

COLLEGE READING AND WRITING: MAKING IT EASY!



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INTRODUCTION



Reading and writing can be difficult tasks for some people. This free online textbook was written with essential literacy strategies to help beginning college students succeed in college. Please use the checklists, templates, and graphic organizers at the end of this ebook to make college reading and writing easy! Reading, writing, studying, and learning can be easy and fun. You can do it! With some perseverance and effort, before you know it, you will be graduating.



How do you start when reading and writing seems like a huge task? **Just start step-by-step and get help.**

Write down 10 things you can do to become a better reader and writer.

1. Read and use this ebook 😊
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Free college textbooks online <https://cnx.org/>

Free college writing support <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

COLLEGE READING

Challenges with motivation, the English language (specifically vocabulary), and learning disabilities can make reading and writing difficult. Please read the information and tips in the areas that apply to you. You can also skip ahead to the Reading Strategies section.

MOTIVATION

TRANSITION STORY

Use the words “I am beginning...”, and “I am becoming....”, and “I am allowing....” To describe your college journey. According to Andy Dooley (2016), personal coach, the brain doesn’t believe it when you say affirmations to yourself like “I’m a great student.” However, your brain can believe, “I’m becoming a great student.” No one has ever become a success overnight. According to Szalavitz (2013) some chess and music professionals take 2 to 26 years to become masters. It takes **YEARS** to become a master.

You just have to start. “A journey of a 1000 miles begins with a single step.” Lao Tzu



Fill in the blanks.

I’m becoming _____.

I’m beginning _____.

I’m allowing _____ to happen.

DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET / DROP THE FIXED MINDSET



You are becoming more intelligent with every class you take.

Some people are born with natural talent in academics, but everyone can increase their intelligence if they keep trying and learning from failure and mistakes. In fact, maybe there is no failure, maybe failure is just feedback to change and grow. A growth mindset will allow you to interpret challenges and setbacks as simply information (Dweck, 2006). If you take any degree of “failure” personally, you might find yourself avoiding school and schoolwork. If you take set-backs as a challenge and make a list of 10 things that you can do to overcome the challenge, you adopt a growth mindset and are on your way to becoming a winner. The more you push and challenge yourself and try, the more you will succeed.

If you are NOT asking yourself, what do I need to do to achieve my goals, and getting caught up in a lot of mental anguish relating to “failure”, you are experiencing a fixed mindset. If you are hearing a big story in your head about why you are a bad student or feeling afraid, start listing 10 things you can do to achieve your goals. Then check off each thing one at a time. The more that you try different approaches and move towards your goal, the better you will feel and the faster you will get results. Watch Carol Dweck talk about [Fixed/Growth Mindsets here](#).

VAK: VISUAL, AUDITORY, KINESTHETIC LEARNING STYLES



Dr. Dawna Markova (1996) studied learning style preferences and found that each person’s brainwaves are stimulated visually, auditorily, and kinesthetically. Beta brain waves indicate alert thinking. Alpha brain waves indicate a dreamy imaginary state of mind. Theta brainwaves reflect slow thinking, creativity, and invoke deep emotions. Traditional learning generally transfers information by sight and sound. Students read books and teachers speak. Taking notes is a kinesthetic activity. Think about what stimulates your beta brainwave state. Do you need to see, hear, or do something in order to

quickly understand? Chances are that whatever mode you prefer to understand something quickly will stimulate your beta brainwaves.

Here is a scenario. Let's say that you learn best by doing something, moving, or feeling it. Your beta brainwaves are stimulated by your kinesthetic sense. When you read you get sleepy. TV also makes you sleepy. Probably, your visual sense stimulates your theta brainwaves. You need to move to stimulate your thinking power when you read. Rub a ball under your feet when you read or sit on an exercise ball or rocking chair. Stand and read at a high table. Hold a pencil or small object in your hand to play with while you read.



Use your beta wave sense to stimulate power thinking and studying.

To learn more about VAK and learning read Markova's book, [The Open Mind](#) for free.

VISUALIZE SUCCESS AND PLAN FOR CHALLENGES

What is it going to feel like, look like, smell like, etc. when you graduate or get a job? What will people say to you? One way to stay motivated with a long journey is to focus on how you want to feel and what you want to experience at the end of the journey. Brain experts and personal coaches encourage people to focus in detail on your end goals to get motivated and stay motivated (Dispenza, 2016; Dooley, 2016). Additionally, Gabrielle Oettingen (2015), a German psychologist, has found that people who visualize goals AND plan ways to overcome any problems or challenges [actually have better results](#) and happiness achieving their goals. Let's say that you want to move to Hawaii and work at your dream job after college.



If you are working on your computer and it breaks, you have a plan to work at the library for free until you have enough money to get a computer again.



SELF-EFFICACY

Albert Bandura (1977) proposed that it is not enough to have the ability to do something, but it also take confidence in yourself to develop your abilities. Confidence or belief in ability and personal control is called self-efficacy.

Efficacious means that something is efficient and effective.

How have you developed your confidence as a reader and writer in the past?

How can you develop your confidence in yourself as a reader/writer today?

How can you become a better student?

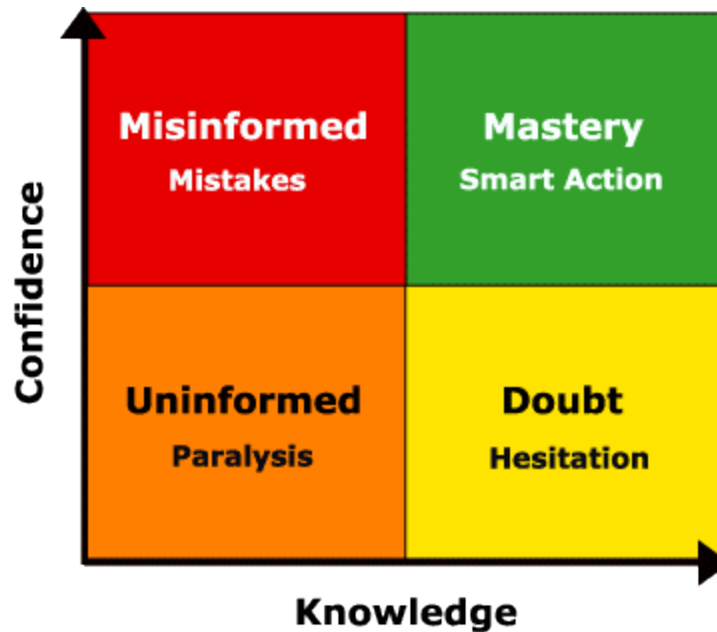
How can you celebrate and own your accomplishments?

If you are enrolled in a college, you have already completed enough education and testing to begin college. You are becoming a college student. You are starting your college journey. You are beginning to make a better future for yourself.

How can you allow yourself to feel confident in your ability as a college student?

By saying to yourself, "I am allowing myself to feel more and more confident every day," you increase your self-efficacy.

GET YOURSELF A CASE OF SELF-EFFICACIOUSNESS AND YOU WILL BECOME A
HAPPIER MORE SUCCESSFUL STUDENT.



Therefore, KNOWLEDGE + ACTION = CONFIDENCE.

CHALLENGES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

VOCABULARY



You may have heard that you need to learn more academic English or improve your vocabulary. Unfortunately, there is no vocabulary pill that immediately increases the number of words you know. Fortunately, there are ways to learn new words effectively. There are about 114,000 words in the English language (Nation, 2001). Native English speakers generally know about 1,000 words for each year of their life (Nation, 2001). If you are 19 and a native English speaker, then you probably know about 19,000 words or more. People often use more words conversationally than they know by sight in reading and writing (Alverman, Phelps, Ridgeway, 2007). The good news is that most academic texts contain only 9% of low use academic vocabulary meaning that you have a small percentage of vocabulary to learn if you have been accepted to college (Nation, 2001). Generally you can learn a new word within 5 to 16 exposures (Nation, 2001). Here are some ways to learn vocabulary.

1. Repetition (hear, see, speak, write)
2. Context (in text, in video with subtitles, in conversation – input)

3. Task (sentence, speech, all parts of speech - output)
4. Antonym / What the word is NOT
5. Synonym (definition)
6. Quizzes



Create a word zoo! Create a word wardrobe!

Think of words as your friends or words as clothes to make your speech sound fabulous and your writing look gorgeous.

Free vocabulary resources:

<https://www.vocabulary.com/>

<http://www.lexipedia.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/>

<http://www.englishpage.com/>

LEXILES – MEASURES OF READING DIFFICULTY

Lexiles are categories that signify the difficulty of reading material. Difficulty relates to the length, vocabulary, and sentence complexity of readings. Generally, it is recommended that students who encounter more than 10 unknown words on a page should find reading materials at an easier lexile level. You will find reading more enjoyable and learn vocabulary more easily if there are less than 10 words on a page that you don't know. Reading very difficult text is not going to help you become a better reader. Make sure that you get help if you have trouble reading college texts.

Find the text in an audio format through the college library.

Read with a friend from class.

Ask librarians for easier texts on subjects related to your college subject.

Use the THIEVES note-taking activity mentioned later in this ebook.

LANGUAGE LEARNING STYLES

Just as people have preferences for learning academic material, you might have noticed how some people learn languages differently. There are roughly 40 different theories about how humans learn languages. Essentially, when you are learning reading and writing, you are learning specific skills related to the English language. Some people may learn reading and writing better if they are able to talk about what they are learning, reading, and writing. Because reading and writing require focused concentration, traditional courses are usually silent places. If you are a student who likes to learn with others and talk about what you are doing, find colleagues with whom you can study. Ask professors to sit in the lobby or in the back and discuss work with peers. You might also talk to yourself, out loud even, if you don't have a friend nearby. As you begin to understand your learning style preferences, please advocate for your needs as a learner. No asking, no getting.

Free learning style quiz: <http://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/>

LEARNING CHALLENGES & PHYSICAL CHALLENGES

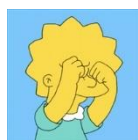
Many students who seek assistance in college preparatory students have not been successful in regular academic environments because of a variety of learning and physical challenges. Challenges can range from 1% to 100%. If you suffer from a 20% problem, your challenge might have gone undetected. Suggestions for getting help are listed below if you think you might have a challenge with learning or physical disabilities, or if you know you have a challenge.

Physical Disabilities



Whether you have challenges with hearing, sight, or movement, you can still learn to read and write at a college level. You are legally entitled to accommodations for your physical challenges. Check with your instructor or the college's disabilities services department to get assistance.

Visual Stress Syndrome

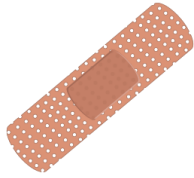


If you see words sliding around or jumping off the page, you may have visual stress syndrome (VSS), or Irlen syndrome. Ask an eye doctor to perform tests to see if visual stress syndrome is affecting your reading ability. Regular eye exams do not detect VSS. Glasses and colored plastic

sheets over text can correct VSS. For more information on VSS:

<http://www.ceriumoptical.com/vistech/visual-stress.aspx>

TBI: Traumatic Brain Injury



Brain injuries can occur from mishaps in sports, in accidents, or from military service. Learning how to re-use your brain, grow new neural connections, and re-learn things you once know can be stressful. Some minor problems like socializing, processing emotions, and maintaining focus can also be related to TBI's. No matter what degree of challenge you might have, there is help available. Make sure that you get support from the college learning disabilities services. You may have to try different things in and out of class. Talk to your professors and ask for what you need.

TBI information: http://www.brainline.org/content/2008/10/student-brain-injury-achieving-goals-higher-education_pageall.html

Learning Disabilities

Each person takes in information and expresses information in a unique way. Some people's nervous systems provide challenges for taking in information or expressing information. For example, people with processing disorders, take in the information of a red rose, but their brain's neural connections take a long route to connect the ideas red and rose. They may have no trouble talking about red roses or writing a story about someone who received a red rose. Other people may easily understand information, but the neural circuitry required to physically write with their hand is very difficult. Their writing is illegible and shaky, a condition called dysgraphia. Whether you have trouble taking information, processing information, or expressing information, you can get help with your college's learning disabilities services. Local communities also must have a vocational rehabilitation office, a government office that provides financial and informational resources regarding work for people with disabilities.

For more information on learning disabilities:

<https://ldaamerica.org/types-of-learning-disabilities/>

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a common learning disability that usually has nothing to do the eye's ability to see, rather the brain processes words in a complex manner. People with dyslexia can learn. Many students with dyslexia have found ways to read if they are already enrolled in college.

Students with dyslexia also benefit from a variety of specialized instructional practices. For more information: <https://dyslexiaida.org/>

COLLEGE READING STRATEGIES

READ TO THINK AND READ TO SHOW YOUR PROFESSOR YOU CAN EXPRESS YOUR THOUGHTS IN WRITING. USE READING TO GET READY FOR WRITING.

If you are reading just to see the words on the page and not thinking or questioning what you are reading, then you are not digesting the words. You are simply sitting down to a book and smelling the words not eating them. Effective readers, stop and think about what they are reading. They go back and look at previous pages to make sense of the text. Effective readers have a conversation in their head about what they are reading. They are not just looking at the words like a television screen and passively observing. Effective readers read, question, look for answers, make hypotheses, predict, and infer.

You can develop the ability to become an effective reader by focusing on thinking before, during, and after reading. The following activities will help you become a more effective reader, develop questions, and sharpen your analytical skills.

BEFORE READING

Start the reading conversation in your head with the 5W's.

5 W's: Questions, Notes

You know how to do this. Before, during, and after you read write down who, what, where, when, and why plus the answers to these questions regarding your reading.



Activate Your Background Knowledge: Read the Title Page

What do you know about the subject, author, and context of the information already? When you think about what you already know about the subject, you activate neurons in your brain that provide a basket for the new information you are about to receive to hold (Kolb, Whishaw, & Teskey, 2014). This means your brain will work more efficiently and effectively. You will read more easily and faster.

DURING READING

While you are reading, you can take notes, skip around, and think about questions.

THIEVES

This during reading strategy is particularly good for processing the information in textbooks. THIEVES is an acronym that stands for Title, Headings, Introduction, Each topic sentence, Visuals, End of chapter questions, and Summary. See the end of this ebook for a handout on THIEVES.



It helps to write down each step in the THIEVES process. By the time you complete all the steps, you will have turned the pages (physical or digital) many times. You don't actually have to read every word in the chapter. You do need to read the title, the introduction, the headings of each section, the first sentence of each paragraph, the captions for visuals and bold vocabulary words, the end of chapter questions and answer them, and the chapter summary. This can be much more interesting and a great way to repeat new vocabulary and concepts.

SQ4R

Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review, and Reflect (SQ4R) is another during reading activity that will help develop effective questioning and analysis. Again, take notes for each step of the SQ4R process. A handout for the SQ4R steps can be found at the end of this ebook.

Survey – Skim through the entire text and think about what you already know about the subject, author, or characters. Predict what you will read.

Question - Think about the 5W's and get ready to find the answers.

Read – read the text looking for the answers to the 5W's and seeing if your predictions are correct.

Recite – After you read paraphrase the information. In your own words summarize the story or information.

Review – Check to make sure that all your questions have been answered.

Reflect – Relate what you have learned to your life and your world. What do you think now about the subject? What else would you like to learn?

When you practice reading using the SQ4R strategies, you begin to develop habits of thinking that will help you increase your analytic and inferential powers.



Brain power! Think of your brain is a muscle, the harder you think, the smarter you become.

ANNOTATIONS

Annotations is a collegiate word for notes. Taking notes allows you to literally see your thoughts. Writing helps you look inside your brain. Writing also helps you find interesting pathways in the forest of your mind. Reading and writing are reciprocal processes. The more you read and write about what you read, the more you understand and develop your thinking. Taking notes will actually help you read faster and more effectively.

There are many ways to take notes, free form, word webs, and underlining and writing in the margins of text.

Two column notes or Cornell notes are also effective note-taking techniques. In the left column while you read write down questions. In the right column write down ideas, predictions, messages, and thoughts about people you know similar or different to the text. In the right column write down your opinions of the reading. Cornell notes allow you to develop ideas to write about, if you have an essay or paragraph assignment.

Cornell note-taking format

Essential question or title	
Narrow column Include the essence: learning goals, big ideas, outline, vocabulary, cues, questions	Notes column Include details, illustrations, definitions, notes, and examples
Summary Include only the most important information (can you distill it down to a single statement?).	

AFTER READING

Signal words = Transition words

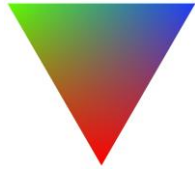
Signal words alert readers to changes in the author's message. Signal words in writing are called transition words. Studying and noticing signal words will help you become a better writer and express your ideas more effectively.

LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP	TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSION
Similarity	also, in the same way, just as ... so too, likewise, similarly
Exception/Contrast	but, however, in spite of, on the one hand ... on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, in contrast, on the contrary, still, yet
Sequence/Order	first, second, third, ... next, then, finally
Time	after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, meanwhile, now, recently, simultaneously, subsequently, then
Example	for example, for instance, namely, specifically, to illustrate
Emphasis	even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly
Place/Position	above, adjacent, below, beyond, here, in front, in back, nearby, there
Cause and Effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus
Additional Support or Evidence	additionally, again, also, and, as well, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then
Conclusion/Summary	finally, in a word, in brief, briefly, in conclusion, in the end, in the final analysis, on the whole, thus, to conclude, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summary

AFTER READING

Summarize. You will be asked many times in college to explain what you have learned in your own words. This means paraphrasing reading. It is very important that you not swallow the author's words and simply regurgitate them. You must learn synonyms for the essential vocabulary and explain the concepts using the 5W's. Talking about what you read is a great way to develop words to write. Try to explain each chapter you read in one sentence or essential thought.

Main Idea/Details



Some people are very good with details. They would see all the blue and green and facts related to the main idea (the red point) first, and may have trouble identifying the main idea.



Other people see the main idea, but have trouble identifying the details. You can practice finding the main idea and the supporting details. Working with a partner or colleague from your course is a great way to summarize information, paraphrase reading and make sure that you understand the author's main points.

Ask your professor in class if your summaries and interpretations of the main ideas are correct. Get feedback from tutors, and teachers assistants. The more you check your understanding, the more confidence you will build in your ability to read difficult text.

FLUENCY

Fluency in reading means reading quickly and effectively. In college, you will often have to read vast amounts of information. Reading quickly for specificity and memorization is essential. You can increase your reading speed by actually slowing down and developing thinking strategies for effective reading. It is more important to understand what you read than to just turn the pages quickly. Practicing the before reading, during reading, and after reading strategies will help you begin to automatically look for the most important and useful information as you read. The more you practice thinking analytically about reading, the faster you will read.



AUTHOR'S PURPOSE? PIE: PERSUADE, INFORM, ENTERTAIN

Another way to think about what you have read is to analyze the author's purpose for writing the text. Did the author try to persuade you to his or her point of view? Was the text providing information? Did

you have fun reading? Was the text entertaining? The acronym PIE (persuade, inform, and entertain) is an easy way to remember to analyze the author's purpose. What kind of PIE did the author bake?

AUTHOR'S TONE/BIAS?

What is the emotional quality of the words the author uses? Angry? Silly? Annoyed? Concerned? Delighted? Grateful? What message can you infer from the tone of the writing? Words the author chooses to use indicate the emotional quality of the text.

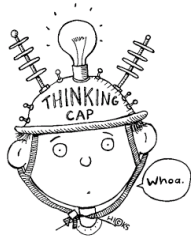
Bias indicates beliefs and prejudices held by the author that are implied but maybe not explicitly stated. The more you question what you read, the easier it will be to identify bias. Making inferences and analyzing the author's opinions will also help you identify bias. Do you agree or disagree? Often simply asking yourself if you agree or disagree with the author will help you realize the author's bias or opinion.



INFERENCE / ANALYSIS

If you can answer questions about reading with a yes or a no, you probably are only asking questions about the facts. Professors want to see that you have thought about what you read and have begun to create new thought and understanding. In order to develop your ability to infer and analyze text, try using the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) method. Questions in the green column relate to the 5W's. The answers to these questions are "right there" in the text. Questions in the yellow column are implied. You have to put the answer together with information from the text. Questions in red are called author and me questions because they make you think about the author's subject from your perspective. On my own questions in blue stimulate you to take the subject more personally and relate it to yourself or your future.

QUESTION STEMS



RIGHT THERE	THINK AND SEARCH	AUTHOR AND ME	ON MY OWN
What? Where?	What examples?	What kind of person is?	If you could?
Who? When?	What are three or four?	What would you do if you?	Do you agree with?
Define Name	What happened before/after?	What part of the text made you ?	Have you ever?
How many? Why does the?	Compare Where did?	What will probably ?	What's your opinion?

Questions are the key to developing inferences and analysis. The more questions you ask when you are reading and brainstorming for writing, the better your writing will be. You will create more neural pathways and possibilities for yourself and even for others.

READING CHECKLIST

- Activate your background knowledge.
- Use the 5W's.
- Answer the 5W questions. Have a conversation in your head about the text while you are reading.
- Read efficiently for specific information and an analytic understanding. (Try THIEVES, SQ4R, or QAR methods to learn effective thinking and reading).
- Take notes while you read.
- Question all aspects of the reading.
- Summarize what you read in your own words.
- Form an opinion of the reading and back it up with evidence from the text.

READING EXERCISES

1. Discover your lexile. Go to lexile.com and enter the latest book that you've read to see what lexile it is. Then choose a text from a more difficult lexile. Then choose a text from an easier lexile. It is useful to challenge yourself and read more difficult material to develop your confidence in your reading ability and your vocabulary. Reading easier material facilitates your reading fluency and is also a useful activity.
2. Read original writing [from the 18th century](#). Some examples are: Gulliver's Travels by Swift and Common Sense by Paine. Examine the writing to see if it is different from today's writing.

3. Read a book for a college course and make a video of yourself offering a scholarly critique of the book. Post your video on YouTube.
4. Read out loud and check vocabulary pronunciation with [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com). Reading out loud will help you connect the words that you know from conversation with words on the page.

COLLEGE WRITING

In this section, essential writing building blocks will be offered as well as strategies for composing more sophisticated academic writing. Some things about handwriting, writing simple sentences with subjects and verbs, capitalizing the word I and the first word of each sentence sound pathetically obvious. You may have heard these things over 1,000 times. However, when you make the effort to handle the basics, your ideas appear more intelligent. You will most likely get better grades on your writing work if you write complete sentences and correctly punctuate them. Skip over the things you already know, and work on areas that need improvement.

INPUT / OUTPUT

Reading and Writing are two different language skills using different neural connections. Just like listening and speaking are two different skills. Reading and Listening require taking information into your nervous system, input. Speaking and Writing require expressing information, output. Practicing listening or combining your listening skills with reading words on a page, like listening to a book on the internet or a CD at the same time you read the words on the page with your eyes will help you develop your reading neural connections.



Speaking the words out loud that you want to write or telling someone first about what you want to write can help you develop writing neural connections. Similarly, reading your writing out loud can help you identify writing errors and help you figure out what you really want to express.

HANDS EXPRESS THOUGHTS

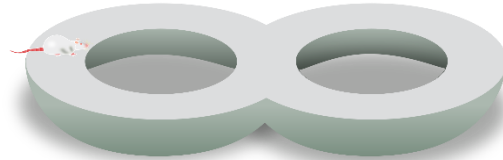
Some students struggle with writing because they cannot express their thoughts quickly enough with their hands through writing or typing. Handwriting and typing are skills. The more you write or type, the easier these skills become. You probably will have to hand write paragraphs or essays on midterms and finals in college. The faster and more easily you write by hand, the more easily you will express your thoughts and the more intelligent your writing will appear.

The art of writing by hand...

Several years ago, elementary teachers under great pressure to increase standardized test scores, quite focusing on teaching handwriting, especially cursive. If you are one of those students who never learned cursive writing and cannot read cursive, you might want to practice handwriting.

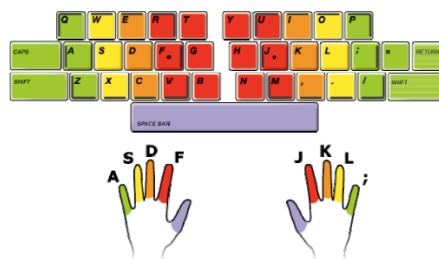
The main thing with handwriting is to end with your pen stroke going down or to the right.

Here is a way you can practice handwriting by using [a figure 8](#). If you were a student who never learned to write by hand efficiently, you can always learn and improve (growth mindset!).



The art of typing...

There are many excellent free typing websites. Practice using a real keyboard. You can get a keyboard for your tablet. Typing **30 words a minute** is the minimal speed you need to express yourself easily in college. If you practice typing 15 minutes a day, it will greatly improve your ability to succeed in all your classes.



Free typing resources:

<http://www.learntyping.org/>

<http://www.typingstudy.com/>

<http://www.easytype.org/>

SPEECH TO TEXT SOFTWARE

Personal computers with Microsoft Word are designed with speech to text features. That means you can tell your computer what to write. This may be a wonderful feature for people that have physical difficulties typing. However, please be aware that it may be more time consuming to tell the computer what to write. For example, you have to say the punctuation when you tell the computer what to write. For example, you would have to tell your computer, "Capital letter The primary objective of the essay was to inform the public about the dangers of coal comma fracking comma and nuclear power period."

Sometimes the computer will not spell correctly or understand your words. After speaking, many corrections may need to be made.

EXPRESS YOURSELF

WRITING ALLOWS YOU TO SEE YOUR THOUGHTS AND DEVELOP NEW IDEAS. YOU DISCOVER WHO YOU ARE WITH WRITING. NO ONE CAN EXPERIENCE THE WORLD AS YOU DO. YOU ARE UNIQUE AND HAVE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAKE TO THE WORLD.

EVERYDAY: Write a blog. Write in a journal. Write emails. Make lists of your successes. Write about the good things in your day.

WRITING SENTENCES

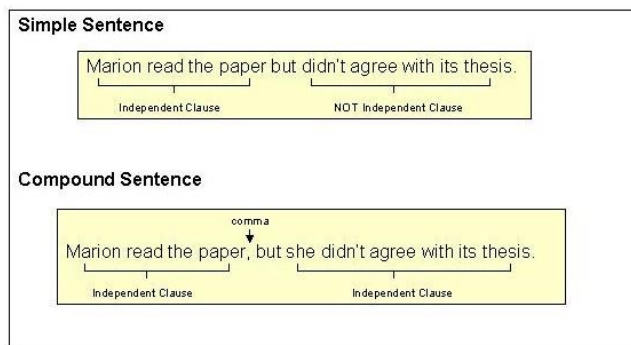
Simple, clear, articulate writing shows your professor that you can express your thoughts in a scholarly objective manner.

Sentences:

Simple sentence = Subject + Verb

Compound sentence = Subject + Verb, FANBOY Subject + Verb

For And Nor But Or Yet



Simple sentence above = Marion + read

Compound sentence above = Marion + read, but she + didn't agree

PROFESSORS HATE RUN ON SENTENCES. YOU WILL NOT GET ANY POINTS FOR TYRING TO SOUND SMART BY LINKING MANY THOUGHTS.

The CURE for run on sentences is...do not use FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) to link ideas together. Let each sentence represent one thought. Make sure each sentence has a subject and a verb.

Complex sentences

Once you feel you have mastered writing simple sentences, try putting two thoughts together with descriptive phrases.

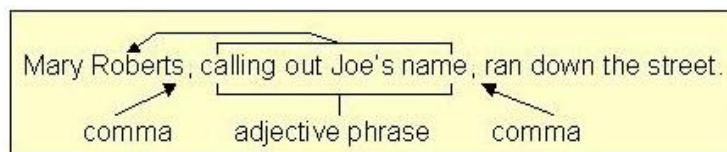
Examples:

- A. *Although Tom reads novels, Jack reads comics.*
- B. *Jack reads comics although Tom reads novels.*
- C. *Jack Smith, who reads comics, rarely reads novels.*
- D. *People who read comics rarely read novels.*

Describing things: Adjectives, adjective clauses

[Practice exercises with adjectives.](#)

[Practice exercises with adjective clauses.](#)



Don't confuse who and whom!

Subject

Who-verb (is)
Whose-noun
Whom-noun (Mary)
Which-verb
That-verb



Object

Who- noun
Whose- noun
Which- noun
That- noun

Ex. Hans, whom Mary knows well, is a flirtatious man.

Ex. Hans, who is Mary's friend, is a flirtatious man.

Describing actions: Adverbs

series of single words

cups, jars, and plates

saw, screamed, and cried

running, jumping, diving, or swimming (4 items)

series of phrase/clause (groups of words)

cups of sugar, jars of honey, and plates of spaghetti

saw the mugging, screamed loudly, and cried about it

Running around the track, jumping over hurdles, diving off
the board, or swimming across the pool.

whom you see, where you go, or what you do

CONJUNCTIONS: As we've seen you can connect two sentences with a FANBOY (conjunction) and a comma. **For And Nor But Or Yet**

SUBJECT + VERB, FANBOY SUBJECT + VERB.

This textbook is informative, but there is always more to learn. (Correct).

This textbook is informative but there is always more to learn. (INCORRECT)

This textbook is informative, there is always more to learn. (INCORRECT called a comma splice when you put two sentences (SV, SV) together with a comma.

PHRASES / CLAUSES

Phrases do not have a subject and verb, but clauses do have a subject and verb. Only use commas to separate clauses that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence, clauses that are extra information (nonrestrictive clauses). For more grammar explanation and specifics go to:

<http://www.grammarbook.com/grammar/clause-phrase.asp>

Relative (Adjectival) Clauses
Definition: introduced by a relative pronoun or adverb, serves to further define the noun/ noun phrase of the sentence, and can be restrictive or nonrestrictive

Restrictive Relative Clauses	Nonrestrictive Relative Clauses
<p>Definition: a relative clause that is essential to the meaning of a sentence</p> <p>Examples (relative pronouns/adjs. in orange):</p> <p>The paper that I have just finished is due tomorrow.</p> <p>The employees who work this afternoon are late.</p>	<p>Definition: a relative clause that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>The final manuscript, which was well formatted, was submitted on time.</p> <p>The woman, whoever she was, left yesterday morning.</p>

CAPITOLIZE

Always capitalize the word **I**...

Always capitalize the **1st** word of each sentence.

AVOID CONTRACTIONS

In academic writing using MLA and APA formatting contractions are not allowed. Spell out **do not, will not, should not, did not**, etc. The purpose of this is to make writing sound more formal and less conversational. Academic writing should be as respectful and objective as possible.

CONNECTING SIGNAL WORDS

Remember signal words from the reading section? Now use them to guide your readers. Use signal words to help express your ideas.

LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP	TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSION
Similarity	also, in the same way, just as ... so too, likewise, similarly
Exception/Contrast	but, however, in spite of, on the one hand ... on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, in contrast, on the contrary, still, yet
Sequence/Order	first, second, third, ... next, then, finally
Time	after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, meanwhile, now, recently, simultaneously, subsequently, then
Example	for example, for instance, namely, specifically, to illustrate
Emphasis	even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly
Place/Position	above, adjacent, below, beyond, here, in front, in back, nearby, there
Cause and Effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus
Additional Support or Evidence	additionally, again, also, and, as well, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then
Conclusion/Summary	finally, in a word, in brief, briefly, in conclusion, in the end, in the final analysis, on the whole, thus, to conclude, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summary

Examples of more complex academic sentences:

Opposing Point of View: _____. **My Point of View:** _____.
 Many people feel that _____, but actually _____.
 Despite the fact that _____, there _____.
 Although some people believe _____, you'll see why _____.
 I can understand the POV that _____, but _____.
 It's easy to see why _____, however _____.
 I used to think that _____, yet _____.
 Regardless of the fact that _____, in my experience _____.
 Some people think that _____, nevertheless _____.
 You might believe that _____, still, _____.

WRITING COLLEGE PARAGRAPHS

Remember, your professors want to see that you can take in information, analyze it, and express yourself in a way that makes sense. Make clear points and back them up with evidence.

Each paragraph should have 6-8 error-free sentences.

Use this formula: **Point Evidence Analysis**

1. Topic Sentence: Express one main point.
2. Explain your point with evidence.
3. Provide more evidence.
4. Offer contrasting evidence.
5. Provide more evidence
6. Summarize your point and explain why your point is important.

Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o I believe that.. o It is my opinion that.. o _____ 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Evidence #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The text states ... o Evidence from the text states that... o According to the text, ... 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Reasoning #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If _____, then _____ o This proves _____ because _____ o This supports my claim because... o This confirms that _____ because _____ o _____ 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Evidence #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Furthermore, ... o Another piece of evidence is ... o Additional evidence states that... 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

PARAGRAPH TEMPLATES

In the short article “_____,” _____ writes about his memorable trip to _____. It was hard for Arwyn to see the lives of the people in Nicaragua because _____. But even though the people are very poor, they still _____. _____ . As Arwyn explains, “_____.” Arwyn admires the people of Nicaragua because _____.

POSITIONS FOR TOPIC SENTENCES

The best place to put the main idea for each paragraph is at the beginning of the paragraph. Topic sentences at the beginning of the paragraph make your writing straightforward and easy for your professor to read. You can place topic sentences at the end of your paragraph or in the middle if you insert them carefully in the context of convincing details. The following essay also demonstrates how you can use supporting paragraphs at to build up your argument and thesis.

Sample Essay of Definition

In the following essay, student writer Martina Lowry defines, explains, and clarifies the meaning of the word “tact.” Note how she summarizes the definition in her concluding paragraph.

Break It to 'Em Gently

The first paragraph ends with a basic definition of “tact.”

— There is a boy in my gym class (I'll call him Bill) who has unbearably yellow teeth that gross everyone out. Recently, another boy told Bill that he should “go Ajax” his teeth. Bill was crushed. Had the other boy been thinking, he would have realized that there is a better way to handle such a situation. He could have handled it with tact. He could have conveyed this hurtful truth in a more careful, sensitive way—that's “tact.”

If a person isn't sensitive to another's feelings, there is no way he or she can be tactful. Yesterday, my 5-year-old brother proudly announced that he had cleaned the screen on our television set. Unfortunately, he used furniture polish, which produced a smeared, oily film on the television screen. My mother smiled and thanked him for his efforts—and then showed him how to clean the screen properly. Her sensitivity enabled my brother to keep his self-respect. Yet, sensitivity alone does not make tact.

Each new aspect of tact is followed by an example.

— “Tactfulness” also requires “truthfulness.” Doctors, for example, must be truthful. If a patient has just been paralyzed in an accident, a tactful doctor will tell the truth—but express it with sensitivity. The doctor may try to give the patient hope by telling of new healing techniques under study or about advanced equipment now available. Doctors must use tact with patients' relatives as well. Instead of bluntly saying, “Your husband is paralyzed,” a doctor might say, “I'm sorry, but your husband has lost feeling in his legs and . . .”

Tact should not be confused with trickery. Trickery occurs when a nurse is about to give a patient an injection and says, “This won't hurt a bit.” Instead of trickery, the nurse can use careful thought. For example, the nurse might assure the patient that the discomfort of the sting of a needle is a small thing compared to the benefits of the shot. It would also be thoughtful for the nurse to tell the patient about some of these benefits.

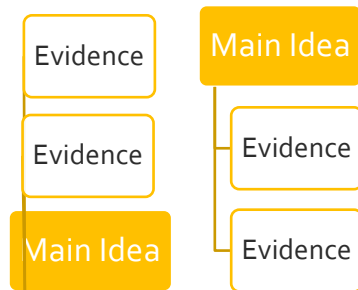
The closing lines stress the importance of tact in society.

Sensitivity, truthfulness, and careful thought—all are necessary components of tact. No one component will do. They must all be used in situations where people's feelings are at stake. Tact is a wonderful skill to have, and tactful people are usually admired and respected. Without tact our society would become an intolerable place to live. ■

DETAIL THINKER OR BIG PICTURE THINKER?

If you like the details more than the big picture, it might help you to make your points at the end of paragraphs, but make sure you also analyze your point and details for the reader.

If you like the big picture more than the details, it might help you to make your point at the beginning of paragraphs.



AUDIENCE – 1ST PERSON, 2ND PERSON, 3RD PERSON

Even if you are writing for a professor who knows more than you do about the course subject, you still need to explain every point and define terminology as needed. **EXPLAIN, EXPLAIN, EXPLAIN**

1st Person: When you write from your own point of view, you are writing in 1st person.

Example: In my opinion, James Joyce was a creative genius. I am inspired by Joyce’s eloquent descriptive writing.

2nd Person: This ebook is written in 2nd person from the author to you.

Example: You are a unique human being. Your writing can change the world.

3rd Person: Write without using I or you. This is the most objective way to write academically and avoid sharing your personal bias. Professors want to see that you can back up your points with actual evidence. Professors don’t actually care about your personal opinion or thoughts unless they directly ask you to state your opinion. Even when they ask you for your opinion, you still have to explain with facts how you came to that opinion. Expressing your opinion with facts rather than with your feelings is called scholarly discourse.

Example:

The American Civil War was a great turning point in the federal government because states became more subservient to national law.

The green hue of summer trees created a feeling of comfort and vibrancy for Jules, who stated, “I could truly relax in the garden under the old sycamore tree.”

CITATIONS AND REFERENCES

The words citations and references are used interchangeably. Please remember two things:

- 1) When you are sharing someone else's opinion, idea, or thought, IN YOUR WRITING and you paraphrase or quote that thought give them credit (Someone, 2015).
- 2) AT THE END of your writing, provide the entire source.

Someone, E., 2015. *The art of citing and referencing*. New York, NY: New Press.

There are several different official ways to write citations and references, MLA, APA, and others for medicine, and engineering. The type of citations and references is called formatting. Professional journals that publish research articles provide guidelines for the exact formatting. Please note that citing and formatting is NECESSARY in academics and in your future professional career. It is the way that professionals communicate to let each other know what they know and respect previous work.

As a student, formatting shows your professors that you are constructing academic arguments and opinions based on your reading. You are not just making up some ideas out of thin air or from listening to the TV. Formatting also shows your professors that you are probably not plagiarizing.

Plagiarizing can get you expelled from college. It is essentially a crime to copy what other people have said and call their ideas your own. Professional researchers who plagiarize are discredited and kicked out of their profession.

Use www.scholar.google.com or www.easybib.com that will create automatic citations and references in several professional formats.

RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE'S WORK. PARAPHRASE. CITE AND REFERENCE.

BEFORE WRITING

Drafts

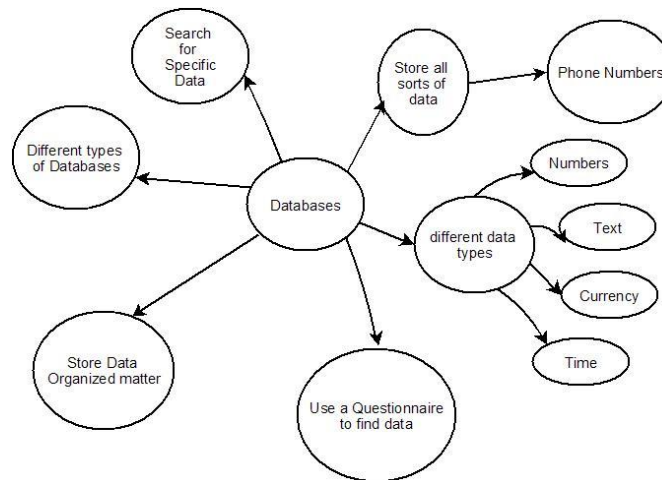
Recognize as you begin to write that you are starting a writing journey and creating a work of art. Professional writers and songwriters always write and rewrite and rewrite some more. Then they submit their work to an editor who gives them feedback and they rewrite it again, maybe even two or three more times before it is finished. You probably have heard that writing is a process. Writing is a journey from nurturing and discovering your ideas to editing and making your final draft error-free (publishing).

Journal

Journaling is writing from your perspective about anything with no rules. When you journal you can make lists, write phrases, spell any way you like. There are no rules. Journaling is a great way to warm up your neurons and get them firing ideas from your brain out to your fingertips.

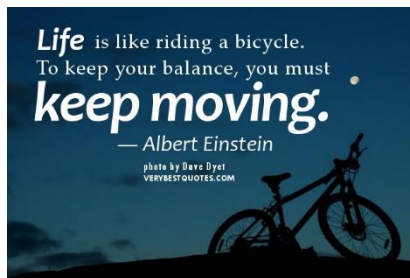
Brainstorm with mind maps

Sometimes it is helpful to create a mind map, also called a word web, to help you organize your thoughts.



Find a quote to inspire you

Sometimes just putting a quote at the beginning of your essay can help inspire you and get you started.



Put a picture on your title page

Similarly, pictures like quotes can be used to illustrate the title page and bring out an aspect or essential thought you plan to convey.

Make an outline

Outlines are great ways to organize your writing. Sometimes writing seems so overwhelming, and you have lots of ideas. When you put them on the page, they get all mixed up, and you might feel lost. Writing will help you generate new ideas. In order to make sure that your new ideas are connected to

your message create an outline. Outlines also serve as checklists. When you get parts of the essay, report, or paper done and check them off on your outline, the satisfaction is awesome!!



Five Paragraph Essay Outline

- I. Introduction
 - a. Create an interesting sentence to introduce the subject of your essay and draw the reader in.
 - b. Introduce your first point of evidence.
 - c. Introduce your second point of evidence.
 - d. Introduce your third point of evidence.
 - e. Explain your thesis, your main point for the whole essay because of your first, second, and third point of evidence.
- II. First supporting paragraph
 - a. Topic sentence reintroducing the first point.
 - b. Evidence or example
 - c. Evidence or example
 - d. Evidence or example
 - e. Analyze the topic and examples for the reader.
 - f. Transition to the next point.
- III. Second supporting paragraph
 - a. Topic sentence reintroducing the second point.
 - b. Evidence or example
 - c. Evidence or example
 - d. Evidence or example
 - e. Analyze the topic and examples for the reader.
 - f. Transition to the next point.
- IV. Third supporting paragraph
 - a. Topic sentence reintroducing the first point.
 - b. Evidence or example
 - c. Evidence or example
 - d. Evidence or example
 - e. Analyze the topic and examples for the reader.
 - f. Transition to the next point.
- V. Conclusion

- Restate your thesis
- Summarize the importance of the evidence you presented (your analyses).
- Relate your findings and argument to the broader world.
- Explain why your argument is important.

YOUR THESIS IS THE MAIN POINT OF YOUR ESSAY AND INCLUDES THE MINOR POINTS THAT MAKE UP THE EVIDENCE AND THE MAIN BODY OF THE ESSAY.

TOPIC	QUESTION AND THESIS STATEMENT
Character	In <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> , Nathaniel Hawthorne depicts Pearl as alien to her society until her father acknowledges her.
Relationships among Characters	In <u>The Catcher in the Rye</u> , Salinger shows that the relationship between Holden and Phoebe acts as a positive force on Holden.
Themes	<u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> is a satire on racism.
Style: Effective use of imagery, foreshadowing, or symbolism to advance character development, theme or artistic purpose	Through the use of images and symbols in <u>The Catcher in the Rye</u> , Salinger reveals many subtleties about Holden's sensitive personality
Style: The point of view, or narration advance character development, theme or artistic purpose	The final fifth of <u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> does not help fulfill Mark Twain's artistic purpose in the novel.
Setting	The raft on the Mississippi River in <u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> is a place with different rules than the towns along the river.
Structure	In <u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> , Mark Twain uses the river journey to illustrate Huck's increasing awareness of the moral hypocrisy in the "civilized" South.
Historical Context: The social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created	Arthur Miller changed some of the facts about the Salem Witch Trials in his play, <u>The Crucible</u> , to advance his artistic purpose.
Critical Overview: Background on critical reputation of the novel including controversies	What reasons do critics have for censoring <u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u> ? Subordinate questions: Is the novel obscene? Is the novel racist? Is the language too coarse? Is it immoral?
Media Adaptations	The 1992 movie <u>Of Mice and Men</u> more poignantly expresses the alienation and loneliness of migrant farm workers than the novel.

DURING WRITING

Here are a few tips to make writing easier.

20 minute take-offs – set your timer for 20 minutes. Put your phone on airplane mode and write one sentence at a time.

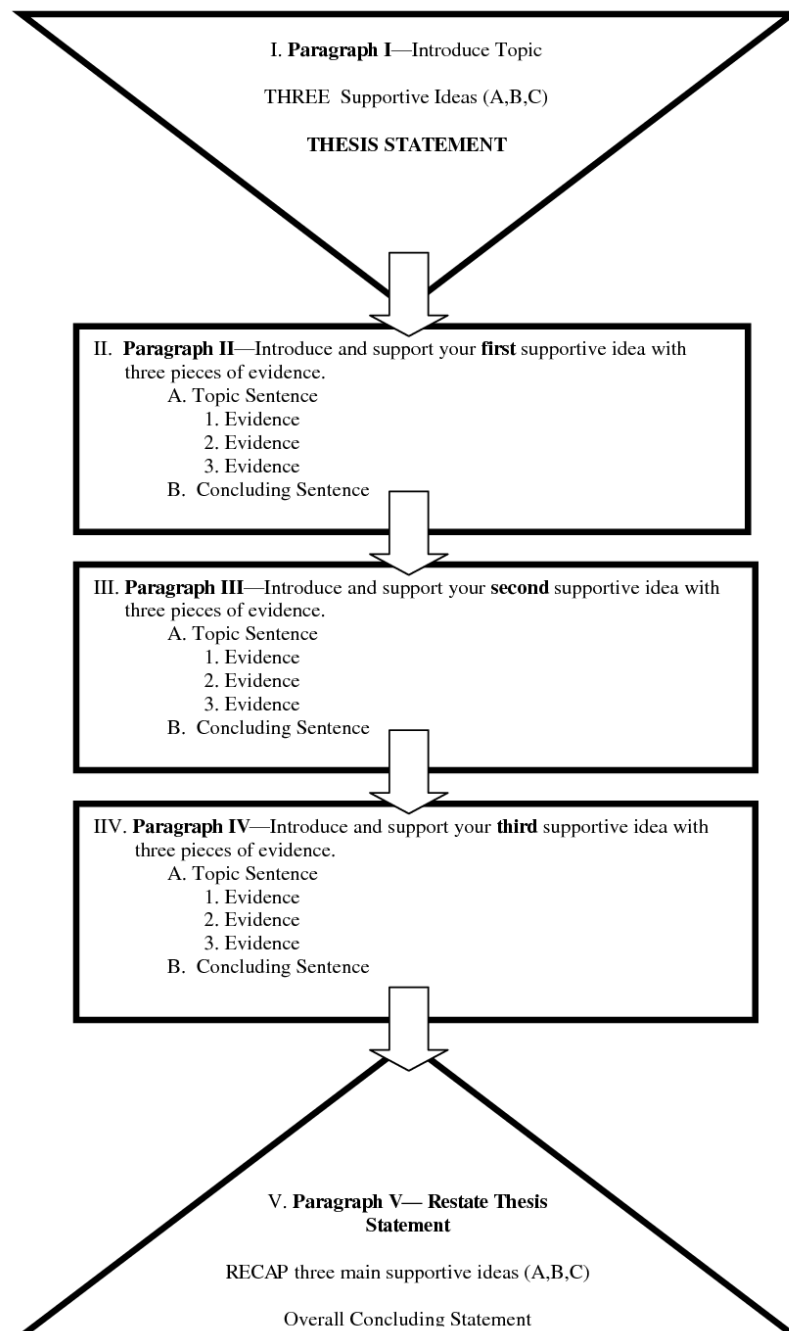
Write first, cite and reference second. Put () empty parentheses at the ends of sentences that you know you should cite.

Use your outline or mindmap as a [checklist](#).

Use [your notes](#) and graphic organizers from reading to add in evidence.

Use www.thesaurus.com to find synonyms so you don't use the same words over and over. Make your vocabulary interesting to your professor.

Basic 5-Paragraph Essay Graphic Organizer



AFTER WRITING – CLEAN AND PRETTY, CLEAR AND UNDERSTANDABLE

Make sure that you clean up your essay. Use spell checker and grammar checkers. Ask friends to read it. Read it out loud. Ask your professor to read drafts of your essays and give you feedback. There are also free online grammar checking services online. Use your school writing center tutors if available.



EDITING CHECKLIST

- Spell checker?
- Grammar checker?
- Periods?
- Capitalize first word of each sentence?
- Capitalize the word I?
- Indent the first sentence in each paragraph?
- Format according to professor/ MLA/APA specifications?
- In text citations?
- End of text citations/references?
- Does it make sense when you read it out loud?
- Do you use signal words?
- Punctuation?

There are some free online grammar checker services. Try www.grammarly.com

SAMPLE PAPERS

Five Paragraph Essay Sample

The Hazards of Moviegoing

Introductory paragraph (Hook) (Thesis) (Blueprint)	I am a movie fanatic. When friends want to know what picture won the Oscar in 1980 or who played the police chief in Jaws, they ask me. My friends, though, have stopped asking me if I want to go out to the movies. I have decided that the idea of going to the movie theater to see a movie is overrated, so I've quit going. The problems in getting to the theater, the theater itself, and the behavior of some patrons are all reasons why I often wait for a movie to show up on TV.
First supporting paragraph	First of all, just getting to the theater presents difficulties. Leaving a home equipped with a TV and a video recorder isn't an attractive idea on a humid, cold, or rainy night. Even if the weather cooperates, there is still a thirty-minute drive to the theater down a congested highway, followed by the hassle of looking for a parking space. And then there are the lines. After hooking yourself to the end of a human chain, you worry about whether there will be enough tickets, whether you will get seats together, and whether many people will sneak into the line ahead of you.
Second supporting paragraph	Once you have made it to the box office and gotten your tickets, you are confronted with the problems of the theater itself. If you are in one of the run-down older theaters, you must adjust to the musty smell of seldom-cleaned carpets. Escaped springs lurk in the faded plush or cracked leather seats, and half the seats you sit in seem loose or tilted so that you sit at a strange angle. The newer twin and quad theaters offer their own problems. Sitting in an area only one-quarter the size of a regular theater, moviegoers often have to put up with the sound of the movie next door. This is especially jarring when the other movie involves racing cars or a karate war and you are trying to enjoy a quiet love story. And whether the theater is old or new, it will have floors that seem to be coated with rubber cement. By the end of a movie, shoes almost have to be pried off the floor because they have become sealed to a deadly compound of spilled soda, hardening bubble gum, and crushed Ju-Jubes.
Third supporting paragraph	Some of the patrons are even more of a problem than the theater itself. Little kids race up and down the aisles, usually in giggling packs. Teenagers try to impress their friends by talking back to the screen, whistling, and making what they consider to be hilarious noises. Adults act as if they were at home in their own living rooms and comment loudly on the ages of the stars or why movies aren't as good anymore. And people of all ages crinkle candy wrappers, stick gum on their seats, and drop popcorn tubs or cups of crushed ice and soda on the floor. They also cough and burp, squirm endlessly in their seats, file out for repeated trips to the rest rooms or concession stand, and elbow you out of the armrest on either side of your seat.
Concluding paragraph (Reworded Thesis) (Summary) (Clincher)	After arriving home from the movies one night, I decided that I was not going to be a moviegoer anymore. I was tired of the problems involved in getting to the movies and dealing with the theater itself and some of the patrons. The next day I arranged to have cable TV service installed in my home. I may now see movies a bit later than other people, but I'll be more relaxed watching box office hits in the comfort of my own living room.

MOTIVATION

Celebrate your successes! If you wrote three paragraphs today, that is great! Any win is a win.

Reward yourself. Take a bike ride. Call a friend. Listen to music. Buy yourself some flowers. Little rewards like lying on the floor for 10 minutes often help you sustain hours of work reading and writing.

Tell the transition story... "I am becoming a successful student. I am finding ways to meet my deadlines. I am allowing myself to get frustrated and then refocus. I am learning how to work smarter not harder."

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

SPAWN – (MARTIN, MARTIN, O'BRIEN, 1984; BROZO, 2003)

Academic writing can be boring and not entertaining. Sometimes, it helps to pretend and imagine to make writing go faster and flow, to develop writing fluency. Sometimes if you write about what is not in the reading, you get ideas for essays. Use SPAWN writing prompts as warm-ups or brainstorming activities.

S – *Special Powers* – Change some aspect of what you read. Explain why it was changed and the effect of the change.

P – *Problem-solving* – Write possible solutions for the problems posed in readings or texts. The sky is the limit, so write about realistic and even fantastical solutions.

A – *Alternative Viewpoints*– Rewrite parts of a story or text as if you were another character or person, not the author.

W – *What If?* – Brainstorm beginning with what if? What if countries swapped presidents for a week? What if global warming suddenly became global cooling? What if...

N-*Next*- If the reading continued what would the author write next? Explain why you think what you wrote would be the next topic. Write about what will happen next in the subject you are studying and explain why.

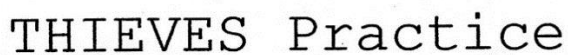
WRITING PAGES

One of the best ways to develop your writing neural circuitry is to write. Using the same neural circuitry over and over is like many cars driving on the highway. A groove gets put in the road. Any activity that you do repetitively becomes like a groove in the highway. Neural impulses travel faster and faster the more you use the activated pathways (Ansermet & Magistretti, 2007).

Every morning fill up one full page of a notebook or journal with words. Just write. Write what you see, hear, smell, feel. Write that you hate writing. Write about what you do not want to write. Write about how you do not know how to write. The key is to keep you hand writing. Just let the words flow onto the page. You can also time yourself for 10 minutes or 30 minutes if that is more fun than filling up an entire page. Keep your hand writing the entire time.

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19

SQ4R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review, Reflect)

Survey: Survey the text. What information do the headings, illustrations, and other visual cues give you?

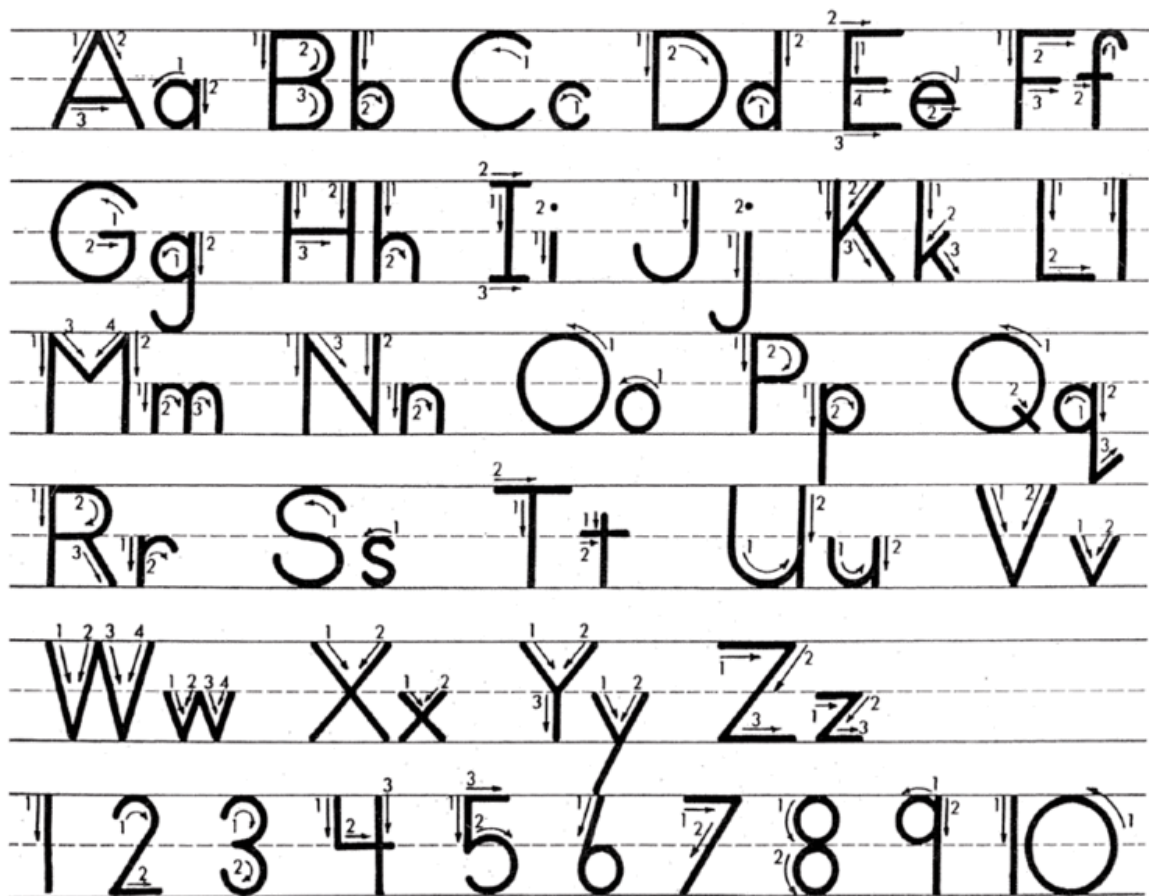
Question: Turn the title into a question. What do you wonder about? Write down any unfamiliar vocabulary.

Read: Read to find answers to your questions. Generate other questions in response to what you are reading.

Recite: Summarize in your own words what you have read.

Review: Answer the questions you have posed before and during reading. Summarize the information by creating a graphic organizer.

Reflect: Relate the information to prior knowledge. What have you learned and what do you still need to learn?



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