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# Academic Reading and Writing

## Module One Basic Rhetorical Skills:

### *Sentence Variety and Paragraph Building*

#### Unit 1 Sentence Variety

##### 1. Appreciative Reading

Just as your dressing style comes from your decision on clothes and shoes, your writing style derives from your choice of words and sentence types. Read the following essay and discuss 1) what impression it leaves on you and 2) what kinds of words and sentences are used to create that impression.

Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind, it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a matter of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is the freshness of the deep springs of life.

Youth means a temperamental<sup>1</sup> predominance<sup>2</sup> of courage over timidity<sup>3</sup>, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease. This often exits in a man of 60, more than a boy of 20. Nobody grows merely by the number of years; we grow old by deserting our ideas.

Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, fear, self-distrust<sup>4</sup> bows the heart and turns the spirit back to dust.

Whether 60 or 16, there is in every human being's heart the lure<sup>5</sup> of wonders, the unfailing childlike appetite of what's next and the joy of the game of living. In the center of your heart and my heart there is a wireless station: so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage and power from men and from the infinite<sup>6</sup>, so long as you are young.

When the aerals<sup>7</sup> are down, and your spirit is covered with the snows of cynicism<sup>8</sup> and the ice of pessimism, then you've grown old, even at 20, but as long as

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<sup>1</sup> temperamental *adj.* 气质的

<sup>2</sup> predominance *n.* 优势, 主导

<sup>3</sup> timidity *n.* 胆怯, 胆小, 羞涩

<sup>4</sup> self-distrust *n.* 畏缩

<sup>5</sup> lure *n.* 诱惑

<sup>6</sup> The infinite refers to a space or quantity that is limitless or endless. 苍穹, 喻上帝

<sup>7</sup> aerals *n.* 天线

<sup>8</sup> cynicism *n.* 愤世嫉俗, 玩世不恭

your aerals are up, to catch waves of optimism, there's hope you may die young at 80.

—Youth, by Samuel Ullman

## 2. Mini-Lecture: *Styling Sentences*

When writing in English, college students as foreign language learners tend to be more grammatically conscious than stylistically or rhetorically<sup>9</sup>. For instance, after they have drafted an essay, the question concerned is more likely to be “Are all my sentences correct?” than “Are they effective?” However, to make an idea or feeling best received, it is not enough to write simply grammatical sentences. Indeed, as shown later in Sample Paragraph 1, a passage free of mistakes but lacking in variety can easily bore its readers.

To improve sentence writing in an essay, there are several commonly used techniques to follow: mixing types of sentences, varying sentence openings, and employing parallel structure.

### 2.1 Mix Types of Sentence

| Description Types | Definition, Function & Examples  | Linking Words Most Often Used  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Simple sentence   | It consists of a single independent clause <sup>10</sup> ; it may contain more than one subject or verb; it gives one clearly defined idea at a time.<br><i>We play basketball in the morning and swim in the afternoon.</i> | and (for compound subjects or verbs <sup>11</sup> )<br><i>Joe, Bill, and I went bowling and dancing.</i>   |
| Compound sentence | It consists of at least two independent clauses and no subordinate clauses. The information conveyed should be of roughly equal importance.<br><i>We waited for them for two hours; then they finally arrived.</i>           | Linking words (with a comma before them): and, but, or, for, yet, nor, etc.<br>Linking words (with a semicolon before them): also, besides, however, still, then, accordingly, therefore, etc. |

<sup>9</sup> rhetorical *adj.* using speech or writing in special ways in order to persuade people or to produce an impressive effect 讲究修辞的, 注重语言效果的

<sup>10</sup> clause *n.* 分句

<sup>11</sup> compound subjects or verbs 复合主语或谓语

|                           |  |  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Complex sentence          | It consists of a single independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. The information conveyed in the dependent clause is less important.<br><i>When my parents found out about my situation, they tried to help me.</i>                     | although, as, because, before, if, since, that, unless, until, as if, as though, in order that, even if, and so that; where, when, while, etc. |
| compound-complex sentence | It consists of two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses; it indicates the complex relationship among ideas.<br><i>Although I enjoy English courses, I failed English 102, but I received an "A" in all my math courses.</i> | It may contain any of the linking words above.   |

Table 1 sentence types, summarized from *The Vital Arts-Reading and Writing* by Dorothy Rubin

Sentences can be categorized into different types. They can be divided into “short” (under 10 words), “medium” (under 20 words), or “long” (20 or more words) ones according to length; they can be defined as simple, compound<sup>12</sup>, complex<sup>13</sup>, compound-complex sentences (Refer to Table 1 above) according to structure; they can also be labeled as declarative<sup>14</sup>, interrogative<sup>15</sup>, exclamatory<sup>16</sup>, or imperative<sup>17</sup> sentences according to function. Just as a good craftsman uses the right tool for the right job, a good writer chooses each type for a particular purpose and effect. Take the paragraph below for example.

...Talent in writing is overrated. Ninety-nine percent of all writing tasks do not require natural genius, just a reasonable intelligence and a willingness to work. You can do that. Will you? Annie Dillard, a Pulitzer Prize winner, goes so far as to say, “There is no such thing as talent.... We all start out dull and weary and uninspired.... Genius is the product of education.” She says people want to believe in genius because they can blame their genes instead of working to improve themselves. So don’t begin with excuses. Your professor will not ask you to write Pulitzer Prize-winning books. But if you work hard, you will write better than you think you can. ...

——From *Ideas and Details* by M. Garrett Bauman

As it indicates, short sentences such as the underlined ones can drive home a

<sup>12</sup> compound sentence 并列句

<sup>13</sup> complex sentence 复合句

<sup>14</sup> declarative *adj.* 陈述的

<sup>15</sup> interrogative *adj.* 疑问的

<sup>16</sup> exclamatory *adj.* 感叹的

<sup>17</sup> imperative *adj.* 祈使的

point when placed with longer sentences, while long ones are often intended to provide details precisely; interrogative sentences can emphasize an important point in a group of declarative ones. Considering the paragraph as a whole, alternating<sup>18</sup> short and long sentences also creates a lively rhythm.

Although it does little good to be overly conscious of sentence types in the first draft of your essay, as you review and revise your essay, keep in mind that too many sentences of any one kind, especially too many simple sentences, will be tedious for your readers, whereas varying sentence length, structure, or function helps hold their interest if properly applied. Therefore, to make your writing better received, you are advised to mix various types of sentences.

## 2.2 Vary Sentence Openings

Another way to achieve sentence variety is to change opening words of your sentences. Although most sentences in the English language follow the SV or SVO<sup>19</sup> pattern and start with the subject, too many in a paragraph can easily lead to monotony and bore the reader. To refresh your writing, you can begin some of your sentences with a coordinating conjunction (such as and, but, so), transitional expression (such as however, therefore, for example, in contrast) or with an adverbial<sup>20</sup> ranging from an adverb, an adverbial phrase to an adverbial clause. Example:

When I was a little girl, I accidentally broke a fruit jar. Several brothers and a sister were nearby who could have done it. But my father turned to me and asked, "Did you break the jar, Alice?" Looking into his large brown eyes, I knew he wanted me to tell the truth. I also knew he might punish me if I did. But the truth inside of me wanted badly to be expressed. "I broke the jar," I said. The love in his eyes rewarded and embraced me. Suddenly I felt an inner peace that I still recall with gratitude to this day.

——Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize-winning author

To do it right, when using an adjective, participial, or infinitive<sup>21</sup> phrase as the adverbial in the beginning position of a sentence, make sure that the subject immediately following it is modified by the phrase itself. If not, you have created an error called a “dangling modifier<sup>22</sup>”.

Example 1:

Incorrect: Unable to answer the teacher’s question, his face turned red.

Revised: Unable to answer the teacher’s question, he blushed.

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<sup>18</sup> alternate *v.* 交替

<sup>19</sup> SV (subject verb) 主谓句式; SVO (subject verb object) 主谓宾句式

<sup>20</sup> adverbial *n.* 状语

<sup>21</sup> infinitive phrase 不定式短语

<sup>22</sup> dangling modifier 垂悬修饰语

Revised: Because he was unable to answer the teacher's question, his face turned red.

Example 2:

Incorrect: Stepping into the boat, my camera dropped into the water.

Revised: After/When I stepped into the boat, my camera dropped into the water.

To sum up, starting sentences with elements<sup>23</sup> other than subjects is an important technique for adding variety and avoiding tedium, so remember to apply it in the revision stage of writing.

## 2.3 Employ Parallel Structure

Parallel structure (also called parallelism) means using the same grammatical form or pattern to express ideas of equal importance. In such a sentence structure, you may see that noun is lined up with noun, verb with verb, phrase with phrase, and clause with clause. It offers us a writing style that uses balance and rhythm to communicate with the readers. Though the term may sound new to some of you, the device has been so commonly used in different kinds of writing that few can be a total stranger to it.

To begin with, parallel structure often goes hand in hand with correlative conjunctions such as both...and, neither...nor, either...or, not only... but also. From the example below, we can see that parallelism balances the structural elements of a sentence and lends symmetry<sup>24</sup> and readability to what we write.

Not Parallel: The young woman is pretty and has brains.

Parallel: The young woman is both pretty and smart.

Parallel: The young woman has both looks and brains.

In addition to paired constructions, the device is frequently employed in sentences with series<sup>25</sup>. As the following examples show, parallelism can create different rhetorical effects in the hands of different writers. It is used to enhance the vividness in Example 1, to emphasize a point in Example 2, to make a statement more forceful in Example 3. Parallel structure also helps with clarity, conciseness and elegance when a series is designed to list specific details or give several examples, as indicated in Example 4.

Example 1: She walked steadily, swiftly, and purposefully.

Example 2: . . . and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

—Abraham Lincoln

Example 3: I came; I saw; I conquered.—Julius Caesar

Example 4: The silent night paints a peaceful picture of life. Stars twinkle in the dark sky like tired eyes trying hard to open; the sea murmurs in a soft voice like a man who prays before his sleep; the silver birches play gentle music with their

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<sup>23</sup> element *n.* 成分, 要素, 元素

<sup>24</sup> symmetry *n.* 对称

<sup>25</sup> series *n.* 序列



leaves and branches, sounding like the lullaby a young mother sings to her sleepy baby.

——Li Meng, an undergraduate of Beijing Normal University

Writing parallel structure can be fun, but pay attention to two points in the course. First, do not mix forms. Because of having the same grammatical function, all items in a pair or in a series must be similar in form so that they are parallel: all single words of the same part of speech, all phrases of the same structure, all subordinate clauses<sup>26</sup>, or all main clauses. Second, put parallel items in order. Well-chosen items in a series often complement each other in content and need to be arranged for clarity. Looking closer, you will find Example 3 and 4 are organized in the order of time and space respectively. In many other cases, items in a series can be arranged in some order of increasing impact. In short, make sure you use parallel structure carefully and correctly.

### 3. Writing Awareness: Recasting Your Sentences

Now that you have gained an awareness of word choice in Unit 2, it is time for you to see the stylistic choices available to you as you compose and revise your sentences. The fundamental unit of composition is the sentence; rewriting or recasting it can make it more graceful, logical, and emphatic. In fact, the way a sentence is structured reveals a way of thinking, because it reflects a way of organizing and prioritizing information. In recasting a sentence, you have to be able to relate the ideas and decide which idea should be emphasized over the other.

In this sense, recasting sentences is not only a stylistic practice but also a thinking practice. To recast sentences, you need to recognize the four basic sentence types and learn some necessary grammatical terms for this purpose. A brief description of them is made in the table above (see Table 1). Each of these sentence types has force; they just spotlight and relate their ideas in different ways.

Based on the function of each of the four basic types of sentences, you can recast your sentences to achieve the intended purpose, making your writing more forceful and therefore more effective. With little consideration of effect and style, many college students tend to write the way they talk and use mainly short sentences in their essays. Although this sentence type has its own strength, overuse of it makes the writing lose its focus, creates a choppy rhythm and indicates a simplistic way of thinking.

A solution to this problem is sentence combination, which, just as it sounds, means putting short sentences into longer units. It can be quite simple when you follow these common strategies: delete repeated words, add connecting words, adjust word order, and change word forms when necessary. Take the sentences below for example. Try combining them into a natural clear statement with all the original details.

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<sup>26</sup> subordinate clauses 从句

John was a woodcutter.  
He worked for a company for five years.  
He never got a raise.

Then, what you have written might coincide with one of the samples given here.

Sample 1: John was a woodcutter with five years' working experience; however, he never got a raise.

Sample 2: John, a woodcutter, worked for a company for five years but never got a raise.

Sample 3: John, who worked as a woodcutter for a company for five years, never got a raise.

Under the surface, the goal of sentence combination is not to produce a longer sentence but to consider different arrangements before you choose the most effective. As you can see from the above samples, though all of them are grammatically correct, each has a unique structure with a different emphasis, and thus fits in different contexts. Therefore, how to put your words together—whether it should be a compound or complex sentence—depends on what your writing is about and where the sentence stands. Now, decide which combination of the above serves best as the beginning of the story here.

\_\_\_\_\_ . The company hired Bill and within a year he got a promotion. This caused resentment in John and he went to his boss to talk about it. The boss said: “You’re still cutting the same number of trees you were cutting five years ago. We are a result-oriented company and would be happy to give you a raise if your productivity goes up.” John went back, started hitting harder and putting in longer hours, but he still wasn’t able to cut more trees. He went back to his boss to seek some advice. The boss asked him to go and talk to Bill. “Maybe there is something Bill knows that you and I don’t.” John asked Bill how he managed to cut more trees. Bill said: “After every tree I cut, I take a break for two minutes and ‘sharpen my ax’. When was the last time you sharpened your ax?” The question hit home<sup>27</sup> like a bullet and John got his answer. “When was the last time you sharpened your ax?” If you want to progress in life, you cannot rest on your past laurels<sup>28</sup>. You must continuously sharpen your ax of knowledge, skill and expertise, in whatever field of activity you may be.

—Fom <http://www.knowledgebase-script.com/demo/article-138.html>

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<sup>27</sup> to hit home 切中要害

<sup>28</sup> laurels 荣誉, 胜利

## 4. Sample Analysis

The following two sample paragraphs are written by freshmen on the topic “The First Snow in Beijing”. Read the teacher’s annotations, compare each sample with the improved version, and discuss the follow-up questions.

### Sample Paragraph 1

I was so surprised with the first snow in Beijing. I was a new comer, and I was born in a farmer’s family in the south, I had never seen such a big snow before. The first snow in Beijing came so early this year. It was so heavy and covered everything in the world. I was so surprised to see the silver world covered with snow. I really couldn’t believe it was snowing outside when I opened the window. It looked like thousands of small white flowers falling down from the sky. It looked so beautiful that I couldn’t help running to the yard in the snow. I never knew that a world covered with snow would be so beautiful. Everything was so surprising to me. I played in the yard with my roommates and took many photos in the snow. The first snow in Beijing really made me happy and surprised.

### The Improved Version

As a new comer, I was truly surprised with the first snow of this year in Beijing. To begin with, it arrived at the end of October, much earlier than I expected, for dark green autumn leaves were still lingering on the branches. More importantly, born and bred in a farmer’s family in the south, I had never seen such a heavy snow before. It was so heavy that it covered everything outdoors—the roofs, the trees, the streets, and turned the whole world into a silver land. When I opened the window, I couldn’t believe what I saw. The flying snowflakes looked like thousands of small white flowers falling down from the sky. So beautiful was it that I couldn’t resist running out to the yard in the snow. There I joined my roommates in a wild snowball fight: we chased each other, threw snow at each other, laughed at each other, and finally leaned on each other, breathlessly, for a rest. What great fun! The first snow in Beijing really made me happy and surprised.

### Questions for Discussion

1. What problems in word choice and sentence writing are revealed after comparing the two versions?
2. What improvements have been made in terms of sentence style? What techniques have been used in the improved version?

### Sample Paragraph 2

When the snow began to fall in Beijing for the first time this year, the whole world became quite peaceful. Those “small-and-white” falling from the high sky seemed to dance in the air silently. Passers-by slowed down or even stopped instead of rushing forward as usual to say hello to the first snow. They must have enjoyed the

kisses of snow, for smiles bloomed on their face. While the snow on the road became thicker, fewer cars were on the road and much slower the drivers drove. So the noise of traffic faded off. Even the trees beside the roads stood pretty still, as if they were waiting for being covered by the first snow in Beijing.

### The Improved Version

When the snow began to fall in Beijing for the first time this year, the whole world became quite peaceful. Those “small-and-white flowers” falling from the sky seemed like they were dancing in the air quietly and elegantly. Instead of rushing to work as usual, pedestrians slowed down or even stopped to greet those heavenly dancers, to appreciate their silent performance, and to enjoy their gentle kisses. Thus, a smile blossomed on everyone’s face despite the cold weather. As the flying snowflakes softly landed and piled up on the ground, vehicles on the road felt as though they were running on a thick white carpet, so they moved much slower and the noise of traffic seemed to fade out. Even the trees beside the road stood still, as if they were waiting to be embraced by the first snow in Beijing.

### Questions for Discussion

1. What do you like about this sample paragraph?
2. What writing problems in word choice and sentence writing are revealed after comparing the two versions?
3. What improvements have been made in terms of sentence style? What techniques have been used in the improved version?

## 5. Practice

Practice A. Make the following general sentences more specific with a series of words or phrases. Remember to avoid repetition in meaning among your word choices within each sentence.

E.g. He is forever talking about the advantages of living in the country.

He is forever talking about the advantages of living in the country—the friendly people, the clean atmosphere, the closeness to nature and the gentle pace of living.

1. People can enlarge their circle of friends by chatting online.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_— all these people can enlarge their circle of friends by chatting online.

2. Enchanted with the life of pop stars, some college students tend to collect everything related to them.

Enchanted with the life of pop stars, some college students tend to collect everything related to them —\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and\_\_\_\_\_.

3. I dislike eating in the dining hall because the food there is terrible.

I dislike eating in the dining hall because the food there is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

4. I enjoy traveling because it can benefit me in several ways.

I enjoy traveling because it can \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

5. You come to know you have grown up at certain moments.

You know you have grown up when \_\_\_\_\_,  
when \_\_\_\_\_, when \_\_\_\_\_.

Practice B. Combine each cluster of numbered items into one or more sentences.  
Then combine clusters into a well-organized paragraph, if you wish.

1.1 The waiting area was noisy.

1.2 The waiting area was cramped.

1.3 The waiting area was poorly lit.

1.4 It looked like a large broom closet.

2.1 Gary sat with two other applicants.

2.2 He tried to relax.

2.3 His insides felt intense.

3.1 He touched his fingers to his face.

3.2 He noticed they were ice-cold.

3.3 This was a sure sign of nervousness.

4.1 His plan was to sell himself.

4.2 The selling would be straightforward.

4.3 It would be without arrogance.

5.1 He would emphasize his adaptability.

5.2 He would emphasize his friendliness.

5.3 He would emphasize his work habits.

5.4 His work habits were responsible.

6.1 The secretary called his number.

6.2 He wiped his palms dry.

6.3 He adjusted his new tie.

6.4 He arranged his face into a smile.

6.5 The smile was upbeat.

7.1 He strode into the interview room.

7.2 He told himself he had nothing to lose.

8.1 He shook hands with the interviewer.

8.2 He settled into an armchair.

8.3 He noticed his mismatched shoes.

8.4 One was light brown.

8.5 The other was black.

From *Writer's Choice: Composition and Grammar*

# Unit 2 Paragraph Writing

*Reading makes a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.*

—Francis Bacon

## 1. Appreciative Reading

A typical English paragraph is composed of a group of related sentences which support the central idea. Read the following paragraphs for the central ideas and discuss what you perceive to be the differences between Chinese paragraphs and English paragraphs.

### Excerpt 1

Of the many things that I wish I understood better, the one that I am faced with the most often is my sister. I see her every day; we attend the same school, share a room, and share our parents. I feel as though I should understand her feelings and be able to identify<sup>29</sup> her moods with ease after thirteen years of living with her, but she remains one of the biggest mysteries in my life. She's talented, intelligent, and undoubtedly the wittiest<sup>30</sup> person I know. Yet she is also picky, stubborn and prone<sup>31</sup> to outbursts that I am powerless to stop. Not that I think these outbursts are a sign of some underlying psychological problem; they are hardly that serious. But when I am coming closer and closer to moving out of our room and thus putting a hole in our relationship that may not be refilled, I can't bear to watch our days together wasted on her bad moods. Maybe it is because I am too close to her that I can't see the way my own actions affect her, but I simply do not know how to behave so that I won't set her off<sup>32</sup>. My parents seem to have some idea; they often think that I am trying to aggravate<sup>33</sup> her on purpose. But I want nothing more than to have the harmony (and that truly is how I would describe the situation) that we often live in to be permanent. I'm just not sure how to make that happen.

—From “*That Made a Difference*” by Ellison Ward

### Excerpt 2

Even becoming accustomed to the cold climate, however, was not as difficult as getting used to the differences in customs between Honduras<sup>34</sup> and the United States. For example, I was amazed to hear my classmates at the university address

<sup>29</sup> To identify is to recognize something or discover exactly what it is. 识别, 鉴别

<sup>30</sup> Being witty means using words in a clever and amusing way. 诙谐的

<sup>31</sup> To be prone to do something is to be likely to do something, esp. something bad or harmful. 易于...的

<sup>32</sup> To set off originally means to cause to explode. Here it means to provoke her; to cause her to get angry. 招惹, 激怒

<sup>33</sup> aggravate v. to make angry, esp. by continual annoyance 惹恼, 激怒

<sup>34</sup> Honduras n. 洪都拉斯 (拉丁美洲国家)

our instructor by his first name. In Honduras, we would always use a title such as “professor” or “doctor” before the instructor’s name. Also, students here joke with their teachers and challenge them on facts or opinions, which Honduran students may find disrespectful. Then, too, American food and meal times vary greatly from food and meal customs in Honduras. I miss the oceans of fresh fruit and vegetables, and I am sick of McDonald’s hamburgers. Dating was another custom that surprised me. I discovered that I could ask a girl to a movie without going steady with her or compromising<sup>35</sup> myself in any way. Finally, the differences in family life are quite striking. In my country, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins are likely to share one large house, but here, people usually live in small, isolated family groups. Some of my classmates visit their parents only at Christmas and in the summer, and they haven’t seen their grandparents for years.

—From *Independent Writing* by Teresa D. O’Donnell

## 2. Mini-Lecture: Paragraph Building

### 2.1 Definition of a paragraph

A paragraph is a group of related sentences developing one idea or expressing one unit of thought (topic of paragraph). It is the basic unit of organization in writing.

### 2.2 Structure of a paragraph

A paragraph is made up of three parts: Topic Sentence; Supporting Sentences; Concluding Sentence

#### 1) Topic Sentences

A topic sentence states the main idea of a paragraph. It not only names the topic (who, what) of the paragraph, but also limits the topic to one or two areas that can be discussed completely in the space of a single paragraph. The specific area is called the controlling idea. The controlling idea is usually indicated by a single word or a phrase in the topic sentence. A controlling idea helps a writer by reminding him/her at all times to keep to the central idea as he or she writes a paragraph. A concluding sentence summarizes the main idea of the paragraph.

Topic sentence: Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics.

Topic: gold

Controlling idea: two important characteristics

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<sup>35</sup> To compromise oneself is to do something which is against one’s principles and which therefore seems dishonest or shameful. 妥协, 让步

In the supporting sentences, two characteristics are introduced. First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. Another important characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry and science.

Here are some requirements for a good topic sentence:

(1) Being complete

FRAGMENT: How to change a tire.

COMPLETE: Anyone can learn how to change a tire.

FRAGMENT: A safe way to change a tire.

COMPLETE: There is a safe way to change a tire.

(2) Being neither too broad nor too narrow or vague

A topic sentence that is too broad requires much more than a paragraph to develop. A topic sentence that is too narrow leaves little to be said in the rest of the paragraph. Besides, many topic sentences are opinions rather than a simple statement of fact.

Eg. Championship wrestling is really cool. (“cool” is too vague)

(3) Being unified

Do not involve too many unrelated ideas in your topic. Bear in mind that the topic announces the idea to be developed in the paragraph and that the paragraph must contain only one central idea.

Eg. San Francisco is famous for its temperate climate, its many tourist attractions, and its cosmopolitan atmosphere. (poor: too many ideas)

### 1.1) Position of a Topic Sentence

- a) At the beginning of a paragraph
- b) At the end of a paragraph
- c) In the middle of a paragraph
- d) At both the beginning and the end of a paragraph
- e) Sometimes it can be implied

For beginners, the beginning and end of a paragraph are the very position of a topic sentence.

### 1.2) Writing activity 1

In groups, write a topic sentence for each topic given below.

- (1) my favorite sport
- (2) physical exercises
- (3) traffic in Beijing
- (4) air travel

### 1.3) Writing activity 2



Underline the topic sentences, or add one to the paragraph (if a topic sentence does not appear but is implied).

1. Americans might be embarrassed because their Japanese friends are so formal with them. Japanese might feel insulted because American acquaintances greet them casually. Still, the forms of greeting in both countries only show respect for others. It just happens that Americans and Japanese have a different way of looking at human relationships and thus have a different way of showing respect.

2. Just as I settle down to watch television, he demands that I play with him. If I get a telephone call, he screams in the background or knocks something over. I always have to hang up to find out what's wrong with him. He refused to let me eat a snack in peace. Usually he wants half of whatever I have to eat. Then, when he finally grows tired, it takes about an hour for him to fall asleep.

## 2) Supporting Sentences

主要扩展句(major supporting statements which center around the topic sentence. They are independent but interrelated with one another)

次要扩展句(minor supporting statements which further elaborate the major supporting statements. They are facts, examples, etc.)

Example:

I don't teach because teaching is not easy for me (TS). Teaching is the most difficult of the various ways I have attempted to earn my living: mechanic, carpenter, writer (major supporting statement 1). For me, teaching is a red-eye, sweaty-palm, sinking-stomach profession (major supporting statements 2).

Red-eye, because I never feel ready to teach no matter how late I stay up preparing (minor supporting statement 1). Sweaty-palm, because I'm always nervous before I enter the classroom, sure that I will be found out for the fool that I am (minor supporting statement 2). Sinking-stomach, because I leave the classroom an hour later convinced that I was even more boring than usual (minor supporting statement 3).

## 3. Coherence

Coherence of a paragraph refers to the proper arrangement of sentences. That is, each sentence in a paragraph naturally leads to the next sentence in explaining the controlling idea. To achieve coherence, all sentences in a paragraph should be arranged in a logical order. It mainly focuses on the organization of a paragraph, which is the key to coherence of a paragraph.

1) coherence by meaning

A. chronological arrangement

B. spatial arrangement

C. logical arrangement

## Logical Arrangement: Specific-to-General Pattern vs. General-to-Specific Pattern

In specific-to-General Pattern (**inductive**), the details are mentioned first, and the general statement, which may be the topic sentence, comes at the end of the paragraph, summarizing the main idea of the paragraph.

**Sample 1:** American might be embarrassed because their Japanese friends are so formal with them. Japanese might feel insulted because American acquaintances greet them casually. Still, the forms of greeting in both countries only show respect for others. It just happens that Americans and Japanese have a different way of looking at human relationships and thus have a different way of showing respects.

**Sample 2:** In whatever situation men can be placed, they may find conveniences and inconveniences. In whatever company, they may find persons and conversations more or less pleasing. At whatever table they may find good meat and drinks of better and worse taste, dishes better or worse prepared. In whatever climate, they may find good and bad weather. Under whatever government, they may find good and bad laws and good and bad administration of these laws. In every poem or work of genius, they may see beauties and faults. In almost every face and every person, they may discover fine features and defects, good and bad qualities. Under these circumstances, the people who are to be happy fix their attention on the conveniences of things, the pleasant parts of conversation, the well "prepared dishes, the goodness of the wines, the fine weather. They enjoy all with cheerful things. Those who are to be unhappy think and speak only of the contraries. Hence they are continually discontented themselves. By their remarks, they sour the pleasures of society, offend many people, and make themselves disagreeable everywhere. (from the Deformed Leg by Benjamin Franklin)

In General-to-Specific Pattern (**deductive**), the general statement, which may be the topic sentence, comes first. And the specific details/examples serve as supporting sentences come after the general statement

**Sample:** If a reader is lost, it is generally because the writer has not been careful enough to keep him on the path. This carelessness can take any number of forms. Perhaps a sentence is so excessively cluttered that the reader, hacking his way through the verbiage (冗词赘语), simply doesn't know what it means. Perhaps a sentence has been so shoddily (劣质地) constructed that the reader could read it in any of several ways. Perhaps the writer has switched tenses, or has switched pronouns in mid-sentence, so the reader loses track of when the action took place or who is talking. Perhaps sentence B is not logical sequel to sentence A -- the writer, in whose head the connection is clear, has not bothered to provide the missing link. Perhaps the writer has used an important word incorrectly by not

taking the trouble to look it up. He may think that “sanguine” (红润的; 乐观的) and “sanguinary” (血腥的, 残暴的) mean the same thing, but the difference is a bloody (very) big one. The reader can only infer what the writer is trying to imply.

## 2) Coherence by linking words

Transitional words and linking devices directly tell the reader the logical relationship between one idea and another idea.

The table below lists the frequently used transitions according to the logical relationships between the ideas.

| Relationship           | Transition  |
|------------------------|---|
| addition               | moreover/furthermore/ in addition (to)/besides  |
| exemplification        | For example/For instance/in particular  |
| emphasis               | indeed/in fact  |
| comparison or contrast | likewise/similarly/ compared with (to) however/on the other hand/in contrast/ on the contrary |
| cause or effect        | Due to/because of /consequently/hence, thus/accordingly/ therefore/as a result (of)           |
| time                   | meanwhile/ after subsequently/ at the same time   |

### Writing activity 3

Find and underline the transitional words and discuss their functions.

Walter's goal in life was to become a successful surgeon. First, though, he had to get through high school, so he concentrated all his efforts on his studies --- in particular, biology, chemistry, and math. Because he worked constantly on these subjects, Walter became proficient in them; however, Walter forgot that he needed to master other subjects besides those he had chosen. As a result, during his junior year of high school, Walter failed both English and Latin. Consequently, he had to repeat these subjects and he was almost unable to graduate on schedule. Finally, on June 6, Walter achieved the first step toward realizing his goal.

## 4. Sample Analysis

Read the Student's sample on the topic sentence “The classroom is a good place to do self-study” and discuss:

1. What do you like about this paragraph?
2. What main problems are revealed judging from the requirements for an effective paragraph?
3. How can you revise the paragraph to develop it more logically and convincingly?

#### Student's sample

The classroom is a good place to do self-study. Whenever pushing the door open, a warm breath coming straight towards me. It is the very classroom I'm expecting for. The tidy pairs of desks and chairs, together with those hardworking people, form a studying paradise. The classroom offers people a quiet and harmonious atmosphere. Sitting in it, we may easily feel preoccupied with the lessons and keep a high mood. All these lead to an efficient work. Also, without the noises and interference around us, we can gain more knowledge than expected. Therefore, learning in the classroom can help us develop a good learning habit that will benefit us all lifelong.

#### Improved Version

The classroom is a good place to do self-study. For one thing, the classroom provides a good learning atmosphere for self-study. Whenever I push the door open, a warm breath comes straight towards me. It is the very classroom I'm expecting for. The tidy pairs of desks and chairs, together with those hardworking people, form a studying paradise. Sitting in it, I am surrounded by students who are totally absorbed in their study. Some are reviewing lessons and doing homework; Some, reading novels; Still some, writing papers. Influenced by them, I may easily make myself occupied with my homework. Besides, whenever I encounter any difficulties, I can always turn to somebody for help or even have an in-depth discussion with them. All these lead to an efficient work. Another reason why I prefer to study in classroom is owing to its quiet and harmonious atmosphere. I wouldn't be annoyed with constant noises and interferences, which I have to put up with while studying in the dormitory. Without all the distractions such as watching TV, talking over cell phone, eating snacks, I can highly boost my working quality, even accomplish more than I intend to. Therefore, learning in the classroom has always been my first choice to do self-study.

## 5. Homework Assignment

1. Support the topic sentences given below with supporting sentences so as to develop it into a short paragraph.
  - (1) Our life today depends very much on the mobile phones.
  - (2) No one can avoid being influenced by advertisements.
2. Write a paragraph on the topic "A Sense of Humor"

# Module Two Expository Essays

## Unit 1 An Overview

*The bad news is that times flies. The good news is that you are the pilot.*

—Anonymous

### 1. Appreciative Reading

Writing can be classified into four different genres<sup>36</sup> or modes<sup>37</sup>: descriptive, narrative, expository<sup>38</sup>, and argumentative<sup>39</sup>. Each of these types has a specific purpose or purposes. Read the following four excerpts and identify the writing mode of each one.

#### Excerpt 1

I had often watched a large dog of ours eating his food, and I now noticed a decided similarity between the dog's way of eating and the man's. The man took strong sharp sudden bites, just like the dog. He swallowed, or rather snapped<sup>40</sup> up, every mouthful, too soon and too fast, and he looked sideways here and there while he ate, as if he thought there was danger in every direction, of somebody's coming to take the pie away. He was altogether too unsettled in his mind over it, to appreciate it comfortably, I thought, or to have anybody to dine with him, without making a chop with his jaws at the visitor, in all of which particulars he was very like the dog.

—From *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

#### Excerpt 2

Oh dear: I've got another terrible black mark against my name. I was lying in bed yesterday evening waiting for Daddy to come and say my prayers with me, and wish me good night, when Mummy came into my room, sat on my bed and asked very nicely, "Anne, Daddy can't come yet, shall I say your prayers with you tonight?" "No, Mummy," I answered.

Mummy got up, paused by my bed for a moment, and walked slowly towards the door. Suddenly she turned around, and with a distorted<sup>41</sup> look on her face said, "I don't want to be cross<sup>42</sup>, love cannot be forced." There were tears in her eyes as she left the room.

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<sup>36</sup> genre *informal* a particular type of art, writing, music, etc., which has certain features that all examples of this type share (文学作品等的) 题材、样式

<sup>37</sup> mode *n.* a way of behaving, living, operating etc. 方式, 样式

<sup>38</sup> expository *n.* 说明文

<sup>39</sup> argumentative *n.* 议论文

<sup>40</sup> To snap sth. up is to take or buy quickly and early. 把...抢先弄到手, 抢购

<sup>41</sup> distort *v.* to twist out of a natural, usual, or original shape or condition 扭歪, 使变形

<sup>42</sup> cross *adj.* angry, bad-tempered 脾气坏的, 生气的

—From *Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank

Excerpt 3

Beware of pranksters on April 1. The custom of playing jokers on April Fool's Day began in sixteenth-century France. The French celebrated the New Year on April 1, according to the old calendar. A reformed calendar was adopted in 1564, and New Year's Day was switched to January 1. Some persons resisted the change in dates. As a result, tricksters played jokes on anyone who continued to celebrate the New Year on the old date, April 1.

Celebrating April Fool's Day is popular in many countries. A French person fooled by a joke is called an April fish. Fish are said to be very young and inexperienced in April and caught easily by the fisherman's hook. In Scotland, a person fooled is called an April gowk<sup>43</sup> or cuckoo<sup>44</sup>. India celebrates the Feast of Hull, and the unsuspecting joke victim is called a Huli Fool.

—From *Wikipedia*

Excerpt 4

In China, women's good name and integrity<sup>45</sup> are well preserved. Their parents are in charge of their marriage. Men are brought up to be breadwinners while women are trained to be homemakers. Therefore, women do not have to devote themselves to socialization<sup>46</sup> for the sake of marriage or wear themselves out to find their own spouses<sup>47</sup>. Apparently, women's dignity<sup>48</sup> is highly respected in China. In contrast, women in the West make a point of seeking their spouses as soon as they come of age<sup>49</sup>. Their parents require them to learn music and dancing before allowing them to go out to socialize with men. As a result, those who are good at winning men's favor will get married first, while those who are inflexible and slow of speech, or reluctant to flatter others by humiliating<sup>50</sup> themselves will remain spinsters<sup>51</sup> all their life. But who is to blame for driving women to win the heart of men at the cost of their own dignity? What else but the free marriage tradition in the West!

This might sound a bit radical<sup>52</sup>, but I am confident that it is not groundless...

—From *Diary of an Overseas Student* (in Chinese) by Hu Shi

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<sup>43</sup> gowk *n.* a kind of bird 杜鹃鸟, 呆子 (隐喻)

<sup>44</sup> cuckoo *adj. slang* mad, foolish (俚)怪人的, 疯疯癫癫的

<sup>45</sup> integrity *n.* honesty, trustworthiness 正直, 诚实

<sup>46</sup> socialization *n.* the process of being made fit or trained for life in a society 社会化

<sup>47</sup> spouse *n.* a husband or wife 配偶 (指夫或妻)

<sup>48</sup> dignity *n.* calmness, formality, and seriousness of manner or style 庄严, 端庄, 尊严

<sup>49</sup> To come of age is to reach the particular age, usually 18 or 21, at which one becomes responsible in law for one's own actions, and one is allowed to vote, own property etc. 达到法定成年年龄

<sup>50</sup> humiliate *v.* to cause to feel ashamed or to lose the respect of others 使蒙羞, 使丢脸

<sup>51</sup> spinster *n.* a woman who is not married, especially a woman who is no longer young and who seems unlikely ever to get married 未婚女人, 老处女

<sup>52</sup> radical *adj.* (of a person's opinions) in a favor of thorough and complete change 激进的

## 2. Mini Lecture: An Overview of Expository Essays

Expository writing and speech surround us in our everyday lives. It is the type of writing that most of us encounter in our daily lives, such as non-fiction books, magazines, newspaper articles, user's manuals<sup>53</sup> or even recipes<sup>54</sup>. At school, students are required to submit essays and research reports as a means for their teachers to grade their progress. Finally, at work, people are required to produce business reports and memorandums<sup>55</sup>. In addition, oral expository presentations that are delivered to a group of people are commonly observed for academic and workplace activities. Therefore, it is important to learn to write expository essays for a variety of real world contexts.

### 2.1 Characteristics

Unlike descriptive essays which paint a picture with words, expository essays communicate knowledge or information and use details to explain processes and relationships. Usually, the readers do not have prior<sup>56</sup> knowledge of what is being discussed in the writing. Expository essays have three main characteristics.

- **Factual (基于事实的)**

Expository essays require a good understanding of the topic you are going to write about. To do so, you need to research the given topic by making use of all the resources available to gather all the information or facts about the topic. Take notes, and make yourself an expert. This is generally a weak area for Chinese students who have been trained to write test-oriented essays. When the process of researching the topic is skipped, students tend to appeal to their personal understanding or knowledge to fulfill the writing requirements. Consequently, their essays often lack the support of facts.

- **Orderly(有序的)**

The details of an expository essay have to be analyzed and put in a logical order. This calls for the ability to think analytically, which includes being able to stand back from the information and examine it in detail from many angles to make sure it is completely accurate<sup>57</sup>. The line of reasoning<sup>58</sup> will come up in the process of the analysis, with the thesis statement being followed by supporting details. These details can be put in sequence, cause and effect, problem and solution or process explanation, depending on the purpose of the author.

- **Objective(客观的)**

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<sup>53</sup> manual *n.* book giving information about how to do something, esp. how to use a machine 手册

<sup>54</sup> recipe *n.* a set of instructions for cooking a particular type of food 烹饪法, 食谱

<sup>55</sup> memorandum *n.* a note of something to be remembered 备忘录

<sup>56</sup> prior *adj.* coming or planned before 先前的, 居先的

<sup>57</sup> accurate *adj.* exactly correct 准确的, 精确的

<sup>58</sup> reasoning *n.* the use of one's reason 推理(方法), 推论

Expository essays use objective language, avoiding personal, subjective words such as ‘nice’, ‘wonderful’, ‘worthwhile’, ‘usual’ or ‘natural’, because the reader’s understanding of these words may be very different from that of the writer.

An expository essay is usually written in a formal, academic style: the language is different from the way you speak, or the way you write letters to a friend. It is not conversational, so it avoids abbreviations and contractions<sup>59</sup> as well as slang and colloquialisms<sup>60</sup> like “just the stuff”. In addition, writers are more cautious in their choice of words to indicate that they are aware that nothing is completely certain. Words and phrases that express this lack of certainty include the following:

*appears to; seems to; tends to; may; might; possibly; probably, apparently; generally; seemingly, in some cases, this..., the evidence suggests that...*

## 2.2 Qualities of Strong Expository Essays

|                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Clear                  | ⇒ | Easy to read  |
| Concise <sup>61</sup>  | ⇒ | Exact, specific, to the point                       |
| Inviting <sup>62</sup> | ⇒ | Connects with the audience in direct, creative ways |
| Informative            | ⇒ | Includes insights and ideas                         |

## 2.3 Types of Expository Essays

According to the content, expository essays can be divided into three main types:

### 1) “How to” type

The “how to” type explains **methods and processes**, such as a general explanation of how to do something, or step-by-step directions which are normally written in a chronological order (the order in which things happen). For example, how would you describe a popular children’s game “Dropping the Handkerchief” in China? The following excerpt introduces a traditional game played by people of the Arctic:

Members of the community grabbed hold of the edge of an animal skin. When everyone pulled at once, the center snapped up, propelling the person who sat or stood in the center of the skin into the air, just as if he or she were on a trampoline<sup>63</sup>. The leader of the most successful whaling<sup>64</sup> crew was often

<sup>59</sup> contraction *n.* a shorten form of a word or words 词的缩略形式

<sup>60</sup> colloquialism *n.* an expression used in informal or familiar conversation 俚语或俗语

<sup>61</sup> concise *adj.* short and clear, expressing a lot in a few words 简洁的, 简明的, 简要的

<sup>62</sup> inviting *adj.* attractive, encouraging one to take a suitable action 吸引人的

<sup>63</sup> trampoline *n.* 蹦蹦床



rewarded with the place on the skin; it was then a matter of pride to remain standing throughout the vigorous tossing.

—From *The Peoples of the Arctic* by Kevin Osborn

## 2) “What” type

The “what” type explains a thing, an incident, a phenomenon<sup>65</sup>, an idea, etc. and can be written in a particular order chosen by the writer. Examples are definitions of concepts (such as compassion, democracy, tolerance), description of activities or events, reports, book reviews<sup>66</sup>, and product introductions. You’re likely to include descriptive writing in most “what” type essays, but it is easy to give too much detail and forget the underlying purpose of the description.

At the Higher Education level you are unlikely to be asked to describe anything just for the sake of describing. There will be another purpose, such as explaining the methods used in the experiment, giving essential background information or summarizing the main points of a theory or an article you have read. The passage below classifies and defines the four causes of conflict:

There are four major causes of conflict. Some conflicts arise when people differ in what they believe to be right and wrong, good and bad, appropriate<sup>67</sup> and inappropriate. We call this type of conflict a values conflict. Conflicts can also be caused when people have different goals for themselves, for their families, or for a project on which they may be working. Disagreements or misunderstandings about what behavior, chores, or responsibilities are expected from someone in a family, in a group, or on the job are called role expectation conflicts. When two or more people compete for a position, a title, a reward, or a promotion, we say they are having a competition conflict

—Thomas Gordon

## 3) “Why” type

The “why” type explains reasons and opinions and is written in a particular order, such as from the core reasons to peripheral (less important) ones. A common assignment for college writing, this type of essays involves cause-and-effect situations and a strong logic in thinking. Therefore, further practice for writing cause-and-effect essays is provided in Unit 10 of this book. Here is a sample passage of the “why” type:

Almost half of the three million people who start their first year of college this month will drop out before they earn their degrees. For the students who do not make it to graduation, that lost opportunity can be expensive both in terms of

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<sup>64</sup> whaling *n.* the activity of hunting whales 捕鲸

<sup>65</sup> phenomenon *n.* a fact, event, type of behavior etc. 现象

<sup>66</sup> A book review (书评) should have four basic parts: an introduction that gives the basic information about the book and its author, a summary of the book (in your own words), an analysis of the book’s literary elements (with well-chosen examples or quotations), and your conclusion about the book’s worth.

<sup>67</sup> appropriate *adj.* correct or suitable for a particular situation or occasion 恰当的

the income they will lose over the course of their working lives and the debt many of them will have acquired in their thwarted<sup>68</sup> quests for a diploma.

So what is the problem? Much of the responsibility can be attributed to high schools that do not adequately prepare students for collegiate-level work. But just as substantial<sup>69</sup> is the fact that the pipeline that moves college students from admission to graduation is broken, most notably in the costs of higher education, for both the colleges and the students. During the high times not so long ago, colleges could afford to raise tuition because students had easy access to educational loans. Now that the economy has weakened, universities and undergraduates have been left gasping for ways to fill the budget gaps<sup>70</sup> in the most difficult financial climate in decades<sup>71</sup>.

—Adapted from *U.S. News & World Report*, September, 2009

## 2.4 Organizational Patterns

Details support, explain, or illustrate the main idea of a paragraph. They are facts that are essential to the main idea, and they provide information about and give meaning to the main idea. Important or supporting details may be organized in a number of different ways or patterns, depending on the writer's purposes. Some of the organizational patterns are provided in the table below. You may find that most of these organizational patterns are very familiar to you and that you may use them in your writing or speaking on a daily basis without considering them to be organizational patterns. Specific tools used in these patterns are examples, personal experiences *and* knowledge, statistics<sup>72</sup>, pictures, charts or diagrams<sup>73</sup>.

**Organizational Patterns for Expository Writing**

| Pattern               | Key Feature  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Illustration          | Using examples to illustrate a point   |
| Description           | Giving precise details about methods, essential background information and features or summarizing the main points for subsequent analysis   |
| Process<br>/ Sequence | Arranging the details in a time order (e.g. steps or stages), spatial <sup>74</sup> order (e.g. left to right, top to bottom, clockwise <sup>75</sup> , foreground to background), or order of importance. |

<sup>68</sup> thwart *v.* to prevent from happening or succeeding 阻碍, 阻挠

<sup>69</sup> substantial *adj.* significant, to have an important effect 重大的, 重要的

<sup>70</sup> the budget gap 预算赤字

<sup>71</sup> decade *n.* a period of ten years 十年, 十年期间

<sup>72</sup> statistics *n.* a collection of numbers which represent facts or measurements 统计数字

<sup>73</sup> diagram *n.* a plan or figure drawn to explain something 图表, 图解

<sup>74</sup> spatial *adj.* arranged within a certain space 空间的

<sup>75</sup> clockwise *adv.* in the same direction in which the hands of a clock move 顺时针的

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Comparison and Contrast | Explaining how two or more things are alike and/or how they are different.                                |
| Cause and Effect        | Exploring the reasons for something and examining the results of events or actions.                       |
| Problem and Solution    | Examining how conflicts or obstacles are overcome.  |
| Classification          | Putting people or things into a particular group because they have similar qualities.                     |
| Definition              | Explaining what a concept is and why it is important, often using examples to show what it exactly means. |

### 3. Practice

#### 3.1 Free-writing Activity

Write for 20-30 minutes on one of the following essay questions or topics:

1. Please briefly elaborate on one of your activities (extracurricular, personal activities, or work experience).
2. What is your favorite word and why?
3. Write a definition essay on a personal quality you admire.

**Follow-up question:** What explanation method is used in your writing?

#### 3.2 Revising Checklist

Rewrite the topic you have chosen and expand it into an essay (at least 200 words). Use the following peer-review form to collect some peer responses before you finalize it. Try to make your writing as interesting and effective as possible.

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the introduction, the body, and the conclusion of the essay. Is the opening paragraph interesting?</li> <li>2. What is the main idea of each paragraph? Does all the information support the main idea?</li> <li>3. Is the information presented in a logical order?</li> <li>4. Are explanations accurate, complete, and clear?</li> <li>5. Are there any unfamiliar terms that are not defined?</li> </ol> |
|---|

#### Practice A. Identify the organizational patterns of the following paragraphs.

1. To you, she may be just a poor stray cat, but to me, she is the most interesting “girl” I have ever met. When I met her, she was sitting by the road meowing for food and comfort. I rushed home and brought some food for her. How lovely! Her snow white fur was soft and glossy; her pale blue eyes expressed a bit of sorrow. She purred as I gave her some beef, and rubbed herself against me, but she did not eat! She just looked at me... I walked away and hid myself behind the fence. Then, she looked around suspiciously, picked up the whole beef, and scampered away. I followed her,

and guess what I found? A big nest of kittens protected by her love. Love is not only in humans; the purest love can also be found simply in a cat, a mother cat.

2. There are three things that the West has: freedom of the individual and this incessant study of the human mind – why we do things the way we do, what we are made of, and how we think and how we behave. The third one is, of course, music. Music, for whatever reason, has developed in the West a lot. Maybe because people in the West and in Europe are more intuitive, more right-sided in their brains. Maybe there are emotions and processes that are developed and need to be articulated and understood. I have tried to be aware of all these gifts, more or less, that are available now in the West.

3. We all go through three stages of development. The first one is when a child is told that he can be wonderful and have all these wonderful things in life: virtue and truth, compassion, altruism, and so forth. The next stage is when he realizes that the world is not actually like that, and neither is he, so he rebels. He thinks most people remain in that second stage of cynicism, rebellion and disbelief. Then he thinks that there is a fortunate group that says, well, I have to live in this world and contribute to it and be sensitive to mankind, so I will utilize all this good and bad in me.

4. I came back to my hometown and felt the wonderful white world. Everywhere were covered with the angels of winter. The trees were wearing blouses to take part in a wonderful party. The snowmen were smiling at everybody. For the whole vacation, I played with snow and ice. I like the feeling, because I want to be close to nature. No matter where I go, I will keep this beautiful feeling in my heart forever.

5. What impressed me most was the new relationship between my parents and me. We all acted so friendly and tolerant toward each other. I helped with the housework as often as possible, which I used to consider dull. And I was willing to take a walk along the riverside with my dad, joking and listening carefully to him all the way, which I used to consider a waste of time.

#### **4. Model Essay: *The Great Wall of China***

In China there is a saying: you won't be considered a great person until you've been to the Great Wall. Well, I visited the Great Wall last year. While it has not made me a great person yet, I do know its grand beauty and would like to share with you some of the wonders of the Wall.

The beauty of the Great Wall lies in its grand view as a whole, with its long arms resting on rolling hills and its towers peering across the valleys. The wall stretches across more than half of China, from the sea in the east, past Beijing, to Gansu Province in the west. With a total length of 4000 miles, it is the longest man-made construction in the world. If the Great Wall were translated to the United States and stretched out in a straight line, it would run from New York City,

completely across the Atlantic Ocean, past Spain, England, and France, and all the way to Berlin, Germany.

The Great Wall has undergone three major stages in its construction: from the first phase during the Qing Dynasty through the second phase during the Han dynasty, until the third phase during the Ming Dynasty. The beginning of the Great Wall, as we know it, dates to 221 B.C. (more than 2000 years ago), when Emperor Qin Shi Huang ordered his top general to lead 300,000 soldiers in rebuilding and connecting separate old walls that had been built by princes of warring states. In just 12 years, Qin had a 3000-mile wall, using primarily wood frames filled with stones and compacted earth. While the wall proved effective in keeping out the tribes who threatened to invade China from the North, it created dissent<sup>76</sup> within China. According to Arthur Waldron's "The Great Wall of China: From History to Myth," ditches<sup>77</sup> on the roadside were filled with corpses<sup>78</sup> of men who had been forced into construction of the Great Wall. Compelled into hard labor and burdened by heavy taxes to finance the project, the people grew unhappy, and a year after Qin's death, the peasants revolted<sup>79</sup>. While the wall stood, the empire<sup>80</sup> collapsed.

The second major period of construction for the Great Wall occurred during the Han Dynasty which lasted from 206 B.C. to 220 A.D. Emperor Wu Di ordered expansion of the existing wall to protect land won when his army defeated the Northern tribes. Workers added 3000 miles to the existing wall. They built wooden frames which they filled with willow reeds<sup>81</sup> and a mixture of fine gravel<sup>82</sup> and water. The ruins of the Han Wall are very different in construction and appearance from the Great Wall as it exists today.

The third major building period of the Great Wall occurred 1,100 years later during the Ming Dynasty. In 1368, during the first year of the Ming Dynasty, Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang ordered more expansion of the Wall. Subsequent Ming emperors strengthened and extended the Wall further until it reached its current length. Builders of the Ming Wall made three important architectural<sup>83</sup> advancements, which resulted in the distinctive<sup>84</sup> features of the Wall as it exists today. You can see those features especially well in this photograph. First, rather than using earth and stone, they used kiln-fired<sup>85</sup> bricks to create a stronger wall. Second, they erected more than 3000 beacon towers<sup>86</sup> to keep watch on the mountain passes for potential invaders. These towers rise from the Wall like mighty outposts, and are one of the most striking aspects of the Wall when you see them in person. Third, the Ming builders made the

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<sup>76</sup> dissent *n.* difference of opinion 异议

<sup>77</sup> ditch *n.* a V-or U-shaped passage cut into the ground for water to flow through 沟, 渠

<sup>78</sup> corpse *n.* a dead body 尸体

<sup>79</sup> revolt *v.* to take strong and violent action against those in power 造反, 起义, 反叛

<sup>80</sup> empire *n.* a group of countries all ruled by the ruler or government 帝国

<sup>81</sup> reed *n.* a grasslike plant that grows in wet places 芦苇, 苇草

<sup>82</sup> gravel *n.* small stones usually mixed with sand 碎石, 沙砾

<sup>83</sup> architectural *adj.* of architecture 建筑的, 建筑风格的, 建筑样式的

<sup>84</sup> distinctive *adj.* clearly making a person or thing as different from others 有特色的

<sup>85</sup> kiln-fired *adj.* 砖窑烧制的

<sup>86</sup> beacon tower *n.* 烽火台

Wall so large that it would be impossible to break through. In fact, the Wall is so wide that the soldiers could ride several horses abreast <sup>87</sup>along the top of the Wall.

In conclusion, the Great Wall of China enjoys a rich history. Built over a course of 2,500 years during the Qing, Han, and Ming Dynasties, it is a magnificent feat of human engineering. While the Wall no longer continues to defend China from invaders, it does continue to play a central role in Chinese culture and international identity<sup>88</sup>. Now that you know a little more about the Wall, I hope you will have a fuller appreciation of why it is regarded as great, not just in China, but throughout the world.

—Adapted from *The Art of Public Speaking* by Stephen Lucas

#### Questions for discussion

1. Which part of the essay impresses you the most? Why?
2. Does it match the characteristics and qualities for expository writing? Explain.
3. What is the organizational pattern of the essay?

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<sup>87</sup> abreast *adv.* next to one another and facing the same way 相并, 并肩, 并排

<sup>88</sup> identity *n.* who or what a particular person or thing is 身份, 本身, 本体

## Unit 2 Cause and Effect

*I have spent most of the day putting in a comma and the rest of the day taking it out.*

—Oscar Wilde

### 1. Appreciative Reading

Read and work in pairs to identify the organizational pattern in the following excerpt about “**the benefits of volunteering**”.

Although it may sound paradoxical, volunteering is one of the easiest ways to find a job. After graduating from a college or university, many get stuck in the situation of trying to find a job, but needing working experience, but you cannot obtain working experience because no one hires you. Statistics show about 73% of employers would rather prefer to hire a person with volunteering experience in the field than a person without one; 94% of employers share the belief that volunteering helps potential employees obtain new skills and diversifies their qualification, and thus are more prone to hiring people who volunteer. Respectively, 94% of those people believe that volunteering can add to one’s skills; 94% of people who were hired after a volunteering experience say such an experience aided them in getting their first job, or benefited them in other ways, such as quicker promotion, salary increases, or obtaining new skills. Having relevant work experience obtained during volunteering and specifying it in your CV can be a kickstarter for your career, because nowadays more and more employers tend to count volunteering as actual work experience. Besides, volunteering is a great option to explore possible career opportunities if you are unsure what you would like be doing for living. Through various programs, you can try yourself in a number of organizations, working on different problems, and on different positions, without having to do job-hunting, and then job-hopping. Therefore, if you still think you do not have time to volunteer because you need to look for a job, or because volunteering could be a nuisance to your duties, you might want to reconsider your opinion.

—Adapted from “*Benefits of Volunteering*”, World Volunteer Web. 14 Sept. 2016

### 2. Mini-Lecture: Writing Cause-and-effect Essays

Cause-and-effect essays explore the reasons for something and examine the results of events or actions. For college students in China, most of the causal essays explore the reasons for some social phenomena or personal opinions. Writing a cause-and-effect essay in English is an effective way of developing your analytical thinking. A strong cause-and-effect essay requires a clear understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships, a strong logic in the reasoning, and sound language

proficiency for the best effect.

## 2.1 Cause-and-effect Relationships

The method of cause-and-effect is much used in arranging supporting details because many events are connected by cause-and-effect relationships, and some are even connected by a chain of cause-and-effect relationships, in which the effects become causes of other effects. Writing cause-and-effect essays is a challenge because very often an effect may have many causes and a cause may have many effects. You have to be well-informed to be clear about all the possible cause-and-effect relationships.

Therefore, before starting to write, make sure a genuine cause-and-effect relationship exists. Remember that an event that came before another event has not necessarily caused it. Next, explore the types of cause-and-effect relationships present. Is there one cause for several effects? Are there several causes leading to a single effect? Or are there multiple<sup>89</sup> causes with multiple effects? Finally, choose a pattern of organization for your writing as suggested in section 2.2 below. After you have completed your draft, review it to be sure that the cause-and-effect relationships are clear.

## 2.2 Organizational Patterns

Depending on the purpose, the author often takes one of the following three organizational patterns for a cause-and-effect essay.

A *cause* essay begins with an introduction which briefly describes the *effect*, and then the entire body of the essay analyses the causes, each of which is generally discussed in one paragraph. An *effect* essay reverses<sup>90</sup> the procedure. It begins with an introduction describing the *cause*, and the rest of the paper discusses the effects. Sometimes an essay may contain both the causes and the effects of something; for example, when analyzing China's one-child policy, the writer may begin with the causes, explaining why the policy was adopted, and then discuss the effects of this policy.

Read the following two essays and decide what kind of pattern has been employed respectively.

### Essay 1

People are exposed to huge amounts of stress each day. Problems at work, dysfunctional relationships, insurance issues, taxes, children's misbehavior, and so on—these typical misfortunes can upset anyone. However, there is a psychological problem which can make one's life excessively complicated even on its own, without adding up the aforementioned factors. This problem is social anxiety; unfortunately, the modern world is permeated with these factors, which contribute to the

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<sup>89</sup> multiple *adj.* including many different parts, types, etc. 多样的, 多重的

<sup>90</sup> reverse *v.* to change round (usual order or position) 颠倒 (通常的次序或位置)



development of this psychological disorder.

Although the environment we live in definitely has an effect on how people feel, it is important to consider the biological factors leading to social anxiety disorder (SAD). In particular, biologists believe that SAD is related to a dysfunction of brain circuits responsible for regulating emotions and the “fight or flight” response center. In particular, there is a brain structure called amygdala; it is known to play a role in controlling the fear response. If a person has an overactive amygdala, they often display an excessive “fear” type of emotional response; therefore, whenever a situation occurs that can be interpreted as even slightly uncomfortable, a person with SAD will overreact in terms of fear. In addition, genetic factors should also be considered when studying the causes of SAD, because social anxiety may occur when it was also present in a first-degree relative: parent, sibling, or child.

Another significant group of factors responsible for the development of SAD is a group of environmental factors, including psychological climates. The first social interactions people make in their lives are usually connected to parents; from them, people learn basic social rules, what is acceptable and what is not, how it is like to be loved and to be ignored, and so on. Based on what happened in their childhood, people construct their personal systems of beliefs, including assumptions on what other people think about them. Commonly, if a child is loved and respected by parents, he or she later assumes that other people treat them in the same way; however, if a child is often criticized, it prevents him or her from developing a sense of personal value, and for such people, it is more difficult to become socially confident.

In addition, the way parents deal with different life situations also influences children’s personality. According to Cheryl Carmin, a psychiatrist and director of the clinical psychology training program at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, parents are often responsible for developing social anxiety in a child. “A parent or a significant adult figure may model that it’s appropriate to be anxious in situations where your performance will be evaluated [...]. For example, a parent who is commenting on being nervous about a performance review or who tells their child to not be anxious before their first “show and tell” may be priming the child to, in fact, be anxious in that situation. It’s also quite possible that any number of these factors interact,” says Dr. Carmin (Live Science).

The reasons why people develop social anxiety are different, but generally they can be divided into two categories: biological and environmental. A biological group of reasons includes dysfunctions in brain work, as well as excessive “fight or flight” reactions. Environmental factors include psychological influences caused by parents on their children, as well as role models which parents provide a form of teaching to their children consciously or unconsciously.

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“Social Anxiety Disorder (social Phobia).” Mayo Clinic. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 June 2015.

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“Understanding Social Anxiety and Shyness.” Overcoming. N.p., n.d. Web. 09

June 2015.

Zimmermann, Kim Ann. "Social Anxiety Disorder: Causes, Symptoms and Treatment." LiveScience. TechMedia Network, 28 Aug. 2014. Web. 09, June 2015.

## Essay 2

Everyone has at least once in their lives stayed awake throughout an entire night. Usually, being up all night is a choice of high school or college students—usually, for partying; excessively responsible workers and workaholics also tend to spend sleepless nights working on their tasks. It is widely believed that, unlike insomnia (which means a regular lack of sleep), a couple of sleepless nights now and then cannot do much harm. Unfortunately, this is not true—being awake for 24 hours even once in a long period of time has unpleasant effects on health.

Everyone knows that a night spent without sleep (or having little sleep) can result in fatigue and bad mood in the morning; many would consider this a small price for a night of fun or productive labor. However, several sleepless nights can cause more serious mental effects. In particular, your ability to focus and to make decisions will decrease significantly; having a foggy brain and unclear thinking, as well as falling asleep mid-day are also among the possible negative effects. However, in a long-term perspective, the health effects are much worse: proneness to obesity, high blood pressure, heart diseases, diabetes, and so on.

Actually, fatigue and sleepiness are just the tip of the iceberg. Specifically, experts from Sweden compared the effects of one-night sleep deprivation to a mild concussion. They conducted a study in which a group of healthy young men slept 8 hours one night, and then abstained from sleep another night. The blood samples taken from the men after the sleepless night revealed a 20% increase of neurochemical markers associated with brain cells damage (compared to the samples taken after the full rest night). "Dysfunctional sleep has been linked with a range of health problems, and it looks like that's because we're injuring our brain by not getting enough sleep," says W. Chris Winter, M.D., medical director of the Martha Jefferson Sleep Medicine Center in Charlottesville, Virginia.

At the same time, some results of the studies were surprising. According to new research, one night without sleep can increase the levels of dopamine in the brain—a substance responsible, in particular, for wakefulness. Scientists believe that by producing more dopamine, the brain tries to compensate for the negative effects of a sleepless night; still, according to the study, cognitive deficits caused by sleep deprivation remain significant. "[...] Dopamine may increase after sleep deprivation as a compensatory response to the effects of increased sleep drive in the brain," says David Dinges, PhD, at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

Obviously, abstaining from sleep has no positive effects on the human body. One-night deprivation of sleep results in fatigue and irritability; several sleepless nights affect one's ability to concentrate and make decisions. Swedish experts compared the negative effects of the lack of sleep to a mild concussion, and although studies show that the brain tries to compensate the lack of sleep by producing more dopamine, it is still not enough to compensate the harm dealt. So, no matter what your

reasons are to stay awake for a prolonged time, make sure to have a normal 8 hours sleep.

References:

Girdwain, Jessica. "The Scary Side Effect of One Sleepless Night." *Men's Health*. N.p., 12 Jan. 2014. Web. 11 Jan. 2016.

"Why Lack of Sleep Is Bad for Your Health." NHS. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Jan. 2016.

"One Sleepless Night Increases Dopamine" In *The Human Brain*, Science Daily, 21 Aug. 2008. Web. 11 Jan. 2016.

Clearly, the above two samples were well-organized five-paragraph essays, with three body paragraphs each describing the causes or effects of different issues.

In writing cause-and-effect essays, some transitions can be used to indicate cause-effect relationships, such as *because*, *since*, *so*, *as a result*, *as a consequence*, *cause*, *result in*, *lead to*. However, not all the causes are stated directly.

### 3. Writing Awareness: Opinions and Facts

Good writers must be able to determine whether the information they are providing is factual or not. One problem typical of the English essays by college students (as can be seen from the sample essays below) is that students often present opinions as though they are facts. But opinions are not facts; they are based on attitudes or feelings and can vary from individual to individual. Opinions cannot be conclusively<sup>91</sup> proven right or wrong. Facts, on the other hand, do not change from person to person. Facts are things that exist and can be proven true. An example of facts: *Beijing is the Capital of China*. An example of opinions: *Beijing is a charming city*.

You must do research to find facts that will support your opinions or ideas. The supporting materials can be examples, statistics, or testimony<sup>92</sup>. Examples can be brief, extended (like a brief account of a story), or even imaginary. Statistics are also an effective way to support the ideas, but the source of statistics should be identified. Statistics should be used sparingly<sup>93</sup> because cluttering<sup>94</sup> an essay with too many numbers can make it dull and uninteresting. You must evaluate their supporting materials to make sure that the materials are accurate, relevant and come from reliable sources.

## 4. Practice

### 4.1 Free-writing Activity

Write for 20-30 minutes on one of the following topics.

1. The effects of nomophobia (no mobile phone phobia) on modern people
2. The causes of students' heavy dependence on social networks

Follow-up question: What organizational pattern is used in your writing?

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<sup>91</sup> conclusively *adj.* putting an end to doubt or uncertainty 结论性地, 决定性地

<sup>92</sup> testimony *n.* a formal statement that something is true, as made by a witness in a court 证词

<sup>93</sup> sparingly *adv.* using or giving little 节约地, 节俭地

<sup>94</sup> clutter *v.* to make untidy or confused 使---混乱, 使---杂乱

## 4.2 Revising Checklist

Rewrite the topic you have chosen and expand it into an essay (no less than 200 words). Go through the checklist below to revise your first draft; collect some peer responses before you finish your final draft. Try to make your writing as interesting and effective as possible.

1. Is there a thesis statement in the opening paragraph?
2. Do the stated cause-and-effect relationships exist?
3. Are opinions supported by facts?
4. Are there clear connections between ideas?
5. Are transitions used to make the cause-and-effect relationships clear: *so, if, then, since, as a result*?
6. Does the ending sum up the thesis clearly and effectively?

## 4.3. Read the text and fill in the cause and effect table.

### Climate

For the last hundred years the climate has been growing much warmer. This has had a number of different effects. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, glaciers have been melting very rapidly. For example, the Muir Glacier in Alaska has retreated two miles in ten years. Secondly, rising temperatures have been causing the snowline to retreat on mountains all over the world. In Peru, for example, it has risen as much as 2700 feet in 60 years.

As a result of this, vegetation has also been changing. In Canada, the agricultural cropline has shifted 50 to 100 miles northward. In the same way cool-climate trees like birches and spruce have been dying over large areas of Eastern Canada. In Sweden the treeline has moved up the mountains by as much as 65 feet since 1930.

The distribution of wildlife has also been affected, many European animals moving northwards into Scandinavia. Since 1918, 25 new species of birds have been seen in Greenland, and in the United States birds have moved their nests to the north.

Finally, the sea has been rising at a rapidly increasing rate, largely due, as was mentioned above, to the melting of glaciers. In the last 18 years it has risen by about six inches, which is about four times the average rate of rise over the last 9000 years

| Cause                                    | Connective/<br>marker | Effect   |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| The climate has been growing much warmer | (different effects)   | 1 Glaciers have been melting very rapidly, e.g. the Muir Glacier in Alaska has retreated 2 miles in 10 years |
|  |                       |  |
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#### 4.4. Exercises

**Look at Table:** *Accidents in a large British city (1996) carefully. Complete the description that follows of the information it contains. In the spaces write a suitable cause-effect connective.*

| Main accident causes |  | Number of accidents 1996 | Percentage rise (+)/fall (-) compared with 1995 |
|----------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| 1                    | Drivers turning right without due care       | 593                      | +12%  |
| 2                    | Pedestrians crossing roads carelessly        | 402                      | +7%   |
| 3                    | Drivers failing to give a signal             | 231                      | -3%   |
| 4                    | Drivers losing control of vehicles           | 312                      | +40%  |
| 5                    | Drivers improperly overtaking other vehicles | 173                      | -10%  |
| 6                    | Drivers misjudging distances                 | 96                       | -20%  |

*Table: Accidents in a large British city (1996)*

Firstly, turning right without due care (1)\_\_\_\_\_593 accidents in 1996. Secondly, (2)\_\_\_\_\_ pedestrians crossed roads carelessly, 402 accidents occurred. Next, although there was 3% decrease in drivers failing to give a signal, nevertheless there were still 231accidents (3) \_\_\_\_\_ this. In 1996, 40% more drivers than in 1995 lost control of vehicles. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ there were 312 accidents. In fifth place came drivers improperly overtaking other vehicles: these (5)\_\_\_\_\_ 173 accidents. Finally, there was a 20% fall in drivers misjudging distances; however, they were still the (6)\_\_\_\_\_ 96 accidents.

## 5. Model Essay

### Unsinkable or unthinkable?

On the evening of April 14, 1912, on its maiden voyage, the “unsinkable” luxury liner the Titanic struck an iceberg in the freezing waters of the North Atlantic. Within a few hours the ship sank, taking with it some fifteen hundred lives. Why did so many people die, particularly when there was another ship within ten miles? Subsequent investigation by national and international agencies showed that the three major reasons the ship sank were: an insufficiently trained crew, limited lifesaving facilities, and poor telecommunication services.

One reason so many people died in the Titanic tragedy was that the crew was insufficiently trained for such an emergency. In the face of grave danger, evidently the crew of the Titanic was simply unable to meet the situation. Many of the lifeboats left the ship only half full and others could have taken several more people. The passengers were not informed of the imminent danger upon impact with the iceberg, investigation suggested, and the officers deliberately withheld their knowledge of the certain sinking of the ocean liner. Therefore, when lifesaving maneuvers were finally begun, many passengers were unprepared for the seriousness of the moment. Further indication of poor crew leadership was that when the Titanic disappeared into the ocean, only one lifeboat went back to pick up survivors.

Another reason so many people lost their lives was that the ship was not equipped with enough lifeboats. Although hundreds of millions of dollars had been spent in decorating the ship with palm gardens, Turkish baths, and even squash courts, the most luxurious liner afloat was lacking the vitally important essentials of lifesaving equipment. Records reveal that the Titanic carried only sixteen wooden lifeboats, capable of carrying fewer than twelve hundred persons. With a passenger and crew list of exceeding twenty-two hundred, there were at least a thousand individuals unprovided for in a possible sea disaster --- even if every lifeboat was filled to capacity.

Undoubtedly, however, the primary reason that so many people aboard the Titanic died was that the international radio service was not perfected. Within ten miles of the Titanic was the Californian, which could have reached the Titanic before she sank and rescued all of her passengers. When the Titanic sent out emergency calls near midnight, the radio operator of the Californian had already gone to bed. A crew member, however, was still in the radio room and picked up the signals. Not realizing that they were distress signals from a ship nearby, the crew member decided not to wake up the radio operator to receive the message. At that time there were no international maritime regulations requiring a radio operator to be on duty twenty four hours a day.

Therefore it can be seen that the great ship Titanic sank due to its unqualified crew, its inadequate number of lifeboats, and an imperfected international radio system. Hopefully, this kind of tragedy will never happen again.

## Unit 3 Comparison and Contrast

*The different between the right word and the almost-right word is as great as that between lightning and the lightning bug.*

— Mark Twain

### 1. Appreciative Reading

Read the following essay and work out an outline of the structure.

#### **Eating and Reading**

As a creature, I eat; as a man, I read. Although one action is to meet the primary need of my body and the other is to satisfy the intellectual need of my mind, they are in a way quite similar.

To keep ourselves alive, we need all kinds of nutrition. Eating is the most important way by which we can get starch, protein, vitamin, sugar, fat, and some trace elements. On the other hand, we eat not only because we have to do so, but also because we enjoy doing so. Having satisfied our hunger, eating can then be a kind of enjoyment. The color, the smell, and the taste of the food are considered as important as its nutritive value. Very often we eat some food not because it is nourishing but simply because we like it. This partiality for certain food will not affect our health, so long as we do not indulge heavily in it. There are many people, however, who do not eat the food they dislike and consequently suffer from malnutrition. So, for the sake of health, we have to eat some food even though we may not like it.

Similarly, to enrich our minds, we need information and knowledge which can be obtained through reading. Reading is one of the most important ways of learning. Without reading our minds will become empty like that of an animal. Sometimes, we take reading as a pastime, and we relax and learn at the same time. Since recreation is involved, we will naturally have a partiality for some particular kinds of books, just as we do for certain kind of food. It is all right if we read more books on history than books on literature. But suppose we focus on one subject only and pay no attention to anything else, we will face the problem of imbalance. Nutrition for our minds should be as comprehensive as the nutrition for our bodies. An educated person is a person who knows a lot of things about something and something about a lot of things. One's mind needs all kinds of nourishment, whether they are to one's liking or not.

Besides, there are other similarities between eating and reading. We should not eat too much without digesting and assimilating, nor should we read too much without understanding and remembering. While we are eating, we should leave out the rotten part of the food which will do harm to our health; and while we are reading, we should be able to reject the poisonous content in a book, if any, for it will poison our minds.

So, eat sensibly and read sensibly to give yourself a strong body and a healthy mind.

## 2. Mini-Lecture: *Comparison and Contrast Essays*

Throughout our lives we are bombarded with countless pieces of information from newspapers, television, radio, and personal experiences. Yet somehow we must make sense of the jumbled<sup>95</sup> facts and figures that surround us. One way is to compare and contrast, as when we make personal decisions, asking ourselves whether one option is better than another. We arrive at the conclusion by a method of thinking called comparison and contrast. A comparison shows how two or more similar things are alike, and a contrast shows how they are different.

People make comparisons and contrasts every day, though they may not be aware of it. For example, you may ask yourself questions like “Which dictionary shall I buy?” or “Which major or job might suit me?” or “Which place should I visit on holiday, the mountain or the beach?” Even a little child might compare a mother’s behavior by asking “Why can a child’s mother be so nice to the other mother’s child?” Similarly, when you write an essay, you will often make comparisons and contrasts.

### 2.1 The Purposes of Comparison and Contrast

Below are three major purposes of comparison and contrast, followed by an example of a model paragraph.

1. To present information about something unfamiliar by comparing it with something familiar.
2. To show the superiority of one thing by comparing it with another.
3. To show the reader the similarities and differences of two things to help the reader understand or evaluate them.

#### Example 1

**It’s easier to walk away from a relationship if two people live together instead of getting married.** Financial responsibilities are one big difference. A couple living together have their own financial responsibilities and a shared account with money. A single person has his or her own credit rating<sup>96</sup>, credit cards, and loans, whereas a married couple usually share credit cards and loans, and their credit ratings go together. Money matters play a significant role in relationships and may keep people together. Another difference between living together and being married is children. People who live together are less likely to have children. For that reason, they will find it easier to leave a relationship. In contrast, married people with children often stay together “for the kids’ sake.” Religion is another important matter. A couple will probably be condemned by their relatives for living together; married couples, in contrast, are more likely to have religion on their side. They usually have the same religious belief. If not, at least no one can say they are “living in sin.” The influence of religion can do a lot

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<sup>95</sup> jumbled *adj.* 混乱的, 乱七八糟的

<sup>96</sup> Credit rating is an estimate of the ability of a person or organization to fulfill their financial commitments, based on previous dealings. 信誉评价; 信誉评级



to keep people together. Finally, legal<sup>97</sup> matters also come into this discussion. Ending a marriage is a complicated process. Papers have to be filed; a divorce has to take place. Splitting up while living together is much easier: no papers, no divorce. Say what you will, there are more things than love keeping married people together. If you think staying together is good, you should get married.

—From *Destination* by Richard E. Bailey & Linda Denstaed

After reading the above paragraph that compares living together and getting married, which of the purposes listed in the box do you think fits the contrast? Have you achieved a better understanding of the two life styles because of the comparison? Clearly, the specific purpose of the comparison is to inform the readers of the advantage of getting married over living together in keeping a stable relationship.

## 2.2 Basis of Comparison

It is important to identify the basis of comparison before drafting a comparison or contrast essay. When two things are very similar, it is the contrast that is worth writing about. And when they are not very much alike, you should highlight similarities. In either case, you should think about each point to decide whether it is significant or not. For instance, to find out the similarity between two wedding photos, one taken in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the other in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, you will select significant points, such as the expressions in the new couple's eyes longing for a happy life. You would not say that both photos are of two people, because it is meaningless.

When you decide on the points of comparison, make sure that you treat the same number of elements for each subject you discuss. The following is a framework to help you outline your essay. Notice the writer may focus only on similarities or differences depending on the purpose of his writing.

### Framework for a Comparison (or Contrast) Essay

| Introduction (with the theme implied) |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Areas to be compared or contrasted    | A | B |
| Similarities                          |   |   |
| 1                                     |   |   |
| 2                                     |   |   |
| 3                                     |   |   |
| ...                                   |   |   |
| Differences                           |   |   |
| 1                                     |   |   |
| 2                                     |   |   |
| 3                                     |   |   |
| ...                                   |   |   |

<sup>97</sup> legal *adj.* of or using the law (有关) 法律的

Significance of similarities or differences (How do I decide whether something is significant?)

Conclusion (Draw the reader's attention to the main points.)

## 2.3 Organizational Patterns

Details in a comparison (or contrast) essay may be arranged either in subject-by-subject (S-b-S) or point-by-point (P-b-P) pattern (Refer to the two boxes below for illustration). Sometimes, both patterns are adopted in the same essay when both similarities and differences are highlighted. Subject-by-subject comparison discusses each subject separately, devoting one or more paragraphs to *subject A* and then the same number to *subject B*. The S-b-S pattern often presents points in the order of increasing significance to hold your reader's interest; it is usually used only for short essays.

### Subject by Subject Pattern

**Thesis:** A is a much better restaurant than B because of its superior food, service, and environment.

I. Restaurant A

A. Food

B. Service

C. Environment

II. Restaurant B

A. Food

B. Service

C. Environment

For point-by-point comparison, you discuss one common element in each section, making your points about *subject A* and *subject B* in turn. To be well balanced, each point made about *subject A* is compared with the point made about *subject B*.

### Point by Point Pattern

**Thesis:** A is a much better restaurant than B because of its superior food, service, and environment.

I. Food

A. Sea Food World

B. Roast Goose City

II. Service

A. Sea Food World

B. Roast Goose City

III. Environment

A. Sea Food World

B. Roast Goose City

Now, read the following two samples and discuss in pairs about the effect of different patterns.

(1) My hometown and my college town have several things in common. First, both are small rural communities. For example, my hometown, Gridlock, has a population of only about 10,000 people. Similarly, my college town, Subnormal, consists of about 11,000 local residents. This population swells to 15,000 people when the college students are attending classes. A second way in which these two towns are similar is that they are both located in rural areas. Gridlock is surrounded by many acres of farmland which is devoted mainly to growing corn and soybeans. In the same way, Subnormal lies in the center of farmland which is used to raise hogs and cattle. Thirdly, these towns are similar in that they contain college campuses. Gridlock, for example, is home to Neutron College, which is famous for its Agricultural Economics program as well as for its annual Corn-Watching Festival. Likewise, the town of Subnormal boasts the beautiful campus of Quark College, which is well known for its Agricultural Engineering department and also for its yearly Hog-Calling Contest.

(2) My hometown and my college town are similar in several ways. First, my hometown, Gridlock, is a small town. It has a population of only about 10,000 people. Located in a rural area, Gridlock is surrounded by many acres of farmland which are devoted mainly to growing corn and soybeans. Gridlock also contains a college campus, Neutron College, which is famous for its Agricultural Economics program as well as for its annual Corn-Watching Festival. As for my college town, Subnormal, it too is small, having a population of about 11,000 local residents, which swells to 15,000 people when students from the nearby college are attending classes. Like Gridlock, Subnormal lies in the center of farmland which is used to raise hogs and cattle. Finally, Subnormal is similar to Gridlock in that it also boasts a beautiful college campus, called Quark College. This college is well known for its Agricultural Engineering department and also for its yearly Hog-Calling Contest.

One important principle in writing comparison-and-contrast essays is that the points of comparison or contrast should be balanced; the two items being compared or contrasted are to be given equal treatment. In the subject-by-subject pattern, both parts are about equal in length (or preferably have the same number of paragraphs) and the second part deals with each point brought up in the first part. Besides, each point of each part must also be discussed and arranged in the same order.

A common fault in comparison/contrast is to discuss one item more fully or in more aspects than the other. Likewise, in a point-by-point pattern, the writer should follow a consistent order. To be well balanced, each point he makes about *subject A* he should also make about *subject B*.

### 3. Writing Awareness: *The Significance of Comparison*

It is crucial to be clear about the significance of your comparison or contrast before drafting such essays; otherwise, your essay will sound like a shopping list, without a focus. The significance determines the theme of your essay. For example, if you write an essay comparing print book and Ebooks, you need to establish a meaningful focus for a specific purpose.

Read the following excerpt and then answer two questions: (1) Does the author focus on differences or similarities? (2) What is the purpose of writer?

#### Example 2

One major decision which faces the American student ready to begin higher education is the choice of attending a large university or a small college. The large university provides a wide range of specialized departments, as well as numerous courses within such departments. The small college, however, generally provides a limited number of courses and specializations but offers a better student-faculty ratio, thus permitting individualized attention to students. Because of its large, cosmopolitan student body (often exceeding 20,000) the university exposes its students to many different cultural, social, and extra-curricular programs. On the other hand, the smaller, more homogeneous<sup>98</sup> student body of the small college affords greater opportunities for direct involvement and individual participation in such activities. Finally, the university closely approximates<sup>99</sup> the real world; it provides a relaxed, impersonal, and sometimes anonymous existence. In contrast, the intimate atmosphere of the small college allows the student four years of structured living in which to contemplate<sup>100</sup> and prepare for the real world. In making his choice among educational institutions the student must, therefore, consider many factors.

—From *From Paragraph to Essay* by Maurice Imhoof & Herman Hudson

Therefore, do remember to be sure of the significance of your comparing or contrasting before drafting your essay. Refer to the framework in Section 2.2 to practice outlining for your essay.

## 4. Writing Activities

### 4.1 Free-writing Activity

Practice A. Write an essay comparing any two people or things you are interested in, such as:

1. Two friends/Two teachers
2. Two attitudes towards life
3. Two ways of travel

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<sup>98</sup> homogeneous *adj.* of the same kind; alike 同种的; 相似的

<sup>99</sup> To approximate is to come near (to) in amount, nature, etc. 接近, 近似

<sup>100</sup> To contemplate is to think deeply and thoughtfully. 深思, 细想, 仔细考虑

4. Life in the countryside/Small cities vs. Life in Big Cities
5. Shopping online vs. Shopping in malls
6. Two lifestyles (e.g. Living at home vs. living in dorm)
7. High school life vs. university life
8. Men vs women in work style/speech

Follow-up question: What is the theme of your essay?

Practice B. Choose an appropriate conjunction from the box below, and fill in each of the blanks in the two paragraphs.

|                           |                 |                           |             |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| <b>in the same way</b>    | <b>likewise</b> | <b>another similarity</b> |             |
| <b>whereas</b>            | <b>too</b>      | <b>While</b>              | <b>Both</b> |
| <b>another difference</b> | <b>but</b>      | <b>on the other hand</b>  |             |

**A** Even though Arizona and Rhode Island are both states of the US, they are different in many ways. For example, the physical size of each state is different.

Arizona is large, having an area of 114,000 square miles,  Rhode Island is only about a tenth the size, having an area of only 1,214 square miles.  is in the size of the population of each state. Arizona has about four million people living in it,  Rhode Island has less than one million. The two states also differ in the kinds of natural environments that each has. For example, Arizona is a very dry state, consisting of large desert areas that do not receive much rainfall every year. , Rhode Island is located in a temperate zone and receives an average of 44 inches of rain per year. In addition,  Arizona is a landlocked state and thus has no seashore, Rhode Island lies on the Atlantic Ocean and does have a significant coastline.

**B** Even though we come from different cultures, my wife and I are alike in several ways. For one thing, we are  thirty-two years old. In fact, our birthdays are in the same month, hers on July 10 and mine on July 20.  is that we both grew up in large cities. Helene was born and raised in Paris and I come from Yokohama. Third, our hobbies are alike, . My wife devotes a lot of her free time to playing jazz piano. , I like to spend time after work strumming my guitar. A more important similarity concerns our values. For

example, Helene has strong opinions about educating our children and raising them to know right from wrong. I feel 10. Our children should receive a good education and also have strong moral training.

—From *College English* by Li Yanglong

## 5. Model Essays

### Model essay 1

#### Why E-books are Preferable to Print

Modern digital technologies today can easily substitute almost any analogue thing that people had been using for decades or even centuries. Bulky vinyl players have turned into tiny iPods, huge TV-sets have become super-flat plasma wall panels, phones are getting more and more impossible to distinguish from pocket computers, and so on. Books have also undergone such a transformation, and today many people prefer using an electronic book, or e-book, rather than a regular printed one. Why? Because e-books are in every possible way better than printed books, no matter what the antique lovers say.

The most obvious advantage is portability. If you have been a book-lover for a long time, you most likely had to carry a book or two with you wherever you go. If you could afford carrying a backpack around, it was not a problem; however, if you are a lady or a clerk in some serious corporation, most likely you either had to fit a book into your purse or folder, or leave it at home. On the other hand, any modern e-book is almost flat and light weight, so you can easily carry one – even in your pocket. You can read it in any position, and take it anywhere with you. By the way, try to make it comfortable to read a printed book while lying on your side – it is almost impossible (Snarkynomad.com). With an e-book device, all your problems with a book's weight and shape are solved.

The next reason why e-books are more preferable is that even a cheap e-book device allows one to carry the whole Library of Congress in your pocket. Depending on an e-book device's memory capacity, you can store gigabytes of data on your device. The file format is usually not a problem: many e-book devices support all popular formats of electronic books such as fb2, djvu, pdf, azw, kfx, and so on.

Also, electronic books are reasonably cheaper than printed ones, and the price seriously depends on which store you buy them at, so in fact you can get a lot of nice books for a humble price. Of course, a device costs more than a book, but this difference in prices pays off quickly (Spreeder.com).

We live in an age when ecological problems have turned from unproven scientific hypotheses to a disturbing reality. Vanishing of the Amazonian rainforests, massive deforestation all over the planet, and the extinction of species of plants are only some parts of a larger ecological problem. The industry of book printing contributes significantly to global warming, because for the paper on which books are printed, they need to cut down trees. There are many books printed on recycled paper as well, but their overall percentage is tiny. Therefore, by preferring an e-book over a printed one, a customer can actively contribute to the matter of saving trees. The less

print books you buy, the more trees you help to save (Epublishers Weekly).

If you like old things, then you most likely stand for print books. However, the majority of rational people today stand for e-books, and there exist several strong reasons for this. E-books not only help to save the environment (since they do not need paper to be printed on), but they also take less space, are cheaper, and allow owners to carry entire libraries in their pockets, wherever they would go. All this proves that choosing an e-book over a printed one is a truly wise and reasonable decision.

#### References

“Ebooks Save Millions of Trees: 10 Ideas For Sustainable Publishing.”Epublishers Weekly. N.p., 28 Sept. 2009. Web. 28 Sept. 2015.

“10 Reasons Why You Might like Ebooks Better than Paper.” Snarky Nomad. N.p., 07 Mar. 2015. Web. 28 Sept. 2015.

“Ebooks VS Printed Books: Which Is Preferred Now?” Spreeder. N.p., n.d. Web. 28 Sept. 2015.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. What major differences are discussed by the author?
2. Are there any similarities between these kinds of books?
3. What is the purpose of comparison and contrast of Ebooks and print books?
4. What other expository patterns are employed in the essay?

#### Model essay 2

##### **Travelling Vacations vs. Staycations**

Staycations have become the most popular alternative to vacation travelling. This is most likely due to the fact that staying at home for the holidays is cheaper, safer and easier (Richards, Temptations of Travelling). It only stands to reason that back-porch vacations and poolside holidays are becoming the new trend for middle-class Americans, especially in light of the recent economic crisis. However, there are some specific reasons why travelling will remain a better alternative, despite the cost issues and any possible inconveniences.

Going on a journey involves experiencing your own senses: seeing, touching, hearing and smelling the new, unusual and unique atmosphere of places you visit while on vacation. If someone described to you what a new ice-cream flavor tastes like using a hundred words, but instead you could choose to simply try it yourself, would you have preferred the description or the experience of your own? It is the same with travelling. Unlike watching the Discovery Channel or National Geographic, reading about exotic places on somebody’s blog and watching even the most colorful and fun podcasts about travelling, actually visiting the place is ten times more powerful of an experience. In addition, you get to form your own opinion about what you see instead of just watching it through the eyes of a documentary director or through the lens of a photographer.

Leaving to involve yourself in an adventure is arguably the best source of

inspiration one could think of. Even if you have been to the chosen location for travel a few times already, the next time you visit it the impressions you receive can be different, have a new spice or a fresh hint, since the weather, your mood and the people you come across will be distinctive, and your impression of the place can change radically or become fuller and more holistic. To me, travelling brings new discoveries, whether they are revelations of environments or discoveries within myself. In this regard, travelling can be the best cure for depression, the feeling of inner perplexity and fears for what the future may bring and where you are heading. Sometimes, a vacation to a place you have never been before or know little about can do more than just broaden your knowledge and inspire new emotions. It can change your whole life perspective and cause you to revise your life values (Howards, Destination Joy). It is no wonder that many people return from vacations as completely new persons and never come back to their old lifestyles.

Travelling means meeting new people. Unlike staycations that normally revolve around the same group of people you are already on good terms with, travelling brings together at times absolutely different people, from various cultures and backgrounds. Travelling is a chance to get to know others better and to learn to adjust to new traditions and other peoples' lifestyle (Opus, The Social Road). While on the road, you can meet someone you would never get a chance to bump into if you stayed within your comfort zone, at home or with a group of people you have known for ages. Travelling is a chance to make new friends and change the cycle of the everyday routine that you have gotten trapped in over the years.

There is a place for discussion of whether travelling is worth the money you will spend on it or is it simply better to save up, spend your vacation at home and stay within your comfort zone. Travelling may seem like a challenge at times – it needs a great deal of planning, a decent budget, and a certain enthusiasm and willingness to challenge yourself. But those who have the courage to follow their dreams and overcome obstacles will find a way to pursue a hobby they like. And if you feel that overwhelming desire to see a place far away, do not let the fears take over your dream. Having once traveled, you will most likely not ask yourself whether to spend your vacation at home or travel – staycations will simply not be an option.

References:

1. Richards, Helen. Temptations of Travelling (2008). The Cincinnati Revelry.
2. Howards, Faiz. Destination Joy (2007). Lenguin Press.
3. Opus, Samuel. The Social Road (2012). The South Orange Country Observer.

### **Model essay 3**

#### **The Handsome and Deformed Leg**

Benjamin Franklin



There are two types of people in the world. Although they have equal degrees of health and wealth and the other comforts of life, one becomes happy, the other becomes miserable. This arises from their different ways in which they consider things, persons and events, and the resulting effects upon their minds.

In whatever situation men can be placed, they may find conveniences and inconveniences. In whatever company, they may find persons and conversations more or less pleasing. At whatever table they may find good meat and drinks of better and worse taste, dishes better or worse prepared. In whatever climate, they may find good and bad weather. Under whatever government, they may find good and bad laws and good and bad administration of these laws. In every poem or work of genius, they may see beauties and faults. In almost every face and every person, they may discover fine features and defects, good and bad qualities.

Under these circumstances, the people who are to be happy fix their attention on the conveniences of things, the pleasant parts of conversation, the well "prepared dishes, the goodness of the wines, the fine weather. They enjoy all with cheerful things. Those who are to be unhappy think and speak only of the contraries. Hence they are continually discontented themselves. By their remarks, they sour the pleasures of society, offend many people, and make themselves disagreeable everywhere. If this turn of mind was founded in nature, such unhappy persons would be the more to be pitied. The disposition to criticize and be disgusted is perhaps taken up originally by imitation. It grows into a habit, unknown to his processor. The habit may be strong, but it may be cured when those who have it are convinced of its bad effects on their congeniality. I hope this little admonition may be of service to them and help them change this habit. Although in fact it is chiefly an act of imagination, it has serious consequences in life, as it brings on real grief and misfortune. These people offend many others, nobody loves them, and no one treats them with more than the most common civility and respect, and scarcely that. This frequently puts them out of humor and draws them into disputes. If they aim at obtaining some advantage in rank or fortune, nobody wishes them success. Nor will anyone stir a step, or speak a word to favor their ambitions. The people should change this bad habit and condescend to be pleased with what is pleasing, without fretting themselves and other. If they do not, it will be good for others to avoid an acquaintance with them. Otherwise, it can be disagreeable, and sometimes very inconvenient, particularly when one becomes entangled in their quarrels.

An old philosophical friend of mine grew very cautious from experience, and carefully avoided any contact with such people. He had a thermometer to show him the temperature, and a barometer to show when the weather was likely to prove good or bad. Since there is no instrument to discover at first sight this unpleasing disposition in a person, he made use of his legs. One of his legs was remarkably handsome, the other, by some accident crooked and deformed. If a stranger looked at his ugly leg more than his handsome one, he doubted him. If he spoke of it, and took no notice of the handsome leg, my friend had sufficient reason not to bother with him any longer.

Not everyone has this two-legged instrument, but everyone, with a little attention,

may observe signs of that kind of fault-finding disposition and make the same resolution to avoid those infected with it. I therefore advise these critical, argumentative, discontented, unhappy people, that if they wish to be loved and respected by others, and happy in themselves, they should stop looking at the ugly leg.

## Unit 4 Essays Based on Graphics

*You can't change the direction of the wind but you can change the sail.*

—John F. Kennedy

### 1. Appreciative Reading

Analytical writing with data often helps readers comprehend the messages conveyed in the visual forms more easily and clearly. Read the following passages and discuss in pairs the characteristics of data description.

#### Excerpt 1

According to a recent survey conducted by the Beijing-based Chinese Mainland Marketing Research Company, the amount of cash being spent each month on the 4.41 million children aged between 0 to 12 in the five cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu and Xi'an has reached as much as 4 billion yuan (US\$ 481 million). The survey also found that the amount of cash spent on education is more than 21 percent of the total amount, and is going up rapidly. But money spent on food and clothes is still where the biggest proportion<sup>101</sup> of cash goes, accounting for more than 64 per cent of the total.

—From *China Daily*, June 11, 2001

#### Excerpt 2

A questionnaire issued jointly by Shanghai-based magazine *Attractive Power* and the French *Science and Life*, on young people's ideals revealed a great difference between the personal ambitions of young Chinese and French people. Those interviewed were in the 12-18 age range. Results showed that 52 percent of young French people regard a good family life as their ultimate<sup>102</sup> ambition, while to 53 percent of their Chinese counterparts a successful career is the main goal, and a further 41 percent see achieving millionaire status as the pinnacle<sup>103</sup> of success. Fan Lizhu of Fudan University's Sociology Department commented that the Chinese choices in this survey reflect that in Chinese society wealth is now an accepted yardstick<sup>104</sup> for success in life.

—From *China Today*, 2004

#### Excerpt 3

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<sup>101</sup> Proportion refers to a part of a number or amount, considered in relation to the whole. 比例

<sup>102</sup> Someone's ultimate aim is their main and most important aim, that they hope to achieve in the future. 最终的

<sup>103</sup> Pinnacle is the most successful, powerful, exciting part of something. 顶峰

<sup>104</sup> Yardstick is something that you compare another thing with, in order to judge how good or successful it is. 比较或衡量的标准

If we start with 1975, we can see that at the beginning of the year, inflation stood at 5%. It increased steadily over the next 12 months to 8%. Things improved at the beginning of 1976 and it leveled off<sup>105</sup> for a six-month period. The improvement continued and inflation decreased gradually by 2% during the rest of the year. Unfortunately, as we can see, the decline was not maintained and over the next six months inflation rose slightly and reached 9% by the middle of 1977. Then we hit a bad patch<sup>106</sup> --- we will remember how inflation went up dramatically to 17% during the next 12 months and the effect this had on our exports. After a drop of 3% over the 2nd half of 1978 when we all thought that things were improving, inflation increased rapidly until it reached a peak of 24% in mid-1979. This subsequently leveled off until the middle of 1980.

—Taken from *College English Writing Lectures & Practice*

## 2. Mini-Lecture: *Essays Based on Graphics*

Graphics are ways of data presentation during a research process. Writing essays based on graphics involves understanding the data presented to draw a conclusion (to generalize), describing the data accurately to support the conclusion, and explaining the cause-effect relationships involved, often by way of comparison and contrast. Writing “graphic” essays is an important way to develop critical, analytical thinking (abstract thinking) which is essential for writing research reports, and essays for CET 4/6, and IELTS.

At college level, the graphics for essay writing are often data from mini research programs, so they are easy to understand and process. Since you have learned how to write cause-and-effect and comparison and contrast essays, the focus of this unit is data interpretation<sup>107</sup> and data description in the way they reflect findings.

### 2.1 Types of Graphics and their Function

Based on the nature and number of variables<sup>108</sup> involved, data will be presented in different types of graph. If there is just one independent variable involved, a single bar or circle or one line will suffice<sup>109</sup> to present the pattern or trend; if there are two or more variables, the number of bars increases accordingly, requiring more complex comparison of the data when describing the graphs.

Three types of graphics are common for essay writing and they each have a

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<sup>105</sup> To level off is to become level or even.使平稳

<sup>106</sup> A bad patch here refers to a period of bad luck.倒霉时期, 衰败时期

<sup>107</sup> Interpretation means the way in which someone explains or understands an event, information, someone's actions etc.解释

<sup>108</sup> Variable is something that may be different in different situations, so that you cannot be sure what will happen.变量

<sup>109</sup> To suffice means to be enough.足以

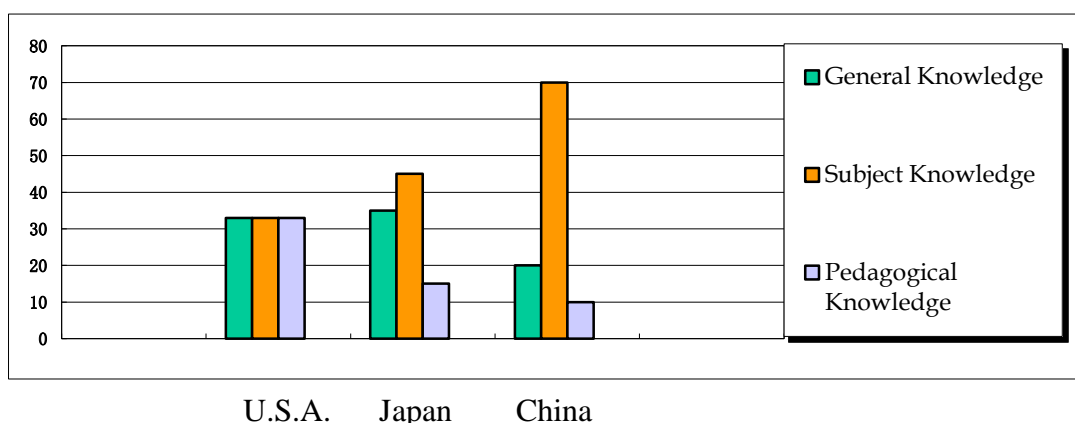
function of their own (see the examples below). They are tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. Tables are used for setting out information in clear categories, bar charts, for comparison and contrast, and pie charts for presenting information in a way that the eye can take in at once.

For example, the table below presents the percentage recall (six options) of information by using each of the five senses, including multi-sensory<sup>110</sup> involvement (six options).

| Percentage Recall | Sensory Involvement                    |
|-------------------|--|
| 20%               | of what we read                        |
| 30%               | of what we hear                        |
| 40%               | of what we see                         |
| 50%               | of what we say                         |
| 60%               | of what we do                          |
| 90%               | of what we read, hear, see, say and do |

Table: *What Do We Remember?* (Flanagan, 1997)

When information is presented in graphs, two or more things are compared against each other. In the bar graph below, the horizontal line (axis<sup>111</sup>) provides details of what is being compared: the three countries: U.S.A, Japan, and China, while the vertical axis presents the different percentages that are being measured for the distribution of three kinds of knowledge for teacher education in general knowledge, subject knowledge, and pedagogical<sup>112</sup> knowledge respectively. In contrast to the table above, the bar graph involves two variables — three different kinds of knowledge as well as three different countries, so both data description and analysis involve more complex relationships.



Bar Graph: The Curriculum<sup>113</sup> Structure of Teacher Education

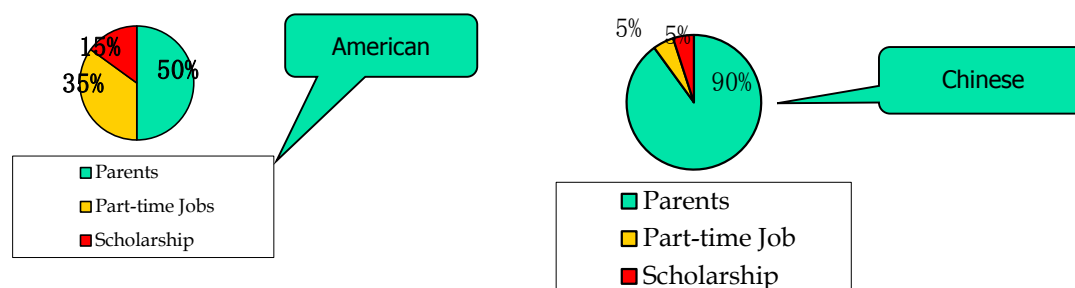
<sup>110</sup> multi-sensory *adj.* relating to or using your senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch 多种感觉(并用)的

<sup>111</sup> Axis is either of the two lines of a graph, by which the positions of points are measured.轴

<sup>112</sup> pedagogical *adj.* relating to teaching methods or the practice of teaching 教学(法)的

<sup>113</sup> Curriculum refers to the subjects that are taught by a school, college etc, or the things that are

Pie charts are particularly good illustrations when considering parts of a whole. The pie charts below present information about the sources of income for American and Chinese students at a glance. Even though it is also meant for contrast, a pie chart is preferred because it is comparing the same source of income in the two countries; the three sources are not contrasted against one another. In this case, both data description and analysis are much less complex than in the bar graph above.



Pie Charts: Sources of Income for American and Chinese Students

## 2.2 The Writing Process

The following steps are necessary for writing “graphic” essays:

**Prewriting (data interpretation):** Find the title and key words of the graphic to see what information is given. What does it tell you? What and how many variables are involved? Look for patterns (relationships) and draw conclusions; summarize the theme in one sentence.

**Data description (brief):** Write down the theme (topic sentence) that indicates the subject or topic displayed in the graphic. Support it with accurate or precise details from the graphic. You may compare the facts or figures to reveal the underlying relationships. Start with the most important detail. Guard against explaining the data at the beginning, which is a common mistake for many college students. Wait to offer explanations at the next step.

**Discussion (focus of the essay):** Reveal the nature of the phenomenon and offer explanations (such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect). The same skills are involved for writing common expository essays.

**Conclusions (brief):** implication/ solution / hope...

## 2.3 Writing Style & Useful Expressions

Before drafting, it is necessary to know that the writing style of “graphic” essays is similar to research reports with the following features:

1. formal—avoid slang and abbreviations
2. focused—address only the given topic and the data from the graphics
3. concise—keep to the point and avoid unnecessary examples
4. analytical —follow a line of reasoning with both facts and opinions.

In terms of wording, data description requires accurate and varied expressions. To make it clear and interesting, it is necessary to use a variety of expressions and word options to describe the data presented in the graphics. The following are common expressions for data description.

#### **For introductory sentences**

The graph presents /reveals/indicates /suggests that ...

The table represents the development and changes in ... over the past 10 years.

According to / Based on the figure shown in the table/graph ...

As is shown/can be seen in the chart ...

#### **For patterns or trends (classified into four types)**

1. The price rose/increased/went up/rocketed/shot up/significantly/ slightly /rapidly/dramatically over the period.  
The price decreased/dropped/fell/plunged/plummeted/ steeply significantly /suddenly/rapidly/dramatically/ slowly over the period.
2. There was a minimal/slight/slow/gradual/steady/dramatic/sharp/ rapid/sudden rise/ increase/ leap (in the price) over the period.  
There was a slight/steep/dramatic/sharp/rapid/gradual decrease/decline /reduction/fall/drop/plunge in 2008.
3. The price remained stable/was fairly steady/leveled off over the period.  
There was a leveling off/hardly any change/little or no change in the price from 2006 to 2009.
4. The price fluctuated dramatically/sharply/wildly/significantly/ slightly over the period.  
There was a dramatic/sharp/wild/significant/slight fluctuation (in the price) over the period.

#### **Expressions for illustration**

to make up 98% of .../to amount to .../to reach .../to constitute .../to represent .../to stand for .../to account for .../to take up

#### **For conclusion**

In short, .../ In brief, .../Briefly, .../In summary, .../ To sum up, .../ All in all, .../ In conclusion, .../ To conclude, .../ On the whole, .../ Altogether, ...

### **3. Writing Awareness: *Steps for Data Description***

When faced with the task of data description for the first time, you might feel at a loss where to start. You might be eager to quote the figures first instead of starting with a topic sentence. To describe the data of the given graphic effectively, it is important to follow three basic steps for data description.

(1) Write an introductory statement about the theme reflected in the graphics. E.g. The above/ given graph shows the average number of hours a student spends on the computer per week in 1990, 1995, 2000 respectively.

(2) Write a statement to indicate the trend or pattern that you have generalized from the data. E.g. During this period, there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of time spent using a computer. When necessary, the first two steps can be combined into one sentence.

(3) Illustrate the trend or pattern with details or figures. E.g. The average time a student spends per week on the computer rises from about three hours in 1990 to seven hours in 1995, and then soars to over twenty hours in 2000.

At the end of the paragraph for data description, a statement is usually made to connect to the next paragraph, indicating the direction of data discussion. Look at the paragraph below for data description. Can you identify the three steps and the transitional statement?

The graph shows the change of rates of male and female smokers in a city between 1960 and 2000. It is clear that while the number of male smokers peaked at 600 in 1960, the number of female smokers stood at just under 100 in the same year. Meanwhile, the number of male smokers has reduced gradually to less than 300 between 1960 and 2000, whereas the number of female smokers rose rapidly until 1975, then went down steadily to around 200 in 2000. The results indicate that effective measures have been taken to discourage people from smoking.

## 4. Practice

### 4.1 Data Description

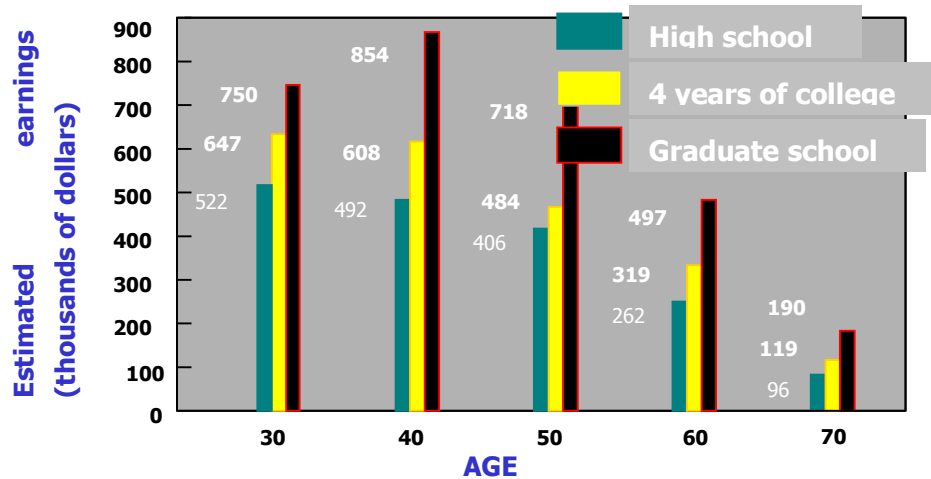
1. Look at the pie graph in Section 2.1 and try to fill the blanks according to the information provided in it.

These two pie charts show the difference in \_\_\_\_\_ between American and Chinese students. We can see that Chinese students get \_\_\_\_ of their income from their parents, while American students only get \_\_\_\_ from their parents. Besides, Chinese students gain only 5% of their income from doing \_\_\_\_\_ and another 5% from \_\_\_\_\_, whereas money from the same sources for American students amounts to/ reach \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ respectively. (Note: the signal words of comparison and contrast are used in the paragraph)

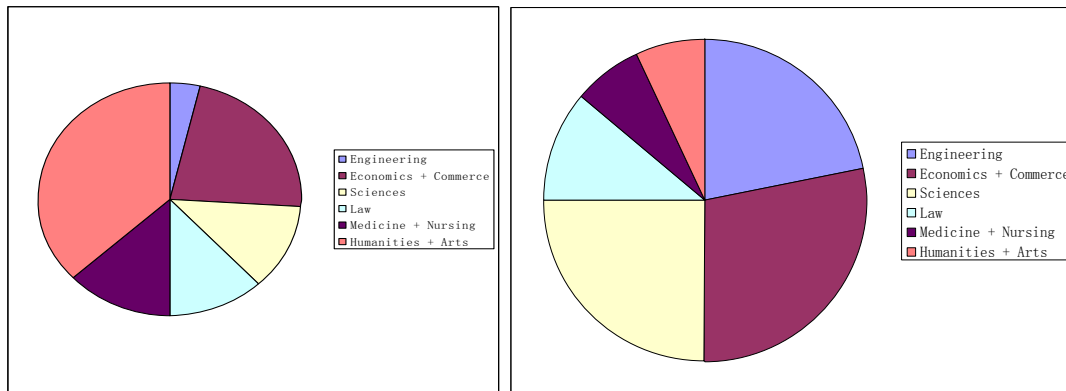
2. Describe one of the following graphs by following the three steps suggested in Section 3. Remember to refer to the writing process in Section 2.2 before drafting, particularly the prewriting part for data interpretation.

Graph 1: *Estimated earnings of people with different education at different ages*





Graph 2: Proportional representation of male and female students in different faculties of a university



## 4.2 Revising Checklist

Use the following peer-review form to collect some peer responses before you finish your final draft. Try to make your writing as interesting and effective as possible.

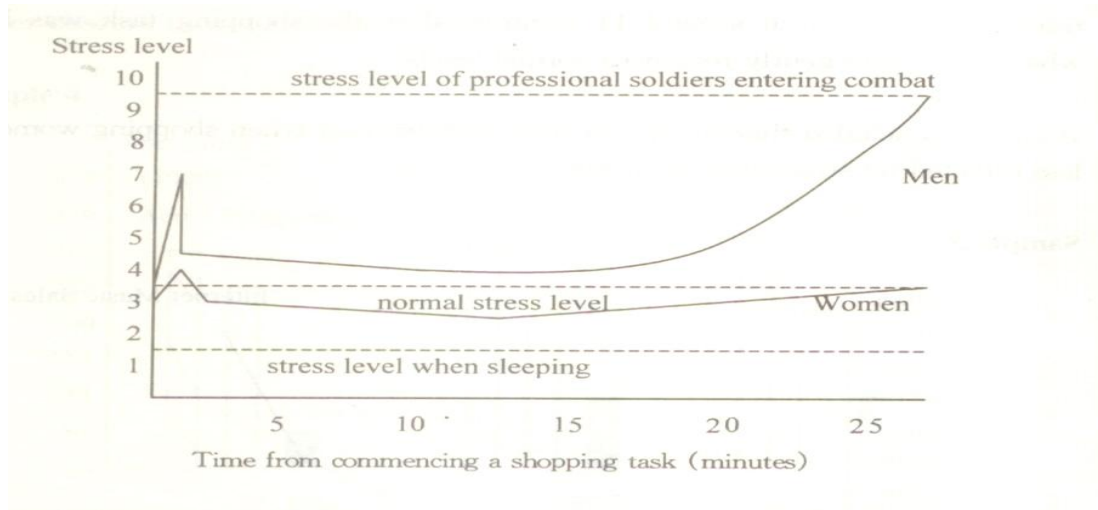
### Peer-Review Form

1. Is there an introductory statement about the theme reflected in the graphics?
2. Does the writer avoid giving any of his or her personal opinions at the beginning of the paragraph?
3. Is there any pattern or trend revealed in the graphic essay?
4. Does the writer remember to illustrate the trend or pattern with details or figures?
5. Does the writer vary the word options or expressions to avoid monotony and boredom?

When you finish the work, discuss the comments with your peer reviewer and

decide what changes you will make to your writing.

## 5. Model Essay



**Graph 1 Stress levels of men and women with duration of shopping time**

The graph shows the effect shopping has on both men and women in terms of stress levels calculated from the time a shopping task is begun.

Basically, the graph illustrates that shopping is a very stressful experience for men, who experience increased stress levels which, after prolonged shopping periods, even reach levels comparable with the stress experienced by professional soldiers in combat. Women, on the other hand, experience reduced stress levels when shopping, which suggests that shopping is a relaxing experience for them.

In the first minute after commencing a shopping task, men experience a dramatic increase in stress level. Their level of stress rises from the normal level of 3 to 7, though it quickly drops down to about 4.5 in the next two minutes. From there the level of stress stabilizes, even falling very slightly, until 10 minutes of shopping time have elapsed, after which the level of stress grows rapidly, attaining a level close to 10 once 25 minutes have passed.

Initially, women also experience a sharp rise in the level of stress, but, unlike men whose stress level never returns to normal during the shopping task, women quickly recover. Their stress level drops during the second minute from 3.5 to about 2.75, 0.25 below the normal stress level. From there the stress level continues to decline until around 11 minutes after the shopping task was begun when it starts to gently return to normal levels.

It can be concluded that the graph clearly shows that, when shopping, women are less affected by stress than men are.

### Group project

#### Cooperative Learning: A Mini-survey

Conduct a mini-survey on one of the following topics:

1. Sources of pressure for college students
2. College students' addiction to computer or net games
3. Students working part time while attending college
4. College-crowded Library, not easy to find a seat
5. The lack of understanding between the young and the old
6. The obsession of many young women and men with their weight and body image
7. Increasing popularity of plastic surgery among young people
8. Young people's obsession with cell phones
9. College student's overdependence on social media like Wechat, QQ
10. Young people falling into an unhealthy diet in our society.
11. Western festivals like Valentine's Day, Halloween, Christmas getting popular in China

Procedures:

1) First remember to narrow down the topic to a more manageable research question and then formulate 2-3 related sub-questions covering different aspects of the subject. The following is an example demonstrating how to use more specific and focused sub-questions to refer to the more general concept of "ambitions".

*Survey question: What are your ambitions?*

*Sub-questions for the survey:*

1. *What do you do for a living?*
2. *What do you do for fun?*
3. *What's the most exciting thing that's happened to you recently?*
4. *Who do you admire most in the world?*
5. *What do you want to be doing five years from now?*

Do not forget to include basic demographic information of the respondent such as their age, gender, etc., which can provide supportive clues for data interpretation and analysis.

2) Then interview your classmates or schoolmates on campus to get their responses to your questions. Afterwards, sum up your data within groups and present the data in the form of graphs or charts.

3) Finally, write a short essay according to the data presented in the graph or chart. Try to employ the organizational patterns you've learned in the previous units, i.e. cause and effect, comparison and contrast. Be ready to present your survey results to class.

# Module Three Argumentative Essays

## Unit 1 An Overview

### Lead-in activity

The photograph below was taken on a university campus in California where students were demonstrating against **tuition increases**.

**Further thinking:** Since this sign is too small to list their reasons for opposing the increases, what reasons might the students give to fight against the tuition raising?

**Discussion:** talk with your partners about **the issue** that concerns many college students, either on your campus, or nationally. Write a paragraph that identifies the issue, takes a position on it, and offers reasons that the position should be accepted by others.



### Passage 1.

#### When Volunteerism Isn't Noble

Lynn Steirer

Engraved in stone over the front entrance to my old high school is the statement, “No Man Is Free Who Is Not Master of Himself.” No surprise for a school named Liberty.

Some time ago, the Bethlehem school board turned its back on the principle for which my school was named when it began requiring students to perform community service or other volunteer work. Students would have to show that they had done sixty hours of such service, or they would not receive their high school diploma.

That forced me to make a decision. Would I submit to the program even though I

thought it was involuntary servitude, or would I stand against it on principle? I chose principle and was denied a diploma.

Bethlehem is not alone in requiring students to do volunteer work to graduate. Other school districts around the country have adopted such policies, and in the state of Maryland, students must do volunteer work to graduate.

Volunteerism is a national preoccupation these days. It all began when retired general Colin Powell, at President Clinton's request, led a three-day gathering in Philadelphia of political and business leaders and many others. General Powell called for more people to volunteer. That was a noble thought.

But what President Clinton had in mind goes far beyond volunteering. He called for high schools across the country to make community service mandatory for graduation. In other words, he wanted to force young people to do something that should be, by its very definition, voluntary.

That would destroy, not elevate, the American spirit of volunteerism. I saw firsthand how many of my classmates treated their required service as a joke, claiming credit for work they didn't do or exaggerating the time it actually took.

Volunteering has always been important to me. As a Meals on Wheels aide and a Girl Scout, I chose to give hundreds of hours to my community, at my own initiative.

While my family and I fought the school's mandatory service requirement, I continued my volunteering, but I would not submit my hours for credit. Two of my classmates joined me in this act of civil disobedience. At the same time, with the assistance of the Institute for Justice, a Washington legal-policy group, we sued the school board.

As graduation neared, a school official pulled me aside and said it was not too late to change my mind. That day, I really thought about giving in. Then he asked the question that settled it for me. "After all," he said, "what is more important, your values or your diploma?"

I chose to give up my diploma, eventually obtaining a graduate equivalency degree instead. The courts decided against us and, unfortunately, the Supreme Court declined to hear our case. The school has continued the program.

Volunteering is important. But in a country that values its liberty, we should make sure that student "service" is truly voluntary.

## **Passage 2.**

### **Organ Donation: A Life-Saving Gift**

Quinne Sember

The idea of helping someone less fortunate is not a novel idea in our society. However, when people think about someone by giving a part of their body away, they become uncomfortable. According to Donate Life America, a Website that promotes donation, organ donation is "the process of giving an organ or a part of an organ for the purpose of transplantation into another person" ("Understanding Donation"). In addition to organs (like the heart, liver, and eye), tissue, blood, and corneas can be donated when a person dies. It is also possible to donate parts of organs or entire

organs (like a kidney) while living.

Organ, eye, and tissue donation has the potential to enhance or save the lives of many people. Surprisingly, however, most people in this country will never donate. If everyone chose to donate whatever they could during their lifetimes and after their death, a lot of grief for families could be prevented.

The most compelling argument for organ donation comes from statistics. Over 100, 000 people need organ transplants right now, and someone is added to the waiting list every ten minutes (“Understanding Donation”). In 2009, a total of 7,048 patients died while waiting for an organ. The number is up from 2000, when it was only 5,000 (Delmonico). If more people are willing to donate their organs after death or even contribute while they were living, these numbers could decrease substantially.

The most common organ donor is someone who has experienced brain death. Brain death is “the death of the brain stem, and the diagnosis of brain death is made by examining the function of nerves that originate in the brain stem” (Kerridge 89). For someone to be considered as a donor after death, he or she must be declared to be brain dead. Someone who is brain dead appears to be alive. The person continues to breathe with the help of a ventilator, and the body remains warm. Therefore, families often have a difficult time recognizing that the person is dead. The prospect of organ donation can be therapeutic to a family going through a difficult time. It is the one good thing that can come out of an unfortunate situation. The family may feel that by donating organs, their beloved did not die in vain.

Even if the person is not eligible to donate organs to someone else, he or she can donate them to research that may further medical knowledge. In 2007, researchers discovered a link between the Epstein-Barr virus and multiple sclerosis by examining the postmortem brain tissue of a donor who had MS (“Brain Tissue”). This advance in science occurred only because someone’s family members decided that they wanted to try to help others with MS, even though their own family member could no longer be helped.

I have volunteered for four years with Upstate New York Transplant Service, which works to promote organ donation awareness. I have become close to a woman who chose to work with UNYTS because of a personal experience. Her four-year-old daughter was diagnosed with a failing heart and needed a transplant as soon as possible. Every day, the girl’s breathing became more labored. Finally, a heart was located. After she had the transplant, however, she began to lose blood and required a large amount of blood. Because of the generosity of a family and countless individual blood donors, this young girl now lives a healthy life. Her family is forever thankful for the gift that she received. They often hold blood drives in her name.

Some people dislike the prospect of organ donation, either for themselves or for their loved one. Usually, these people have misconceptions about it. The Mayo Clinic Website addresses some of these mistaken ideas in “Organ Donation: Don’t Let These Myths Confuse You.”

Many people believe that if they are a registered organ donor, the hospital staff won’t work as hard to save their life. This is not true. The doctor who tries to help you is not the same doctor who would be concerned with the transplantation. Your

doctor's job is to save your life. In that moment, he cares about nothing else.

Others worry that they won't actually be dead when the death certificate is signed. This is highly unlikely. According to the Mayo Clinic, "people who have agreed to organ donation are given more tests (at no charge to their families) to determine that they are truly dead than are those who haven't agreed to organ donation." These tests would be reassuring to the family, as well.

Another major concern that comes up is disfiguration of the body. People believe that they won't be able to have an open-casket funeral if they donate their organs. This is untrue. The body is clothed so that no signs of organ donation can be seen. For bone donation, a rod may be inserted in place of the bone. For skin donation, a small sample of skin can be taken from the back of the donor and placed where the donated skin was taken.

Finally, many people worry whether their religion accepts organ donation. Courtney S. Campbell addresses this issue in her article "Religion and the Body in Medical Research." She recognizes two key characteristics of organ donation---"altruistic intent" and "therapeutic expectation"---that explain why most religions accept it. Altruistic intent means that the donor is giving an important gift to the recipient without expecting anything in return. Therapeutic expectation means that this gift is expected to "offer a pronounced therapeutic prospect for the recipient" (281). Basically, these concepts simply mean that because the donor is trying to help someone else save his or her life, donation is acceptable in almost any situation.

Campbell also identifies the specific beliefs that some major religions hold about organ donation. In Judaism, a great deal of importance is placed on the preservation of the body after death. Campbell says, however, that "this presumption can be overridden--- by the requirement of *pikkuah nefesh*, the saving of human life". Roman Catholicism holds much the same belief. Islam believes organ donation to be acceptable as well, as long as the remaining parts of the body are buried. Most Protestant denominations have no objection to organ and tissue donation.

Most people decide not to donate their organs for reasons that are untrue. If everyone donated their organs when they died, we would make enormous advances in science as well as save countless lives. The best way to become an organ donor is to talk to your family. If they know what you want to happen when you pass away, they are much more likely to carry out your wishes. In most states, you can also sign the back of your driver's license to indicate that you would like to be an organ donor. Organ donor cards are available online, and many states have a donor registry that you can become a part of. Become an organ donor, save a life!

## **1. Graphic Organizer**

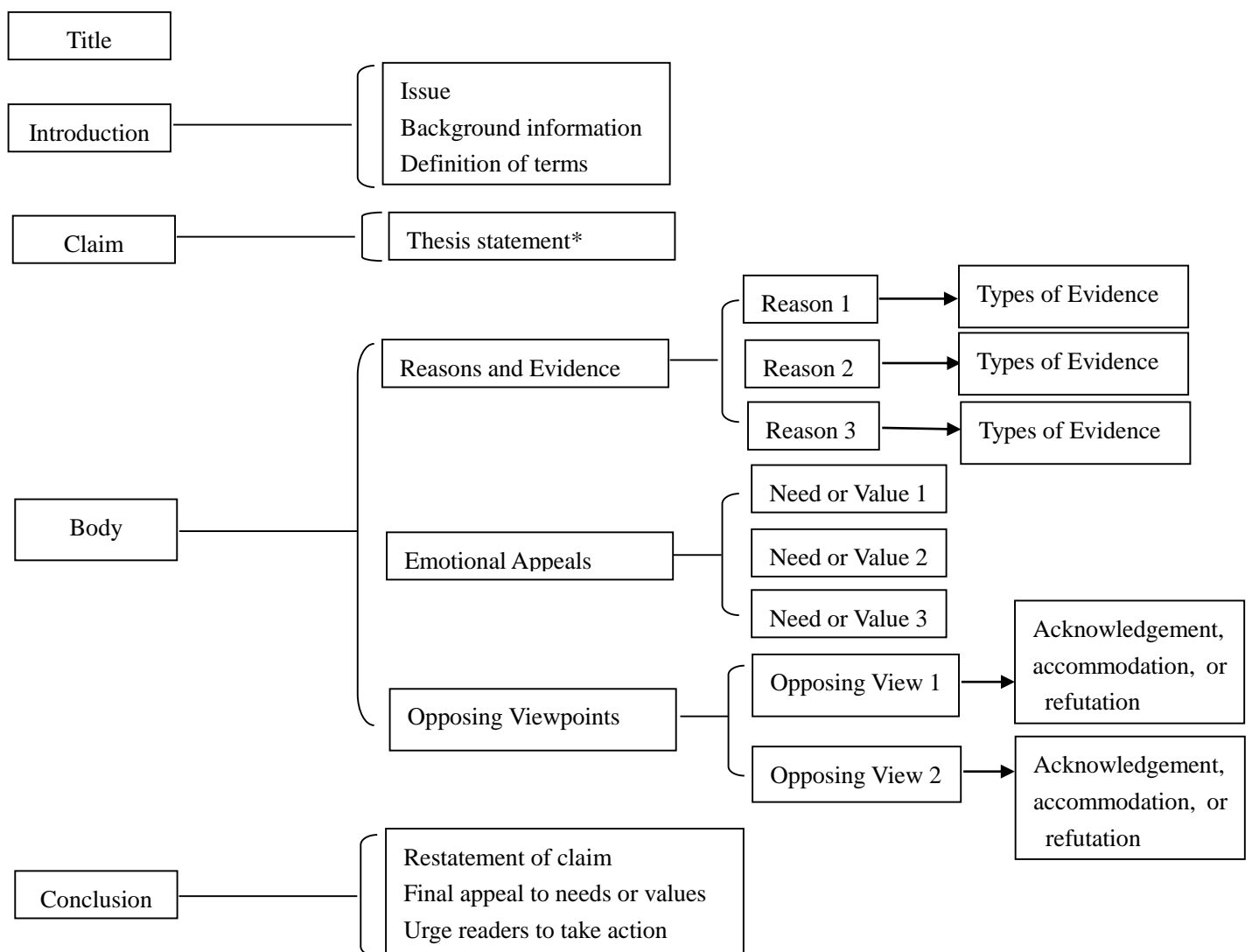
### **1.1 What is graphic organizer?**

Graphic organizer is a good strategy for following the structure of an argument. In some ways an argument resembles a building. The writer lays a foundation and

then builds on that foundation. Reasons and evidence presented early in the essay often support ideas introduced later on, as the lower floors in a building support the higher ones. Once you recognize an argument’s plan or overall structure, you are in a better position to understand it and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. This section offers strategies for following the structure of an argument — including identifying key elements in a graphic organizer and writing a summary — which can help you analyze and evaluate an essay.

## 1.2 Graph Sample

The following graph outlines the basic relationships among ideas in an argument essay.



This above graph doesn’t necessarily reflect the order in which the ideas are presented in an argumentative essay. Instead, it provides a way for you to organize

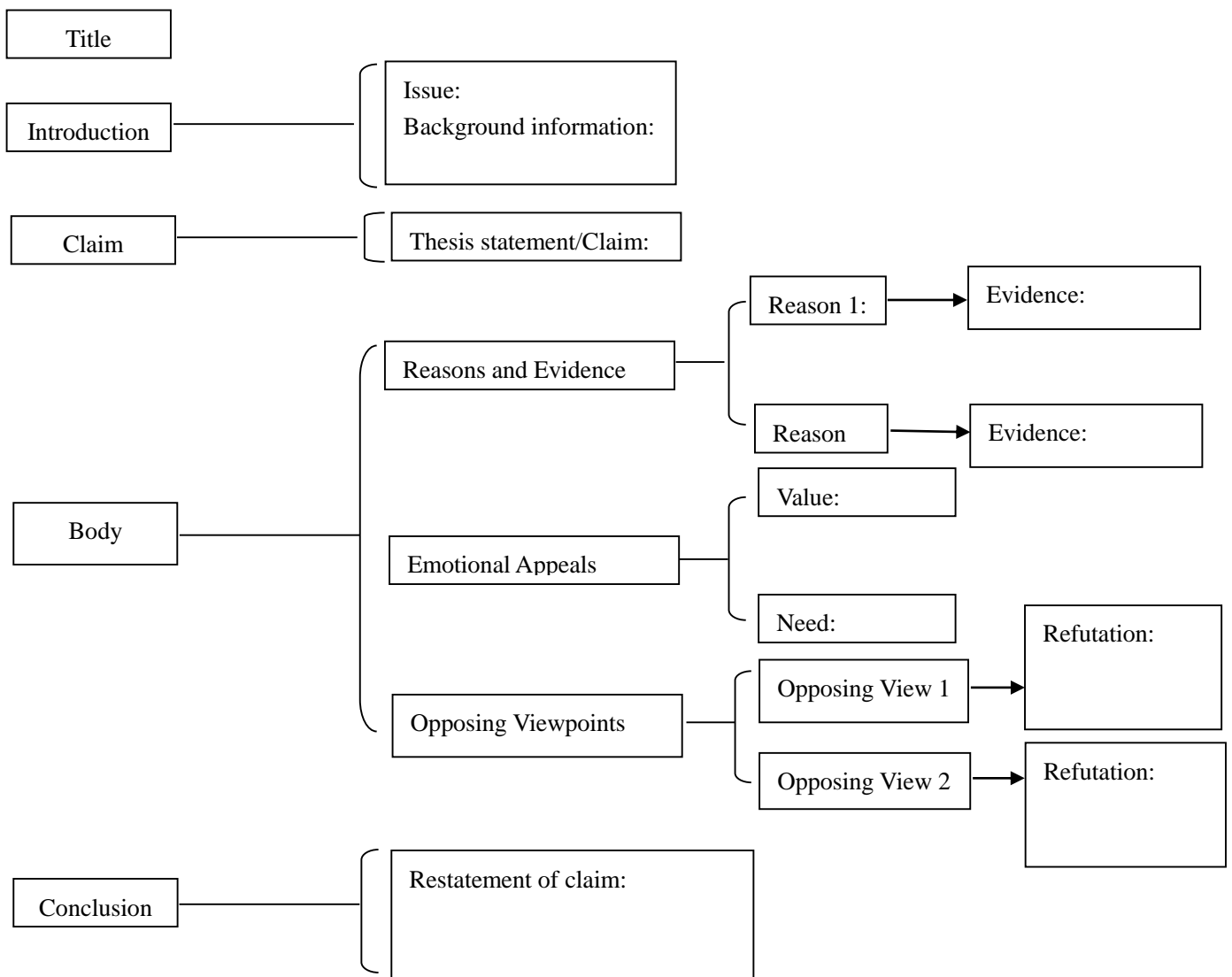


those ideas. Therefore, when reading an argument, you can have the following steps:

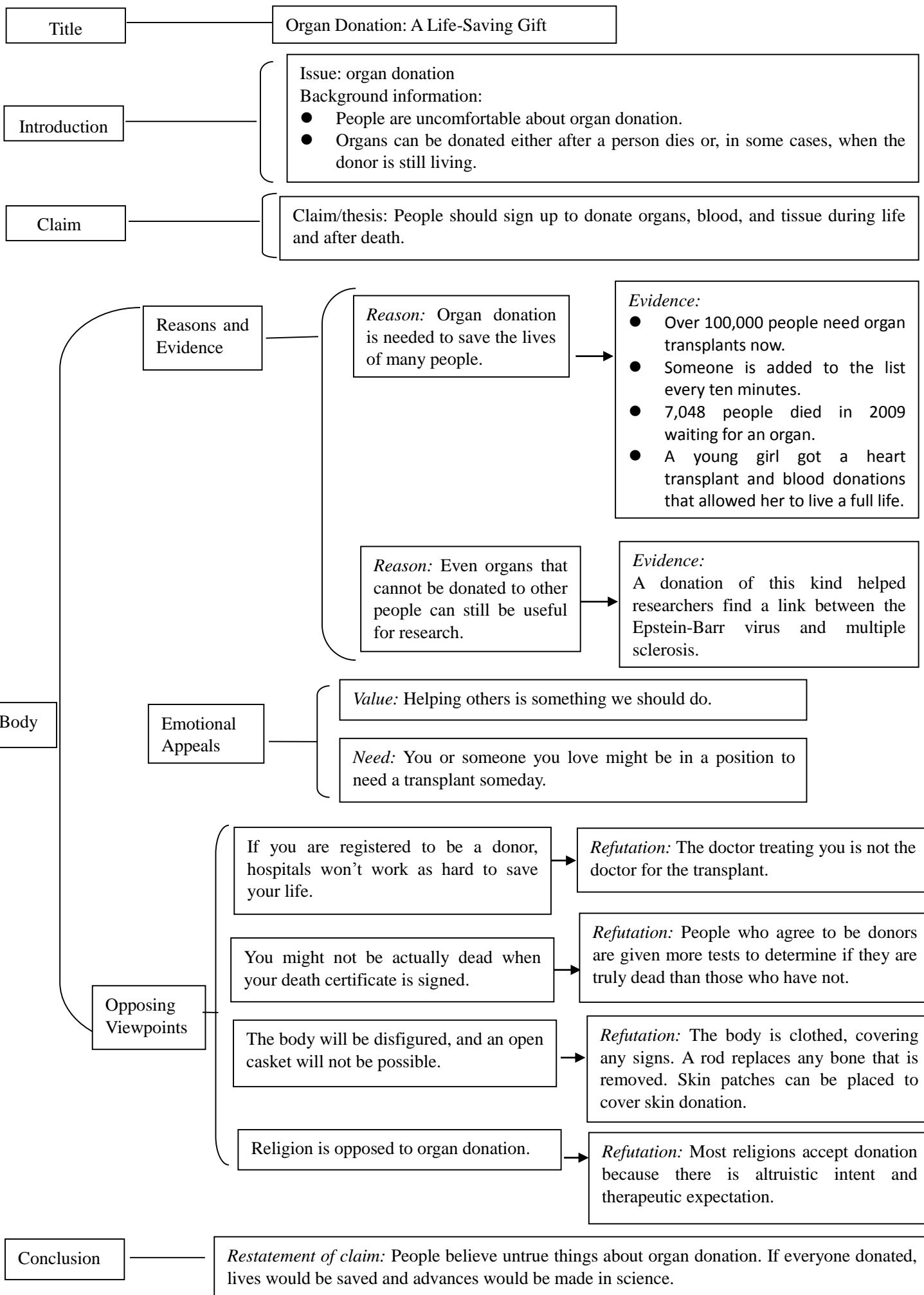
1. Read and highlight the essay before drawing a graphic organizer.
2. Record ideas with your own words, not in the author's words.
3. Reread difficult or confusing parts of the essay before filling in those sections of the organizer.
4. Try working through the organizer with a classmate.

### 1.3 Group Reading Activity

Read the 2<sup>nd</sup> passage and work out a graphic organizer.



SEE THE REFERENCE ON THE NEXT PAGE.



## 2. Overview of Argumentative Writing

### 2.1 Characteristics of Argumentative Essays

All arguments are concerned with issues. In developing an argument essay, you need to have a clear and specific stand/claim about the issue, give reasons and evidence to support the claim. In addition, you should follow a logical line of reasoning; use emotional appeals appropriately; and acknowledge, and/or refute opposing views. Basically speaking, argumentative essays have the following characteristics:

#### 1. Take a clear claim/stand

The first thing you must know as young writers, about argumentation, is to take a clear position. Taking a stand on a controversial issue can be quite demanding. You need to think hard for a clear thought, you need to have a reasonably cool head for a sound and persuasive argument. To achieve this, you need to explore the issue thoroughly at the prewriting stage. First, compile a pro-and-con table. Then, study each side by asking questions as follows:

- Which point of view agrees with your values?
- Which of the points do you want to argue for?
- Which of the claims do you want to refute?

Your answers to these questions may lead you to a clearer position on the issue as well as a well-thought out organizational pattern. Finally, construct a proposal from the main points you choose and put it in one sentence.

#### 2. Give strong and logical reasons supported with convincing evidence

In developing an argument, you need to have reasons for making a claim. A **reason** is a general statement that backs up a claim; it answers the question, Why do I have this opinion about the issue? You also need to support each reason with **evidence**. Suppose you want to argue that *high school uniforms should be mandatory* for three reasons: The uniforms (1) reduce clothing costs for parents, (2) help eliminate distractions in the classroom, and (3) reduce peer pressure. Each of your reasons would need to be supported by evidence, facts, statistics, examples, personal experience, or expert testimony. Carefully linking your evidence to reasons helps readers see how the evidence supports your claim.

#### 3. Deal with opposing views

Recognizing or countering opposing arguments forces you to think hard about your own claims. When you listen to readers' objections, you may find reasons to adjust your own reasoning and develop a stronger argument. In addition, readers will be more willing to consider your claim if you take their point of view into account. There are three methods of recognizing opposing views in an argument essay: *acknowledgment*, *accommodation*, and *refutation*.

- A. When you **acknowledge** an opposing viewpoint, you admit that it exists and show that you have considered it. For example, readers opposed to mandatory high

school uniforms may argue that a uniform requirement will not eliminate peer pressure because students will use other objects to gain status—such as backpacks, iPods, hairstyles, and cell phones. You could acknowledge this viewpoint by admitting that there is no way to stop teenagers from finding ways to compete for status.

- B.** When you **accommodate** an opposing viewpoint, you acknowledge readers' concerns, accept some of them, and incorporate them into your own argument. In arguing for mandatory high school uniforms, you might accommodate readers' view that uniforms will not eliminate peer pressure by arguing that the uniforms will eliminate one major and expensive means of competing for status.
- C.** When you **refute** an opposing viewpoint, you demonstrate the weakness of the opponent's argument. For example, some people may support the view of creation, and they think that learning and following rules just make people ordinary. They may talk about Gates or Jobs as examples. *However, I think that the experience of these successful people are too special to define success.* It is easy to call on to create. How many people can in fact achieve success by whatever kinds of creation? There must be a huge number of people failed before Gates and Jobs. Because of the risks, many people pay a high price for creation.

#### **4. Methods of development**

We choose methods of development that will present our arguments in the most effective way for our reader. Developing skills include:

- ◆ exemplification,
- ◆ definition,
- ◆ comparison and contrast,
- ◆ process,
- ◆ classification,
- ◆ cause and effect,
- ◆ generalization

We can use the following types of evidence to make our claim convincing. Types of Evidence include:

- ◆ Exemplification (Fact),
- ◆ Statistics,
- ◆ Research results,
- ◆ Personal experience,
- ◆ Others' experience,
- ◆ Quotation/Citation,

### **3. Homework Assignment**

1. Read the two additional passages and summarize its refutation pattern.
2. Imitate the pattern and write a paragraph to refute the saying:  
*The primary purpose of education is not to teach you to earn your bread, but to make every mouthful sweeter.* -J. Angell, American psychologist
3. Passage writing: choose one topic and write an argumentative essay with no

less than 160 words.

- a. Which comes first in choosing a major, job opportunities or interests
- b. Should we buy Chinese-made products only
- c. Are you what you wear

**Applying Your Skills: Additional Readings:** The following essays take different views on the issue of multitasking.

### **How (and Why) to Stop Multitasking**

*Peter Bregman*

**(Peter Bregman is a leadership consultant and CEO of Bregman Partners, Inc., a global management consulting firm. He is the author of *Point A: A Short Guide to Leading a Big Change* (2007). He blogs for *Harvard Business Review*, where this essay appeared in 2010. As you read, highlight Bregman's claim and the reasons he gives to support it.)**

During a conference call with the executive committee of a nonprofit board on which I sit, I decided to send an email to a client. I know, I know. You'd think I'd have learned. Last week I wrote about the dangers of using a cell phone while driving. Multitasking is dangerous. And so I proposed a way to stop. But when I sent that email, I wasn't in a car. I was safe at my desk. What could go wrong?

Well, I sent the client the message. Then I had to send him another one, this time with the attachment I had forgotten to append. Finally, my third email to him explained why that attachment wasn't what he was expecting. When I eventually refocused on the call, I realized I hadn't heard a question the Chair of the Board had asked me.

I swear I wasn't smoking anything. But I might as well have been. A study showed that people distracted by incoming email and phone calls saw a 10-point fall in their IQs. What's the impact of a 10-point drop? The same as losing a night of sleep. More than twice the effect of smoking marijuana.

Doing several things at once is a trick we play on ourselves, thinking we're getting more done. In reality, our productivity goes down by as much as 40%. We don't actually multitask. We switch-task, rapidly shifting from one thing to another, interrupting ourselves unproductively, and losing time in the process.

You might think you're different, that you've done it so much you've become good at it. Practice makes perfect and all that. But you'd be wrong. Research shows that heavy multitaskers are less competent at doing several things at once than light multitaskers. In other words, in contrast to almost everything else in your life, the more you multitask, the worse you are at it. Practice, in this case, works against you.

I decided to do an experiment. For one week I would do no multitasking and see what happened. What techniques would help? Could I sustain a focus on one thing at a time for that long? For the most part, I succeeded. If I was on the phone, all I did was talk or listen on the phone. In a meeting I did nothing but focus on the meeting. Any interruptions — email, a knock on the door — I held off until I finished what I was working on.

During the week I discovered six things:

- **First, it was delightful.** I noticed this most dramatically when I was with my children. I shut my cell phone off and found myself much more deeply engaged and present with them. I never realized how significantly a short moment of checking my email disengaged me from the people and things right there in front of me. Don't laugh, but I actually — for the first time in a while — noticed the beauty of leaves blowing in the wind.
- **Second, I made significant progress on challenging projects,** the kind that — like writing or strategizing — require thought and persistence. The kind I usually try to distract myself from. I stayed with each project when it got hard, and experienced a number of breakthroughs.
- **Third, my stress dropped dramatically.** Research shows that multitasking isn't just inefficient, it's stressful. And I found that to be true. It was a relief to do only one thing at a time. I felt liberated from the strain of keeping so many balls in the air at each moment. It felt reassuring to finish one thing before going to the next.
- **Fourth, I lost all patience for things I felt were not a good use of my time.** An hour-long meeting seemed interminably long. A meandering pointless conversation was excruciating. I became laser-focused on getting things done. Since I wasn't doing anything else, I got bored much more quickly. I had no tolerance for wasted time.
- **Fifth, I had tremendous patience for things I felt were useful and enjoyable.** When I listened to my wife Eleanor, I was in no rush. When I was brainstorming about a difficult problem, I stuck with it. Nothing else was competing for my attention so I was able to settle into the one thing I was doing.
- **Sixth, there was no downside.** I lost nothing by not multitasking. No projects were left unfinished. No one became frustrated with me for not answering a call or failing to return an email the second I received it.

That's why it's so surprising that multitasking is so hard to resist. If there's no downside to stopping, why don't we all just stop? I think it's because our minds move considerably faster than the outside world. You can hear far more words a minute than someone else can speak. We have so much to do, why waste any time? So, while you're on the phone listening to someone, why not use that *extra* brain power to book a trip to Florence? What we neglect to realize is that we're already using that brain power to pick up nuance, think about what we're hearing, access our creativity, and stay connected to what's happening around us. It's not really extra brain power, and diverting it has negative consequences.

So how do we resist the temptation? First, the obvious: the best way to avoid interruptions is to turn them off. Often I write at 6 a.m. when there's nothing to distract me, I disconnect my computer from its wireless connection and turn my phone off. In my car, I leave my phone in the trunk. Drastic? Maybe. But most of us shouldn't trust ourselves. Second, the less obvious: Use your loss of patience to your advantage. Create unrealistically short deadlines. Cut all meetings in half. Give yourself a third of the time you think you need to accomplish something. There's

nothing like a deadline to keep things moving. And when things are moving fast, we can't help but focus on them. How many people run a race while texting? If you really only have 30 minutes to finish a presentation you thought would take an hour, are you really going to answer an interrupting call? Interestingly, because multitasking is so stressful, single-tasking to meet a tight deadline will actually reduce your stress. In other words, giving yourself less time to do things could make you more productive and relaxed.

Finally, it's good to remember that we're not perfect. Every once in a while it might be OK to allow for a little multitasking. As I was writing this, Daniel, my two-year-old son, walked into my office, climbed on my lap, and said "Monsters, Inc. movie please." So, here we are, I'm finishing this piece on the left side of my computer screen while Daniel is on my lap watching a movie on the right side of my computer screen. Sometimes, it is simply impossible to resist a little multitasking.

### **Examining the Reading**

1. Why does Bregman believe we should stop most of our multitasking?
2. Summarize the opposing views favoring multitasking that Bregman refutes.
3. What did Bregman discover after he stopped multitasking?
4. Explain the meaning of each of the following words as it is used in the reading: refocused (para. 2), competent (5), disengaged (7), persistence (7), and meandering (7).

### **Analyzing the Writer's Technique**

1. What is Bregman's claim? Is it a claim of fact, value, or policy? Explain how you know.
2. What types of emotional appeals does Bregman make? Identify the needs and values to which he appeals.
3. What types of evidence does Bregman use to support his claim?
4. Are there any errors in reasoning? If so, explain.

### **Visualizing the Reading**

Create a graphic organizer for the argument in this essay.

### **Thinking Critically about Argument**

1. Describe Bregman's tone. Highlight several words or phrases that reveal this tone.
2. Bregman mentions research but fails to cite his sources. How does that affect the effectiveness of his argument?
3. What is the connotation of the word "delightful" (para. 7)?
4. What is "smoking anything" (3) a euphemism for?

### **Reacting to the Reading**

1. Evaluate Bregman's description of his discoveries when he stopped multitasking. Are they persuasive? Could he have added anything that would make them more persuasive?
2. What do you think of Bregman's tips for how to stop multitasking? Are these things you could apply to your life? Why or why not?
3. Keep a journal for a day, and record all the times you multitask and how doing so affects you.
4. Write an essay describing your own experiences with multitasking. Offer examples

of why it has or has not been useful for you.

## In Defense of Multitasking

David Silverman

(David Silverman has worked in business and taught business writing. He is the author of *Typo: The Last American Typesetter or How I Made and Lost Four Million Dollars* (2007). He blogs for *Harvard Business Review*, where this essay appeared in 2010, ten days after the previous one by Peter Bregman. As you read, notice how Silverman attempts to refute Bregman’s position.)

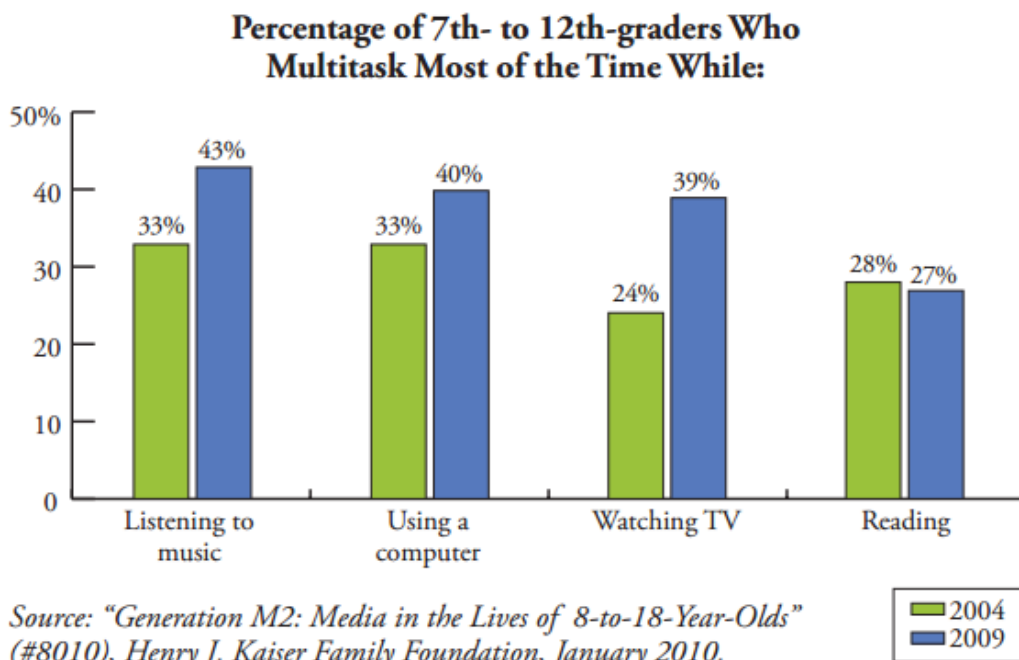
HBR.org blogger Peter Bregman recently made some excellent points about the downside of multitasking — as did Matt Richtel in his *New York Times* article on Monday. I will not deny that single-minded devotion often produces high quality. Nor will I attempt to join the misguided (and scientifically discredited) many who say, “Yeah, other people can’t do it, but I’m super awesome at doing 10 things at once.”

But let’s remember, unitasking has a downside too — namely, what works for one person slows down others. Multitasking isn’t just an addiction for the short-attention-spanned among us; it’s crucial to survival in today’s workplace. To see why, take a look at computing, where the concept of multitasking came from.

Long ago, in the days of vacuum tubes and relays, computers worked in “batch” mode. Jobs were loaded from punched cards, and each job waited until the one before it was completed. This created serious problems. You didn’t know your job had an error until it ran, which could be hours after you submitted it.

### Electronic Multitasking Is on the Rise

*The percentage of youngsters who multitask while using electronic media—such as checking their Facebook page on their laptops while watching TV—has increased in recent years, but the percentage who multitask while reading has changed very little.*





You didn't know if it would cause an infinite loop and block all the other jobs from starting. And any changes in external information that occurred during processing couldn't be accounted for.

The invention of time-sharing resolved these issues: Multiple tasks can now be done concurrently, and you can interrupt a task in an emergency. Incoming missile? Stop the backup tape and send an alert to HQ. So, how does all that apply to the way people work? In several ways:

- 1. Multitasking helps us get and give critical information faster.** You can get responses to questions quickly, even if the person you're asking is on another task. For example: I was at an all-day offsite (no BlackBerrys allowed) when one of my direct reports received a request from an internal customer to make a slide. Since I was unreachable by phone when he started on it, my employee worked the entire afternoon on something that, after I finally read my e-mail and called him, took us only 30 minutes to do together because I had information he didn't have.
- 2. It keeps others from being held up.** If I don't allow for distractions in an attempt to be more efficient, other people may be held up waiting for me. This is the classic batch job problem. Going back to my slide example: The next day, the person who had requested the slide said he only needed a couple of bullet points. Had he been reachable earlier, and not devoted to a single task and blocking all interruptions, we wouldn't have wasted what ended up being nearly six hours of work time (my employee's and mine).
- 3. It gives you something to turn to when you're stuck.** Sometimes it's good to butt your head against a task that is challenging. And sometimes it's good to walk away, do something else, and let your subconscious ponder the ponderable. When you return 25 minutes later, maybe you'll reach a better solution than you would have if you'd just stuck it out. And in the meantime, you've finished some other task, such as writing a blog post. (By the way, my 10.6 minute attempt to uncover how many minutes it takes to get back to a task after an interruption yielded a variety of answers — 11, 25, 30 — and links to a lot of dubious research, such as this University of California study of 36 workers and this study that tracked “eleven experienced Microsoft Windows users [3 female].”)
- 4. The higher up you are in the organization, the more important multitasking is.** The fewer things you have to do, the more you should concentrate on them. If I'm painting my house, and I'm on a ladder, I've got to keep on that one task. But if I'm the general contractor, I need to stay on top of the house painter, the carpenter, the electrician, and the guy swinging that big ball on the end of a giant chain, lest the wrong wall or an unsuspecting worker get demolished. To take this to the logical extreme: Does Barack Obama get to unitask? Can he say, “I'm not available for the rest of the day, because I'll be working on that spreadsheet I've been trying to get done on the number of my Facebook friends who aren't updating their pages with posts about their pet cats?” Or does he have to keep doing his job while handling whatever spilled milk (or, say, zillions of gallons of oil) comes his way?

What do you think? Are we comfortable pretending we really can live our lives not multitasking? Or are we like my father and others who say smoking is bad but can

be found on the front porch in the dead of night, a small red glow at their lips, puffing away while texting their BFFs and playing Words with Friends?

Before you answer, think about the eight Washington Post reporters who tried to go a week without the Internet and failed miserably. The truth is, we need multitasking as much as we need air.

### **Examining the Reading**

1. Summarize Silverman's reasons for defending multitasking.
2. Explain Silverman's analogy about computers. What is he trying to show with it?
3. What message does Silverman convey by discussing his father in the next-to-last paragraph?
4. Explain the meaning of each of the following words as it is used in the reading:  
*discredited* (para. 1), *unitasking* (2), *concurrently* (4), *ponderable* (4), and *lest* (4).

### **Analyzing the Writer's Technique**

1. What type of claim does Silverman make?
2. Is Silverman's analogy about computers effective? Why or why not?
3. What additional information, evidence, or explanation would make this essay more convincing?
4. The end of the essay talks about multitasking and the presidency. Is this an effective example? How useful is it in applying the issues in this essay to regular people?
5. Who is Silverman's intended audience?

### **Visualizing the Reading**

Create a graphic organizer for the argument in this essay.

### **Thinking Critically about Text and Visuals**

1. To what needs and values does Silverman appeal?
2. What fallacies, if any, can you find in Silverman's essay?
3. Evaluate Silverman's use of sources in this essay. What kinds of sources could he have added?
4. How does Silverman present opposing viewpoints? Does he refute them? If so, how?
5. Discuss whether Silverman's essay is made up primarily of fact or of opinion. How does this balance affect the success of his argument?
6. What are the connotations of the word **addiction** in paragraph 2 and of the word **missile** in paragraph 4?
7. Look at the bar graph on page 538. (This graph did not appear in the original blog post.) What does the graph indicate about the rate of multitasking over time among teenagers? What do you think accounts for the fact that multitasking while watching television or listening to music has increased? Why might the percentage of teenagers who multitask while reading not have increased much between 2004 and 2009?

### **Reacting to the Reading**

1. Do you agree or disagree with Silverman's assertion that multitasking is essential for survival at work? Why?
2. Keep a journal for a day to track important interruptions that you would miss if you

were unitasking.

3. Write an essay describing how and why multitasking might have developed as human behavior. When would it have been a valuable skill? How would it have helped early humans?
4. Imagine you are having surgery. Explain how your surgeon might need to unitask or multitask during the procedure at different times.

### **Integrating the Readings**

1. Which writer's argument did you find more convincing? Why?
2. Compare how each writer introduces the issue. In what context does each writer frame it?
3. Silverman and Bregman do not seem to be talking about exactly the same kinds of activities in their discussions of what people try to do simultaneously. How do you think this difference affects their opinions of multitasking?
4. What is the primary difference in the ways that Bregman and Silverman view multitasking? Do they define it differently? If so, describe how each might define it.
5. How do you think Bregman might respond to Silverman's claims?

## Unit 2 How to Use Evidence (I):

### Types of Evidence

As Balwanz-Emmel (1989, p189) indicated, "... all essays share in the following structural truth: that the development of evidence makes up a large part of the actual page length of an essay, and that the degree to which the evidential line of reasoning is developed (and the skill of its development) contributes significantly to the success of the essay."

After you have taken a stand, evidence comes into its stage to support your arguments and urge people to share the writer's perspective and insights. Therefore, evidence makes a reasoned, logical way of asserting the soundness of a position, belief, or conclusion possible.

#### What counts as evidence?

To argue is to convince your reader by presenting solid evidence as well as logical reasoning. In other words, you must look for solid evidence to support your claims.

#### Discussion:

- What can be used as evidence in argumentation?
- What should we pay attention to when using evidence?

## 1. Four criteria to evaluate the evidence

### 1.1 Relevance

Evidence should support the essay's thesis or claim and be pertinent to the argument being made.

**An example for analysis:** (Topic Sentence: From my point of view, the major causes are the powerless leadership, **ineffective propaganda** and limited communication with the nearby resource.) ...Secondly, what I have to mention is that the propaganda part is done really bad. *In the club, I am curious that we didn't have division of job, which means we have to complete a task from head to toe, of course almost all by our own, who know little about the process since lacking of experience and assistance. Propaganda, which has a direct relationship with the response of each activity, is done in this way. Take my team as an example, we designed, draw, printed and then finally put up the posters. Not only did the process take large amount of our labor, but also our brain.* That is why every time you pass by a poster wall, the poster of the English Club was almost always the ugliest and roughest one.

**Question: Is the evidence relevant to the claim (ineffective propaganda)?**

## 1.2 Representative or Typicality

Evidence should represent the full range of opinions about the subject and not just one side or the other. You want a balanced and convincing discussion. In addition, the examples and expert opinions you include should be typical rather than aberrant. If you argued against the use of animals in medical experimentation, you would not use just the information provided by animal rights activists. Why? It is extremely important to use sources your reader trusts. For this reason, as a writer you should be aware of the bias or angle of your sources.

## 1.3 Sufficiency

There should be enough evidence to support the claim(s). The amount of evidence required depends upon the length of your paper, your audience, and the nature of your thesis.

### **An example for analysis:**

- Firstly, looking out of the window of English, I touched a new world of western literature. I saw the leisurely and comfortable lives of the people living in British countryside from the word picture described by Austen; I saw the magnificent and torrential affection happened during the American Civil war from the exquisite writing of Margaret; I saw the growing trajectory of four lovely girls and the warmth of the common American family from the stories narrated by Alcott.

## 1.4 Accuracy

Data shouldn't be used unless it is accurate and up-to-date, and it can't be persuasive unless the audience believes in the writer's credibility. Faith in the accuracy of a writer's data is one function of ethos. If you plan to cite statistics, check if they are **accurate and come from reliable sources**, which you should also include in your writing. If you want to use personal examples, make sure they **show or apply to general situations**. If you are quoting someone, confirm that he or she is **an authority on the issue**. **Your** position will be strengthened if readers accept your evidence, whereas it will be greatly weakened if they spot inaccuracies in your argument.

### **Evidence can be as follows:**

- Facts not opinion,
- Example,
- Statistics,
- Research results,
- Personal experience,

- Others' experience,
- Quotation/Citation (famous saying),
- Definition

**Now read the following statements and identify what types of evidence they are.**

1. It cost the State of Utah nearly a million dollars to execute Gary Gilmore.
2. Blood donation is not as dangerous to donator's health as some people imagine. Only healthy people are allowed to donate just a small amount of blood each time. As long as the donator has a short period of rest, he/she will recover.
3. 50 million tons of coal will be saved every year to generate the same amount of electricity. Consequently the quality of our environment will be considerably improved.
4. My cousin and her friend just felt a little weak and easily got tired in the first two or three days after donating blood, but they could go to school and chorus as they do every day.
5. A study by Dr. Gordon Grisby of the University of Florida shows that 75 percent of males and more than 90 percent of females who committed violent crimes were under the influence of alcohol or drugs and not rational at the time.
6. In the 1930s, 1,667 people were executed, compared to 717 in the 1950s and only 47 since 1970s.

## 2 Evidence: Different Kinds

**Facts** play a dominating role in supporting your claim. It is very important to tell the difference between facts and opinions in the course of reading and writing. Then what are *facts*? And what are *opinions*?

### 2.1 What are facts?

Facts can be proved or disproved with direct evidence. Once verified or taken from a reputable source, facts can be accepted and regarded as reliable information. You can find facts in legal records, scientific findings, encyclopedias, atlases (地图集), etc.

- Examples:
  1. Her mother, Deborah, all along had been supportive of our relationship, and even joked about when we were going to get married so she could have grandchildren.  
---a past state of affairs
  2. In the third and final stage, people often fell weak, tired, and out of breath---and exercise performance is severely compromised.  
-----the sentence reports how people feel in the final stage.

**Clues to statements of facts:**

1. Statements dealing with persons, places, objects, or occurrences that exist or did

exist, and that can have their truth or falsity proved, are facts.

E.g.: In last night's class, Dr. John spoke on methods of teaching English.

2. Statements whose truth or falsity can be proved or disproved are statements of fact even when they could be in error and proved false. In fact, then, is not always accurate or correct.

E.g.: Three hundred and twenty-seven teachers from forty-nine schools attended the school-boarding meeting.

E.g.: It is sunny outside.

---If truth or falsity can be proved, it is a statement of fact.

2. Statements of fact use more concrete words referring to things, events, or measurable characteristics. Words such as blue, rock, bottle, ten years, 130 pounds are all concrete words.

## 2.2 What are opinions?

Opinions are not reliable sources of information but statements of belief, judgment or feeling and should be questioned and carefully evaluated. Opinions involve someone's taste and preference and show what someone thinks or feels about a subject. Opinions can't be proven to everyone's satisfaction.

### Clues to statements of opinion:

1. I believe, I think, I feel, I suggest, in my opinion, in my view, it is likely that, seemingly, presumably, one explanation is apparently, may mean, it would seem, estimates, claims, it is apparent that, is considered to be, it appears, calculates, are convinced that, (experts) believe, likely to, predicts

E.g. I'm sure that time will only confirm what we feel deeply about each other.

2. probably, perhaps, possibly, usually, often, sometimes, on occasion (are used to limit a statement of fact and to indicate the possibility of other opinions)

E.g. *Maybe* our children will have some problems, but whose children don't?

It has *often* been remarked that the saddest thing about youth is that it is wasted on the young.

3. "qualifier words", emotive words which show the writer's preferences: best, disgusting, good, great, nice, terrible, the best, beautiful, ugly, the lowest, pretty, the worst, the most...

E.g. When we met I saw him as my beloved, *intelligent, charming and caring*. Cape Town is the *best* city to live in, or Durban is the *best* city.

4. emotive response (the use of exaggerated, emotional words to describe the writer's response to something may signal that opinion, not fact, will follow): *horrified, shocked, humiliated, enraged*...

E.g. No, it isn't really music. It's weird. It is definitely *horrible* stuff.

5. Confident assertions (sounds like *proven* facts but may actually be opinion): the problem is, the solution is, it's... 's fault, certainly, frankly, obviously.

E.g. That's the way *it should be*. Oscar Wilde *had it right* when he said we ought to

give our ability to our work but our genius to our lives.

E.g. 1) If iron levels are low, talk with a physician to see if the deficiency should be corrected by modifying your diet or by taking supplements.

*---imperative sentences*

2) *In general, it's better to* undo the problem by adding more iron-rich foods to the diet, because iron supplements can have serious shortcomings.

6. Statements of opinion may rely on abstract words. Abstract words refer to things that can't be touched or measured, such as faith, love, hope, courage, patriotism, health.

### **Class Activity 1:**

**Group work:** Please find out facts to support the opinions.

Group I Beijing is a historic city.

Group II Beijing is a modern city.

Group III Beijing is a cultural city.

Group IV Beijing is a crowded city.

### **Class Activity 2:**

#### **Group work**

Each member tries to provide one kind of evidence (facts, statistics, expert opinion, example, personal experience) to support the following claim:

**Reading aloud to preschool and kindergarten children improves their chances of success in school.**

## **3. Read to write:**

1. Read the two essays entitled "Can Money Buy Happiness", and then write the outlines.
2. Compare the introduction of the two essays and tell which one is a more attractive beginning to an argumentative essay, why?
3. How has each author dealt with the opposing view?
4. Despite the opposite stands in the two essays, similar types of evidence could also be detected. Compare the similar types of evidence used and tell how they contribute to the claim? What other types of evidence are used differently?
5. What limiting words have been used in the two essays to avoid overstatement?
6. Pick out the most convincing claim illustrated with sufficient evidence in the two essays and propose a similar claim supported with evidence.

### **Model Essay 1**

#### **Can Money Buy Happiness?**

What we have been told since childhood about money is "It can't buy happiness, it can't buy health, and it can't buy love." But the facts don't support this. Evidence shows that money can buy happiness, but it doesn't come cheap.

To begin with, medical evidence shows those with more money live longer,



healthier lives than those with less. There are always the stories featuring<sup>114</sup> the rich young man who rebelled and died of an overdose or the moneyed uncle who had a heart attack while living the high life<sup>115</sup>, but on average, those with more money live longer and healthier lives. In the Whitehall Survey, conducted at University College London, 17,000 civil servants have been followed. All are well educated and have the same access to health care. Yet the clerks at the bottom of the income scale have tripled the mortality rate<sup>116</sup> as those at the top. A U.S. study involving 300,000 men, called the Multiple Risk Intervention Factor, discovered every income class was healthier than the classes below them and sicker than the ones above.

Moreover, a 1998 survey conducted by the magazine *Town & Country* shows people with more money tend to have better marriages, are happier with the friends they make, and find their jobs more interesting. There are many other surveys indicating that the rich are more optimistic about their lives, which is clearly a major factor in happiness.

These studies come as no surprise to me. Though it's not like you can go to the market and buy two pounds of happiness, money can make you happier because it represents freedom and time. With money you can buy convenience and other people's time. By convenience I mean that more of the necessities in life are readily available to you. When I say you can buy time, I mean time in two senses: first, because your health improves and you are likely to buy a few more good years of life; second, every time you pay someone to type your paper, clean your house, or babysit your child, you are literally buying his or her time to do something you don't want or don't have time to do yourself. Of course, if you are not rich, you have to put in your own time to earn the money you use to buy his. But if you are rich, you no longer have to use the limited amount of time you have on this planet to buy someone else's time. Thus, you stand a better chance of doing what you enjoy.

Of course, this is not to say only the rich are happy or you can only be happy if you're rich. Lots of people are happy. But, if you have lots of dough<sup>117</sup>, it's likely that you're going to be even happier.

## Model Essay 2

### Can Money Buy Happiness?

Would you feel happy when given an additional 10% pay raise? Would you feel excited when winning generous prizes while competing in a TV show? Would you feel ecstatic when getting 10000 dollars by winning the lottery? In these cases, the pleasure centers of your brain may light up, but actually that initial rush does not translate into long-term pleasure for most people. Why doesn't money bring a constant sense of joy? The answer is that the relationship between the two is fairly small.

Many people are under the illusion that the more money they make, the happier

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<sup>114</sup> feature *vt.* to show a particular person or thing in a film, magazine, etc. 特写

<sup>115</sup> To live the high life is to live in an extravagant or luxurious way. 过奢靡的生活

<sup>116</sup> mortality rate 死亡率

<sup>117</sup> dough *slang* money 钱

they will be. They put all their resources into making money at the expense of their family and health. However, they fail to realize that people's material wants increase with the amount of money they make. Many of us must have experienced this without realizing it. When our income is small, we can usually stretch it to cover all our basic needs. When our income increases, we think we will have plenty left over, but it turns out that we spend it all anyway. And when we think about it, we do not know where all that money went. The reason is that when we have more money, we see and crave many more things, and we accumulate many things we do not really need. To quote the American philosopher Henry David Thoreau, "Superfluous<sup>118</sup> wealth can buy superfluities only." Admittedly, happiness is dependent on being able to meet basic needs for food, shelter and clothing, but after meeting those needs you need to turn to something other than consumerism<sup>119</sup> because additional money has negligible<sup>120</sup> impact on how happy you are.

Rather than earning and spending more, true happiness lies somewhere else. It typically comes from good health, close friendship, loving marriage, warm family. According to the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago, people with five or more close friends are 50% more likely to describe themselves as "very happy" than respondents with fewer; on the other hand, a survey of 800 college alumni<sup>121</sup> showed that classmates who valued high income, job success, and prestige more than close friends and love were twice as likely to be "fairly" or "very" unhappy. In addition, happiness is about managing what you already have, concentrating on your own successes instead of comparing yourself—your income—with others. A person with a 5000-yuan salary has more fun using the money to take his family out than thinking how much more fun those earning 6000 would have than him.

Money will buy food, but not an appetite; a house, but not a home; luxuries, but not culture; amusements, but not happiness. It is good to have money to buy what it can, but it is better not to lose what it cannot. Therefore, if you hunt for happiness, don't pin your hopes on the next big pay raise; look at your money with a different eye instead.

From *Recitable Model Essays for TEM-8*

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<sup>118</sup> superfluous *adj.* being beyond what is required or sufficient 多余的, 过剩的, 过量的

<sup>119</sup> consumerism *n.* attachment to materialistic values or possessions 拜金思想

<sup>120</sup> negligible *adj.* not significant or important enough to be worth considering 可以忽略的

<sup>121</sup> alumni (男) 校友

## Unit 3 How to Use Evidence (II): Reasoning about Evidence

### Lead-in activity

Choose a saying from below to refute with reason and evidence.

1. From saving comes having.
2. One takes the color of his own company.
3. A fall into a pit, a gain in your wit.
4. The primary purpose of education is not to teach you to earn your bread, but to make every mouthful sweeter.

-J. Angell, American psychologist

5. It is not true suffering ennobles character; happiness does that sometimes, but suffering, for the most part, makes men petty and vindictive.

-William Somerset Maugham, British writer

### 1. Using concrete and relevant evidence to support claims

#### 1.1 Supporting claims

**Reading activity 1:** Read the essay *College Lectures: Is Anybody Listening?* and discuss the following questions in groups.

- (1) What is the stand of this essay? (par.3)
- (2) How does the essay get started? How is the introduction (par.1&2) related to the stand?
- (3) How does the writer appeal to reason in this essay? Give examples.

#### **College Lectures: Is Anybody Listening?**

1. A former teacher of mine, Robert A. Fowkes of New York University, likes to tell the story of a class he took in Old Welsh while studying in Germany during the 1930s. On the first day the professor strode up to the podium, shuffled his notes, coughed, and began, "Guten Tag, Meine Damen und Heeren" (Good day, ladies and gentlemen"). Fowkes glanced around uneasily. He was the only student in the course.
2. Toward the middle of the semester, Fowkes fell ill and missed a class. When he returned, the professor nodded vaguely and, to Fowkes' astonishment, began to deliver not the next lecture in the sequence, but the one after. Had he, in fact, lectured to an empty hall in the absence of his solitary student? Fowkes thought it perfectly possible.
3. One aspect of American education too seldom challenged is the lecture system. Professors continue to lecture and students to take notes much as they did

in the thirteenth century, when books were so scarce and expensive that few students could own them. The time is long overdue for us to abandon the lecture system and turn to methods that really work.

4. One problem with lectures is that listening intelligently is hard work. Reading the same material in a textbook is a more efficient way to learn because students can proceed as slowly as they need to until the subject matter becomes clear to them. Many students believe years of watching television have sabotaged their attention span, but their real problem is that listening attentively is much harder than they think.
5. Worse still, attending lectures is passive learning, at least for inexperienced listeners. Active learning, in which students write essays or perform experiments and then have their work evaluated by an instructor, is far more beneficial for those who have not yet fully learned how to learn. While it's true that techniques of active listening, such as trying to anticipate the speaker's next point or taking notes selectively, can enhance the value of a lecture, few students possess such skills at the beginning of their college careers. More commonly, students try to write everything down and even bring recorders to class in a clumsy effort to capture every word.
6. Students need to question their professors and to have their ideas taken seriously. Only then will they develop the analytical skills required to think intelligently and creatively. Most students learn best by engaging in frequent and even heated debates, not by scribbling down a professor's often unsatisfactory summary of complicated issues. They need small discussion classes that demand the common labors of teacher and students rather than classes in which one person, however learned, propounds his or her own ideas.
7. The lecture system ultimately harms professors as well. It reduces feedback to a minimum, so that the lecturer can neither judge how well students understand the material nor benefit from their questions or comments. Questions that require the speaker to clarify obscure points, and comments that challenge sloppily constructed arguments are indispensable to scholarship. Without them, the liveliest mind can atrophy. Undergraduates may not be able to make telling contributions very often, but lecturing insulates a professor even from the beginner's naïve question that could have triggered a fruitful line of thought.
8. If lectures make so little sense, why have they been allowed to continue? Administrators love them, of course. They can cram far more students into a lecture hall than into a discussion class, and for many administrators that is almost the end of the story. But the truth is that faculty members, and even students, conspire with them to keep the lecture system alive and well. Lectures are easier on everyone than debates. Professors can pretend to teach by lecturing just as students can pretend to learn by attending lectures, with no one the wiser, including the participants. Moreover, if lectures afford some students an opportunity to sit back and let the professor run the show, they offer some professors an irresistible forum for showing off. In a classroom where everyone contributes, students are less able to hide and professors less tempted to engage in

intellectual exhibitionism.

9. Smaller classes in which students are required to involve themselves in discussion put an end to students' passivity. Students become actively involved when forced to question their own ideas as well as their instructor's. Their listening skill improve dramatically in the excitement of intellectual give and take with their instructors and fellow students. Such interchanges help professors do their job better because they allow them to discover who knows what—before final exams, not after. When exams are given in this type of course, they require analysis and synthesis from students, not empty memorization. Classes like this require energy, imagination, and commitment from professors, all of which can be exhausting. But they compel students to share responsibility for their own intellectual growth.
10. Lectures will never entirely disappear from the university scene both because they seem to be economically necessary and because they spring from a long tradition in a setting that values tradition for its own sake. But the lectures too frequently come at the wrong end of the students' educational careers—during the first two years, when they most need close, individual instruction. If lectures were restricted to junior and senior undergraduates and to graduate students, who are less in need of scholarly nurturing and more able to prepare work on their own, they would be far less destructive of students' interests and enthusiasms than the present system. After all, students must learn to listen before they can listen to learn.

**Reading activity 2:** Read paragraph 3 of the essay *Better Living through Steroids* and tell how the writer gives strong supporting evidence.

### **Better Living Through Steroids**

James Ponieworzik

Why do performance-enhanced societies scorn performance-enhanced athletes?

1. Turn on a pro football game, and you'll see cheerleaders with seam-popping breast implants, aging sportscasters with suspiciously tenacious hairlines and commercials for pills that promise Olympian erections. Turn on the news, and you'll hear about how athletes have got the notion that it's O.K. to use artificial substances to improve their bodies. Appalling! Where would they get an idea like that?
2. On its face, the baseball steroid scandal is simple. Athletes who break the rules to win are cheaters. But ask why we have the rules in the first place, and you have to confront a basic irony. We decry performance-enhanced sports. Yet we live performance-enhanced lives.
3. We all know about Hollywood celebrities who get plastic surgery to extend their careers. (You want to see performance enhancement in sports, look courtside at an L.A. Lakers game.) But plastic surgery has become positively democratic. Businessman get nipped and tucked to win promotions; other people just look hot.

And there are plenty of other ways that we argument nature, medically, technologically and financially. The elderly can extend their sex lives beyond what God and their grandchildren imagined. Kids take expensive prep courses to ace tests that are supposed to measure inborn aptitude. Short but healthy children are given human growth hormone for their self-esteem. Adults take Ritalin to sharpen their senses. Pot singers have their vocals, ahem, “sweetened” with additional recorded tracks. Yet no one is threatening legislation against Ashlee Simpson.

4. So why are steroids the exception? One obvious answer is that sports are supposed to be fair in a way that life is not. But sports are full of institutionalized unfairness—ask anyone who’s ever rooted against the Yankees. Olympic runner wins a gold medal because of blood doping: Cheater! Olympic team wins dozens of medals because it has tens of millions of dollars for training: U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.! In the steroid debate, what’s often cited is fairness, not to current players but to the records of retired and dead ones. Yet middling athletes of today routinely outdo greats of the past thanks to legal advances in everything from nutrition to sports medicine to bio-dynamics to equipment. If Roger Bannister had the advantage of competing today, wouldn’t he run better than a mere 3:59.4 mile?
5. Yes, but steroids are far more dangerous than say, carb loading. That justification would be far more convincing if there were any evidence that fans and teams otherwise give two snorts about athlete’s health. But that wouldn’t explain how fans tolerate, for example, football linemen larding up heart-straining proportions and players hobbling themselves for life by “playing through the pain” (i.e., getting taped and numbed by the team doc.) Or jockeys nearly killing themselves to drop weight. Or the very existence of boxing.
6. Of course, tainted Yankee Jason Giambi is an adult; teen athletes, however, have started using the same drugs the pros do. Setting the good example for the kids is a noble argument—but one that society hardly heeds otherwise. If the U.S. senate’s steroid scold, John McCain, were a woman, he might be pushing laws against plastic surgery among pop starlets—the better to save girls from deadly eating disorders, President George W. Bush denounced steroid use in his State of the Union speech last January. “It sends the wrong messages—that there are shortcuts to accomplishments,” said the Yale legacy student.
7. In the end, the steroid controversy may be less about what we want for athletes and children than about what we fear for ourselves. The performance enhancement of society promises to get only more radical, especially as genetic engineering grows more advanced. When people of means can buy sharper brains and stronger bodies for themselves or better genetic bodies for their kids, juiced-up athletes will be the least of our worries. If San Francisco Giants slugger Barry Bonds deserves an asterisk next to his home-run records, maybe we will deserve asterisks next to our salaries, our sexual conquests and our kids’ school test scores.
8. Our new power to transform ourselves raises the question of whether we are changing from nature’s creation to man’s invention. So we ask athletes to maintain

an authenticity that we don't want to—to be museum pieces of purity. Is that hypocritical? Yes, because the fan-athlete relationship is inherently hypocritical: fans want sports heroes to be more admirable than the rest of us. We used to worship athletes for being mightier, faster, greater than we could imagine. The day may come when we gather in stadiums—with our bought-and-paid-for brains, bodies and libidos—and cheer on players for making do with less.

## 1.2 Dealing with opposing arguments: refutation

Assume that the majority of your readers are neutral or possibly hostile on a given topic, and you will be able to anticipate the counterarguments from your readers. Even if you do not directly write about the counter-arguments to your topic, you should know what they are so that you can think of ways to make your own arguments stronger.

Here is an example of refutation:

Some people may support the view of creation, and they think that learning and following rules just make people ordinary. They may talk about Gates or Jobs as examples. *However, I think that the experience of these successful people are too special to define success.* It is easy to call on to create. How many people can in fact achieve success by whatever kinds of creation? There must be a huge number of people failed before Gates and Jobs. Because of the risks, many people pay a high price for creation.

Here the writer refutes the view of creation by dismissing the exceptional example used.

However, many students tend to take what they need to prove as self-evident truth and become almost blind to opposing views. As a result, their arguments sound like biased claims. Work in pairs and contrast the following two versions of an argument and rate the persuasiveness of each; discuss the differences in terms of tone.

**Version (1):** Today it is quite common to see a great many college lovebirds walking in the school gardens, kissing on the campus road, and holding each other at the entrance to their dorm. *This is not a good phenomenon.* In my opinion, college students should not seek love and romance. First, it may take up much of their time and affect their studies. College students should put their schoolwork in first place and study hard for their future. Moreover, it is not practical to seek love at college. Love on campus is as easily broken as glass.

**Version (2):** Today it is quite common to see a great many college lovebirds walking in the school gardens, kissing on the campus road, and holding each other at the entrance to their dorm. However, in my opinion, college students should not seek love and romance. First, *though it is tempting to taste the sweetness of love,* college students should put their studies before forging a romantic relationship. As we know, undergraduates have heavy pressures and huge tasks in the four-year learning

period—to complete demanding courses, pass difficult exams and develop various skills, but seeking love may distract their attention from these priorities at college. Moreover, *while some students do find a lifelong partner at this stage*, most college love stories end in a breakup before or soon after graduation because they settle in different cities. *Whether it is a memorable experience or not*, if you know you have a good chance to separate with the one you are pouring your whole heart into, you would probably think twice about your choice on whether to pursue love before work.

The refutation in version (1) sounds overly assertive and hence closes the space for different opinions, while version (2) seems bringing in a dialogue with the opposing views by using a more objective tone. Version (2) is also an application of direct refutation. The following example applies indirect refutation:

The second reason why it should not be applied is that capital punishment has failed in its purpose. Many supporters of the death penalty argue that it is a strong deterrent to people who could be criminals. They reason that if the punishment is great enough, a person will weigh the amount of the reward of killing against the pain of the punishment, and then will not commit the crime. *However, this is a false argument because most who commit violent crimes are not rational at the time.* A study by Dr. Gordon Grisby of the University of Florida shows that 75 percent of males and more than 90 percent of females who committed violent crimes were under the influence of alcohol or drugs and not rational at the time.

**Writing Activity:** ask students to write a paragraph using the following topic sentence.

Topic sentence: The primary purpose of education is not to teach you to earn your bread, but to make every mouthful sweeter.

### 1.3 Linking evidence and claims

The relationship between evidence and claims is rarely self-evident, it needs to be explained. Writers who think that evidence speaks for itself often do very little with their evidence except put it next to their claims, just juxtaposing the evidence with the claim leaves out the thinking that connects them, thereby implying that the logic of the connection is obvious. But even for readers prone to agreeing with a given claim, simply pointing to the evidence is not enough.

We first have to make sure to include both evidence and claim before we can attend to the relationship between them. Example 1):

The party was terrible: there was no alcohol.

The party was great: there was no alcohol.

Without explanation, these two examples can be interpreted alternatively as they are unsupported assertions.

**Exercise:** Label the sentences of the following paragraph as either evidence (E) or claims (C).



Example 2): The owners are ruining baseball in America. Although they claim they are losing money, they are really just being greedy. A few years ago, they even fired the commissioner, Fay Vincent, because he took the players' side. Baseball is a sport, not a business, and it is a sad fact that it is being threatened by greedy businessmen.

**Reading tasks:**

- How does the writer wrap up evidence and claim in example 3)?
- What are the differences between example 2) and 3) in evidence and claim use?

Example 3)

Baseball is a sport, not a business, and it is a sad fact that it is being threatened by greedy businessmen. For example, Eli Jacobs, the previous owner of the Baltimore Orioles, sold the team to Peter Angelos for one hundred million dollars more than he had spent ten years earlier when he purchased it. Also, a new generation of baseball stadiums have been built in the last two decades-in Baltimore, Chicago, Arlington (Texas), Cleveland, and most recently, in San Francisco, Houston, and Philadelphia. These parks are enormously expensive and include elaborate scoreboards and luxury boxes. The average baseball players, meanwhile, now earn more than a million dollars a year, and they all have agents to represent them. Alex Rodriguez, the third baseman for the New York Yankees, is paid more than twenty million dollars a season. Sure, he continues to sets records for homers by a player at his age, but is any ball player worth that much money?

## 1.4 Appealing to readers' emotions

Except for using evidence, we can also turn to rhetorical strategies in order to persuade the readers effectively. For instance, expressions like *of course* and *naturally* serve to communicate agreement with the readers; words like *show* and *demonstrate* communicate recommendation. Examples:

*Sure*, he broke rules. *Yes*, he ducked. *Admittedly*, he was badly behaved. *But* look at what he achieved. From nothing, he had become a multinational businessman ...

Five studies *show* that economic dependence is associated with economic inequality. The studies *demonstrate* that investment dependence on foreign firms increases economic inequality.

## 2. Sample Analysis

The following sample essay was co-written by three freshmen. Read the teacher's annotations, compare it with the improved version, and discuss the follow-up questions.

### Sample Essay

#### Which Comes First in Choosing a Major, Job Opportunities or Interests?

Everyone in the world has his own trait, which will determine his different life from others. So when we are faced with the decision on whether we should choose our major according to our interests or job opportunities, it is natural for different people to give different answers. Some people suggest that we should study a major with more job opportunities, while others think that we should build the choice on our interests. In my opinion, we should pursue our interests rather than learn for the sake of jobs.

First, if we follow our interests to choose the major, it is usually the most suitable for us. No matter whether it is practical or not, no matter how the future will be, it is our own decision and it is our paradise indeed. In contrast, if you are not interested in your major, you will feel you are in hell.

Moreover, we can study to the best of our ability when we are keen on our subject. In the letter which Li Kaifu wrote to Chinese students he said: "To be the best of yourself, the most important thing is giving full play to your potential." But how can we do this? His answer is interest. When you are interested in the major you are studying, you will always achieve twice the result with half the effort. On the other hand, if you are not interested in the major, you will always achieve half the result with twice the effort. So I think when you are choosing your major, you should choose it depending on your interest but not the hottest major. In the year 1977, Bill Gates gave up his major math in Harvard University for his enthusiasm to the software. Try to have a think, if he still stayed in Harvard and became a teacher there, would he still have today's success? A famous college conducted a research, and the result showed that most freshmen wanted to be after wealth and fame; however, 90% of those who really reached the aim were those who fostered high ideals and were interested in the majors.

Last, it is hazardous to choose a major with better job opportunities. First, the major you think with good job opportunities often, indeed, not so. Teenagers as we are, we don't have many experiences, and most of us were living in a small city or town until come to university. As a result, we know little about society. In our eyes, some professions are wonderful, which results in our choosing of majors related to them. But after you start studying it, you'll probably find that the subject you major in won't offer you many job opportunities. Besides, even if the major you are studying could offer good job opportunities now, how about four years later when you graduate from college? There is a danger that the graduates of this major will not be in great demand then.

All in all, find a subject that you enjoy and choose that for your major. Only in that way you will lead a fulfilled and fruitful college life and get truly well-prepared for your future.

### **The Improved Version**

Which Comes First in Choosing a Major, Job Opportunities or Interests?

Before coming to college, we often have a hard time deciding on our majors. Some people suggest that we should study a major with more job opportunities, while others think that we should make the choice based on our interests. In my opinion, our

priority at college is to pursue our interests rather than secure a job.

First, we can enjoy learning our major when we are truly interested in it. If we choose a major we like, we can't wait to go to classes; we can't stop thinking about the ideas brought up in lecture; we pursue opportunities outside of class—research, field trips, additional assignments. In contrast, if our current major is only a path to a well-paid job and our true interests lie elsewhere, we may probably feel sick thinking about our classes and assignments and our college life will be all “doom and gloom”<sup>122</sup>.

Moreover, we can only study to the best of our ability when we are keen on our subject. In his letter to Chinese students, Li Kaifu, former Google vice-president, said: “To make the best of yourself, the most important thing is to give full play to your potential.” But how can we achieve this? His answer is interest. When interested in our major, we often get twice the result with half the effort. On the other hand, if we dislike our major, our grades always tend to be lower than they should be. Indeed, recent research on college students shows that most freshmen wanted wealth and fame, but nearly 90% of those who really reached their aim fostered high ideals and were interested in their majors.

In addition, pursuing our interests at college does not cost us job opportunities. Though some occupations do require a specific major, the overwhelming majority of careers do not. There are many careers for which companies are willing to hire and train new college graduates. Additionally, the longer we are in the job market, the less important our major becomes. The skills we acquire as we are working will be far more important in determining our career path. On the other hand, because of rapid technological, industrial, and social changes, even if the major we would choose could offer more job opportunities now, it is hard to tell whether it will still be so in four years' time when we graduate from college. It is possible that the graduates with your major will not be in great demand then.

All in all, we should find a subject we love to study and choose that for our major. By doing so we will more likely lead a fulfilled and fruitful college life and get truly well-prepared for your future.

### **Questions for Discussion**

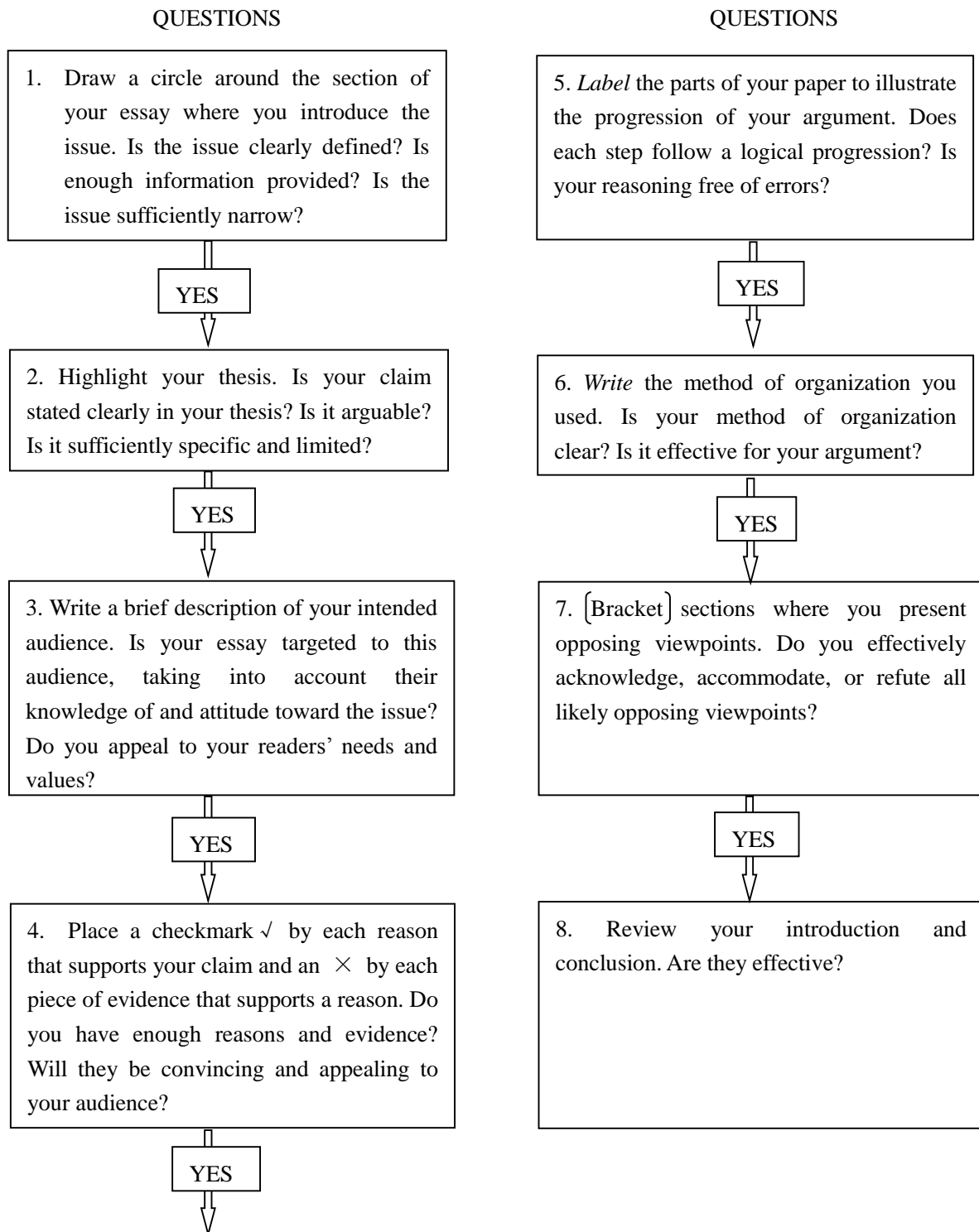
1. What problems in the sample essay are revealed regarding the supporting arguments compared with the improved version?
2. What is wrong with the reasoning of the rebuttal in the sample? How does the improved version refute the counterclaim?

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<sup>122</sup> doom and gloom *n. phrase* when there seems to be no hope for the future (前景) 暗淡无光

## Unit 4 Feedback, Different Thinking Logic and Debate

### 1. Homework Feedback: How to check your essay by yourself



## **2. Possible problems with students' essay**

### **1. Faulty Reasoning**

In an argument essay, a writer may inadvertently or deliberately introduce fallacies, or errors in reasoning or thinking. Several types of fallacies can weaken an argument; undermine a writer's claim; and call into question the relevancy, believability, or consistency of supporting evidence.

### **2. Circular Reasoning**

Circular reasoning is also called begging the question. Circular reasoning occurs when a writer uses the claim as evidence by simply repeating the claim in different words.

### **3. Hasty generalization**

A hasty generalization occurs when the writer draws a conclusion based on insufficient evidence or isolated examples. If you taste three chocolate cakes and conclude on the basis of that small sample that all chocolate cakes are overly sweet, you would be making a hasty generalization.

### **4. Sweeping generalization**

When a writer claims that something applies to all situations and instances without exception, the claim is called a sweeping generalization. To claim that all computers are easy to use is a sweeping generalization because the writer is probably referring only to the models with which he or she is familiar.

### **5. False analogy**

When a writer compares two situations that are not sufficiently parallel or similar, the result is a false analogy. Just because two items or events are alike in some ways does not mean they are alike in all ways. If you wrote, "A human body needs rest after strenuous work, and a car needs rest after a long trip," you would falsely compare the human body with an automobile engine.

### **6. No sequitur**

A non sequitur which means "it does not follow"---occurs when no logical relationship exists between two or more ideas. For example, the comment "Because my sister is financially independent, she will make a good parent" is a non sequitur, as no logical relationship exists between financial independence and good parenting.

### **7. Red herring**

With a red herring, a writer attempts to distract readers from the main issue by raising an irrelevant point. For example, suppose you are arguing that television commercials for alcoholic beverages should be banned. To mention that some parents give sips of alcohol to their children distracts readers from the issue of television commercials.

### **8. Either-or-fallacy**

An either-or-fallacy argues that there are only two sides to an issue and that only one of them is correct. For instance, on the issue of legalizing drugs, a writer may argue that all drugs must be either legalized or banned, ignoring other

positions (such as legalizing marijuana use of cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy).

### **3. Different Thinking Logic**

#### **3.1 Hypotaxis (English) V.S. Parataxis (Chinese)**

**Hypotaxis** (英语形合): English is hypotactic, namely, English is a language in which the logical meaning of a group of sentences is conveyed by using external methods, such as inserting connectives in between. Various kinds of cohesive ties are applied to make the writing coherent. These cohesive ties include all kinds of relatives (who, whom, whose, that, which, what, when, where--), connectives (and, or, however, neither---nor--) and prepositions etc.

**Parataxis** (汉语意会): Chinese is mainly paratactic, namely, Chinese is a language in which the logical meaning of a group of sentences is not presented by the use of connectives, instead, conveyed through the context.

The differences between Chinese and Western thinking lead to one result: Chinese emphasize on comprehensive, holistic thinking while English pay more attention to analytical, personalized thinking.

Different ways of thinking lead to the differences in language processing. English rhetoric requires that the English articles must be coherent and logical while Chinese sentences focus on the inner meaning and are not bound by the form. That is to say, English pay more attention to the transitional sentences and paragraphs by using transitional works which can help the readers understand the train of thought of the author.

#### **3.2 Subjective Thinking V.S. Objective Thinking**

Western people attach importance to objective thinking while Chinese people value subjective thinking.

#### **3.3 Induction V.S. Deduction**

The traditional Chinese way of thinking focuses on visual experience and intuitive judgment. Chinese people tend to summarize the practical experience and inner realization from subjective intention. In the West, the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle created Formal Logic and considered deduction as a senior way of thinking that can derive the unknown. After that, deduction not only become a means of building theoretical system for Western scholars, but also become an accustomed way of thinking for Westerner.

Affected by the deductive way of thinking, in English paragraphs there are topic

sentences which can express the central idea of the paragraph or clearly present a problem to be discussed. Under normal circumstances, the topic sentences are placed at the beginning of the corresponding paragraphs to be clear. Different from English writing, Chinese writing lay less emphasis on topic sentences due to the influence of inductive way of thinking. As long as the central idea of the paragraph or chapter is clear, there is no need to use a topic sentence. Even if there is a topic sentence in a paragraph, it usually appears at the end of a paragraph. In most Chinese essays, the last paragraph summarizes the previous contents.

### **3.4 A clear stand V.S. a neutral stand**

Westerners normally have a clear stand in their writing and speaking while most Chinese prefer to have a neutral standing when facing a controversial issue. Why?

## **4. English Debate**

### **Aims of learning debate skills:**

To be acquainted with the rules and the procedures of a debate.

To learn the skills for arguing and counter arguing.

### **General instructions:**

A debate is a kind of contest where you must support your argument and refute your opponent's argument with logical reasoning and rebuttals by giving facts and evidence. In order to support you argument, you may have to make statements which are against your own opinion. It is best never to agree with the opposite side until after the debate.

### **Group:**

All of the participants will be divided into 2 groups, A and B and each group must decide which side of the argument to take: FOR or AGAINST the proposed topic of discussion.

### **Procedure:**

FOR and AGAINST sides will be seated opposite one another (if the debate is going to take place in a room). It may be a good idea to prepare your side of the argument first: delegate a person in each group to take note of ideas (in summarized form) put forward by the group. Carry out a 'brainstorming session' beforehand if necessary. By consolidating ideas, your side of the argument will flow more easily. All relevant ideas and opinions can then be mentioned one by one during the debate. The chairperson will start the debate by summarizing the situation at heart.

One debate: 15 minutes in total

a 1-minute constructive opening speech from each side, 5 minutes for questions and answers

6 minutes' free debate from each side turn by turn (3 minutes for each side)  
a 1-minute concluding speech from each side  
questions from the floor - the audience can address questions to both sides after the debate (optional).

**Judgment:**

At the end of each debate, the audience will decide by majority vote which team has developed and presented the best argument.

**Steps of an English debate:**

**Step 1:** say your opinion (opening presentation)

1. The first debater in pros speaks. (about 1 minutes)
2. The first debater in cons speaks. (about 1 minutes)

**Step 2:** ask questions to each other (questions & answers)

1. The third debater in cons asks.
2. The first debater in pros answers, then asks.
3. The first debater in cons answers, then asks.
4. The second debater in pros answers, then asks.
5. The second debater in cons answers, then asks.
6. The third debater in pros answers, then asks.
7. The third debater in cons answers.

**Step 3:** free debate

The pros speak first, then the cons speak.

Pros and cons take turns to speak. (3 minutes per group)

**Step 4:** sum up all the arguments (closing statement)

1. The fourth debater in cons speaks.
2. The fourth debater in pros speaks.

**Step 5** (optional)

questions from the floor - the audience can address questions to both sides after the debate.

**The rules of free debate**

1. Free debate should be around two teams. A debater in pros speaks first then a debater in cons speaks. Two teams take turns, until the time is up.
2. The time that each team takes should be calculated the total time. When one team end the speaking, we begin to record the time of the other team.
3. In the total time. It doesn't matter that how long and how many times a debater speaks.
4. If one of the teams uses out the time, the other team can give up speaking or keep on taking turns until the time is up. Giving up speaking cannot influence the score.

**Useful Expressions**

Chairperson:

Let's begin with Mr. XYZ with his opening statement.



Now I open the debate to the floor.

Speaker:

Madam Chairwoman/ Mr. Chairman, I'd like to start my motion.----

Audience:

Excuse me, Mr. XYZ, you mentioned ..., but don't you think it is...

Excuse me, how do you explain... if you insist that...

Debating Tips:

Focus on one aspect and list down your reasons for or against it.

Try to provide supporting details for each reason: statistics, facts, examples, quotation, etc.

Rebut - if they have an incorrect fact, rebut it. If they give an example that has no relevance, rebut it. Remember, the opposition is always wrong. (Predict about the arguments about the opposition and be ready to rebut.)

Before The Activity

Allocate your roles now and get prepared:

1. make clear your positions;
2. anticipate the opposite views;
3. attack-and-defend;
4. search for facts, statistics, examples, etc.

## **Debating Activities**

### **Debating Activity 1:**

Work in groups. Decide at least three points to support or to rebut the following motion.

*When the college students try to find a job after graduation, a well-paid job is a better choice than an experience-orientation job.*

### **Debating Activity 2:**

*Have a debate on the topic: Should we set up a day for men?*

### **Debating Activity 3** (based on an event)

CLASS assignment at a Guangzhou university has provoked controversy after local press reported that a professor asked students to design a hypothetical plan to rob a bank. The professor said the same assignment had been used at the Harvard Business School to train students how to manage human resources.

Many shocked commentators have criticized the assignment as absurd. They suggest that it may even encourage students to commit crime. Such a project wouldn't have any educational value, they argue. Others say that robbing a bank is not necessarily an innovative idea for a college class project; it only shows that the educator has run out of legitimate ideas and methods.

However, a greater number of other commentators support the project. They suggest that such unconventional methods will capture students' imaginations and make the class more interesting.

Students, too, came to the professor's defense, saying it was a very inventive

project from which they learned a lot.

Topic: *Do you think this is a project that should be assigned to a college class?*

**More topics for debates in the following week**

- Money invested in space travel should be better invested in helping the poor and needy
- Experimenting on animals in laboratories is cruel
- Genetic engineering is nothing but a violation of the laws of nature
- Cloning could have disastrous consequences for mankind in the future
- The energy crisis is 'necessary' to maintain the world balance in power
- There is always a price to pay in protecting the environment
- Too much knowledge is a dangerous thing
- Teaching machines' will replace teachers
- Chinese students should have English as a compulsory course.
- An honest person will be at disadvantage.
- The order of a society should be maintained by means of law instead of morality.
- Competition is the stimulation for development and progress.
- Women need more care than men.
- It is nothing wrong with people living together before they get married.
- Pop singers, top stars and top sportsmen earn far too much money.
- Euthanasia(安乐死)is human.

# Module Four Summary Writing

## Unit 1 An Overview

### 1. Introduction of summary writing

Of all the writing tasks so far, summary writing may well be the one you are most familiar with. We make summaries of many different things, including meetings, lectures, and readings. Our summaries may be quite elaborate, or they may only involve one or two key words, depending on our purpose for writing them. These summaries of what others have written or said may be for our own personal use. Most often we use this material for future reference. At the university especially, it can form an essential part of our preparation for an exam, a class discussion, a research paper, a thesis, or a dissertation. In these situations, we are free to concentrate on what we ourselves think is important or interesting about the source.

Summary writing may, alternatively, be part of a more public communication and an integral part of other work that you may do. For example, your advisor may ask you to summarize some recent literature that could be useful for your research group. Instructors may assign you to review or critique articles. In each of these cases, you are given the opportunity to “display” your understanding of some material. Summaries as part of a course assignment are relatively common in graduate student writing and may be a *foundation* for other, more complex writing tasks, such as a literature review.

### 2. Guidelines & steps

The following box explains how to summarize effectively.

#### **Guidelines for summarizing**

Identify the main points, and take care not to alter the meaning of the original source.

·Don't include your opinions; they don't belong to a summary.

Never use a summary to present your THESIS STATEMENT or a TOPIC SENTENCE.

Keep your summary as short as possible to accomplish your purpose.

Integrate summarized material smoothly into your writing.

Use your own words. If you need to use key terms or phrases from the source, include them in quotation marks, but otherwise put everything into your own words.

Document the original source accurately.

Avoid PLAGIARISM.

### **Here are the preliminary steps in writing a summary:**

- (1) Skim the text, noting in your mind the subheadings. If there are no subheadings, try to divide the text into sections.
- (2) Consider why you have been assigned the text. Determine what type of text you are dealing with, that is, the *genre* of the source text (e.g., a research paper) or perhaps the organization (problem-solution or general-specific). This can help you identify important information and focus your reading strategies.
- (3) Read the text, highlighting important information or taking notes.
- (4) In your own words, write down the main points of each section, try to write a one-sentence summary of each section.
- (5) Write down the key support points for the main topic, but include minor detail only if necessary.
- (6) Go through the process again, making changes as appropriate.

## **3. Some notes on plagiarism**

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is presenting another person's words, ideas, or visual images as if they were your own. Plagiarizing is a form of academic dishonesty or cheating. Of course, borrowing the words and phrases of others can be a useful language learning strategy. Certainly you would not be plagiarizing if you borrowed items that are commonly or frequently used in academic English or that are part of common knowledge, for example, *Paris is the capital of France*, or *The result from this experiment seems to suggest that...*

### **Avoiding plagiarism**

An important step in avoiding plagiarism is to learn the techniques of quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing. The three techniques are essential for combining information or ideas from other writers with your own.

### **Distinguishing quotation, paraphrase and summary**

A **Quotation** is the exact words of a source enclosed in quotation marks. Well-chosen quotations can lend a note of authority and enliven a document with someone else's voice. Here is an example.

#### **SOURCE**

Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. New York: Basic Books, 2011. Print.

#### **ORIGINAL (TURKLE'S EXACT WORDS)**

Digital connections and the sociable robot may offer the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship. Our networked life allows us to hide from each other, even as we are tethered to each other. [from page 1]

### **ACCEPTABLE SMOOTH USE OF QUOTATION**

Turkle explains that networked connections “may offer the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship”.

A **paraphrase** precisely restates in your own words the written or spoken words of someone else. Paraphrase only passages that carry ideas you need to reproduce in detail to explain a point or support an argument. Avoid paraphrasing more than a paragraph or two; for longer passage, use summary. Below is an example.

### **SOURCE**

Baron, Dennis. *A Better Pencil: Readers, Writers, and the Digital Revolution*. New York: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.

### **ORIGINAL (BARON’S EXACT WORDS)**

One of the advantages that pencils had over pens was that pencil marks could be erased. Erasers became popular in the late eighteenth century as West Indian gum elastic, or India rubber, reached Europe. In fact that substance, actually the resin of ficus or hevea plants, was called “rubber” because of its ability to rub out pencil marks. Erasers were sold as separate cubes, and people carried them along with their pencils. [from page 43]

### **ACCEPTABLE PARAPHRASE**

According to Dennis Baron, the “rubber” used for pencil erasers received that name because it could “rub out” marks, a property that give pencils advantages over pens. Erasers began to be widely used in the late 1700s, when importers brought to Europe a material named West Indian Gum elastic, which was actually “the resin of ficus or hevea plants.” The early erasers were separate from pencils, and people had to carry both.

Whereas a paraphrase restates the original material in its entirety, a **summary** states only the main points of the original source in a much briefer fashion. A summary doesn’t include supporting evidence or details. As a result, a summary is much shorter than a paraphrase. Summarizing is probably the technique you’ll use most frequently to integrate sources. Below is an example of an unacceptable summary and an acceptable one.

### **SOURCE**

Tanenbaum, Leora. *Catfight: Women and Competition*. New York: Seven Stories, 2002. Print.

### **ORIGINAL (TANENBAUM’S EXACT WORDS)**

Until recently, most Americans disapproved of cosmetic surgery, but today the stigma is disappearing. Average Americans are lining up for procedures—two-thirds of patients report family incomes of less than \$50,000 a year—and many of them return for more. Younger women undergo “maintenance” surgeries in a futile attempt to halt time. The latest fad is Botox, a purified and diluted form of botulinum toxin that is injected between the eyebrows to eliminate frown lines. Although the procedure costs between \$300 and \$1000 and must be repeated every few months, roughly 850,000 patients have had it performed on them. That number will undoubtedly shoot up now that the FDA has approved Botox for cosmetic use. Even teenagers are making appointments with plastic surgeons. More than 14,000 adolescents had plastic surgery in 1996, and many of them are choosing controversial procedures such as breast implants, liposuction, and tummy tucks, rather than the rhinoplasties of previous generations. [from page 117-18]

#### **Unacceptable Summary (Underlined words are plagiarized)**

Average Americans are lining up for surgical procedures. The latest fad is Botox, A toxin injected to eliminate frown lines. This is an insanely foolish waste of money. Even teenagers are making appointments with plastic surgeons, many of them for controversial procedures such as breast implants, liposuction, and tummy tucks (Tanenbaum 117-18).

#### **Acceptable Summary**

Tanenbaum explains that plastic surgery is becoming widely acceptable, even for Americans with modest incomes and for younger women. Most popular is injecting the toxin Botox to smooth wrinkles. She notes that thousands of adolescents are even requesting controversial surgeries (117-18).

## **4. Tasks and practice**

(1) Read this adaptation of “Transformation of the Nile River Basin” and underline the information you think is significant and should be included in a summary. Next to each underlined section, briefly explain why you think the information is important. The first paragraph has been done for you. Then write in the marginal, in as few words as possible, what each paragraph is about.

### **Transformation of the Nile River Basin**

The Egyptian landscape has been changing for centuries. One area which has undergone dramatic change over the last 7,000 years is the Nile River Basin. One of

the most notable aspects of this transformation is the year-round irrigation of land for agricultural purposes, rather than a strict reliance on the annual flood. [This is the topic of the passage.] Conversion to continuous irrigation, which began around 1500 and was limited only by the level of technology, led to improved agricultural productivity. This in turn contributed to an increase in the population of the area. [The effect of the change in irrigation patterns is significant.]

Large-scale conversion of agricultural land involving perennial irrigation began in 1800 with the availability of more modern technology. Water could be retained, raised, and distributed to summer crops with the aid of barrages constructed on the Nile below Cairo and at sites on 30,000 km of new canals. Large dams were built on the Nile at Aswan in 1902, 1912, and 1933. The final transformation to continuous irrigation was finished with the completion of the Aswan Dam in 1960. This full-scale change brought about a major shift and expansion in agriculture. Cash crops such as cotton, sugar cane, and vegetables tended and still tend to be produced at the expense of subsistence crops.

Because Egyptians have historically preferred to live within or near the cultivated land area, agricultural expansion has also had an impact on the environment and livelihood of the Nile population. As the amount of land available for agriculture increased, so did the population. Egypt's population has increased from 2.5 million in the early 1800s to 9.7 million in the late 1800s, 18.8 million in the 1940s, 37 million in the mid-70s, 46 million in 1984, and nearly 67 million in 2002. The population could reach over 100 million by the beginning of 2050. In 1907, urban dwellers constituted only approximately 17% of Egypt's population. By 2001, however, they were 45% of the total. Recent studies have indicated that appropriately 1-2% of Egypt's arable land is lost annually to human encroachment.

(2) Take a look at some attempts at summarizing some of the details in the third paragraph of the Nile River text. Which summary provides the right amount of detail? Explain your choice.

A. In the early 1800s the population of Egypt was 2.5million. By the late 1800s it was 9.7 million. In the 40s the population reached 18.8 million; by the mid-70s it had reached 37 million. In 1984 the population was 46 million. In 2002 it was nearly 67 million. The population could reach over 100 million by 2050. One to two percent of Egypt's fertile land is disappearing annually as a result of the growth.

B. In the 1800s Egypt's population increased from 2.5 million to 9.7 million. In the 1900s it grew again, from 18.8 million in the 1940s to 46 million in 1984, reaching 67 million in 2002. By mid-century, the population will be almost double

that in 1984. A result of this population growth is an annual 1-2% loss of agricultural land.

C. The Egyptian population has increased from 2.5 million in the early 1800s to 67 million in 2002. It could grow to approximately 100 million by mid-century. Along with this population growth, Egypt has also experienced a 1-2% loss in the amount of fertile land.

D. The Egyptian population has dramatically increased since the 1800s and is expected to continue to increase. A small percentage of agricultural land is lost each year because of the growth in population.

E. The Egyptian population in 2002 was approximately 30 times that in the early 1800s. By mid-century, it could grow to 100 million. Egypt is also losing agricultural land as a result of the population increase.

Now attempt your own summary of the third paragraph.

(3) Read “Reducing Air Pollution” and try to determine the text-type. Then read the summaries that follow. Decide which of the summaries you like best. Write one or two sentences after each summary, explaining what you like or dislike about each. Finally, discuss each of the summaries with a partner.

### **Reducing Air Pollution in Urban Areas: The role of Urban Planners**

*Yasufumi Iseki*

Recently, increasingly significant problems regarding energy use have emerged. Enormous amounts of pollutants are being emitted from power plants, factories, and automobiles, which are worsening the condition of the Earth. This environmental degeneration is a clear result of acid rain, increased levels of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere, and other forms of air pollution.

Acid rain and air pollution, for instance, are devastating forests, crops, and lakes over wide areas of Europe and North American. In fact, in Europe nearly 50 million hectares have been identified as damaged, representing 35% of the total forested area. In the United States, appropriately 1,000 acidified and 3,000 marginally acidic lakes have been reported. Since the midcentury, CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the atmosphere have increased by 13%, setting the stage for global warming. As atmospheric temperature rise, grain output may significantly decrease, making it more difficult for farmers to keep peace with the growth of population. In urban areas, air population is taking a toll on buildings and human health.

To reduce the amount of environmental damage in cities specifically, developed counties have devised technology to control the harmful emissions. However, as these



countries already have an abundance of vehicles that continues to grow in number, the efficacy of these measures is diminished. Since cars and other vehicles create more air pollution than any other human activity, the most effective means to reduce pollution is to decrease the number of vehicles. A major shift away from automobile usage in urban areas may be possible with the aid of urban planning.

#### *Summaries*

A. According to Yasufumi Iseki, air pollution can be controlled through effective urban planning.

B. Yasufumi Iseki in “Reducing the Air Pollution in Urban Areas: The Role of Urban Planners” states that pollutants are worsening the condition of the Earth as a result of acid rain, increased levels of CO<sub>2</sub>, and other forms of pollution. In fact, 35% of the total forested area in Europe has been damaged, and in the United States, approximately 1,000 acidified lakes and 3,000 marginally acidic lakes have been reported. Since the midcentury CO<sub>2</sub> levels have increased by 13%. Cars and other vehicles create more pollution than any other activity; thus, decreasing the number of vehicles is the most effective way to reduce pollution. This may be possible with urban planning.

C. Yasufumi Iseki states that because cars and other vehicles are the greatest single source of air pollution, a reduction in the number of vehicles in urban areas would be an effective approach to improving the urban environment. This reduction could be achieved through urban planning.

D. Yasufumi Iseki claims that urban planning can play a role in improving air quality in urban areas by promoting a shift away from heavy vehicles use. This will be difficult to achieve because of the overabundance of vehicles in developed countries.

## **5. Homework Assignment**

Write a summary of the following passage.

### **Selling Cities: Promoting New Images for Meetings Tourism**

Meetings tourism, which we define as travel associated with attendance at corporate or association meetings, conferences, conventions or congresses or public or trade exhibitions, has emerged as a significant subsection of the tourist industry both in terms of volume of travel and expenditure generated. “Meetings” demonstrate enormous variety, ranging from small business meetings of a few participants to large conventions of, for example, professional associations which might attract in excess of 20,000 delegates. The range of locations within which these meetings take place is

also broad, including such sites as hotels, universities, sports venues, and specially built convention centers.

The meetings tourism has been vigorously pursued by many former industrial sites in Europe and the U.S. as part of their strategies of post-industrial urban regeneration (Law, 1987, p85).

This market offers a number of obvious attractions to such cities, not least the rapidity of its growth during the 1970s and 1980s, the very period during which many cities were suffering contractions in their industrial base. Figures for the U.S.A suggest the business conference industry almost doubled during the 1980s. The growth is particularly marked for international conferences, which bring the greatest financial returns for host cities (Labasse and Law, p47)

In many European cities the economic contributions of business tourism outweigh those from leisure tourism by two to three times (Van den Berg et al. 1994, p161) making it both a seemingly appropriate and rewarding sector for former manufacturing cities to pursue. (Adapted from Bradley, Hall, and Harrison 2002)

## Unit 2 Flipped Class

In the following 1 or 2 weeks, we will have a flipped class. Here is the instruction for the flipped class.

### 1. Procedures

Step 1: Each team chooses one from the 4 passages according to your interest.

Step 2: Each one in the team writes a summary based on the chosen passage respectively.

Step 3: All team members discuss together about the strength and weakness of each summary.

Step 4: All team members work together to write one final summary.

Step 5: Each team goes to the classroom (according to the assigned timetable) with the individual draft summaries and the final group summary for face-to-face tutoring.

### 2. Passage Summary - Rubric

#### **10 points total:**

- 2 points for the beginning part: appropriate Thesis Statement and the source
- 7 points for the body part: supporting points
- 1 points for an appropriate Conclusion
- Plagiarism nullifies the score – 0 points

### 3. Passages for Flipped Class

#### **Passage One**

##### **The Other Population Crisis**

IT IS AN UNQUESTIONED PRINCIPLE that has dominated international thinking for decades: we live in an overcrowded world teeming with billions of humans who are destined to suffocate our cities and squeeze our planet of its precious resources. Our species is inexorably wrecking Earth: flooding valleys, butting down forests and destroying the habitats of animals and plants faster than scientists can classify them. Our future is destined to be nasty, brutish, and cramped.

Or is it? Now, it seems, population analysts have started to question the ‘self-evident’ truth that we are destined to eventually to drown under our own weight. While accepting that populations will continue to rise, they point out that this rise will not be nearly as steep or as long-lasting as was once feared. They even claim they can envisage the day when world population numbers will peak and begin to decline.

As evidence, statisticians point to a simple, stark fact: people are having fewer

and fewer children. In the 1970s, global fertility rates stood at about six children per woman. Today the average is 2.9 and falling. Such a rate will still see the world's population increase to nine billion by 2050, a rise of fifty percent on today's figure. That is not good news for the planet, but it is far less alarming than the projections of fifteen billion that were once being made. More to the point, statisticians predict that after 2050 the number of humans will do down. Such trends raise two key questions. Why has the rise in world populations started to die out so dramatically? And what will be the consequences of this decline?

Answers to the first question depend largely on locality. In Europe, for example, couples will have only one or two children when they might have had three or four in the past. There are various reasons for this. Women now have their own career options, and are no longer considered failures if they do not marry and produce children in their twenties or thirties. This has taken a substantial number out of the pool of potential mothers. In addition, parents have aspirations for their offspring, choices not available to past generations but which cost money, for example, higher education and travel. These and other pressures have reduced the average birth rate in European countries to 1.4 per couple. Given that a country needs a birth rate of 2.1 to maintain its numbers, it is clear to see that in the long term there will be fewer Europeans.

The causes of declining numbers in other countries are more varied and more alarming. Russia's population is dropping by almost 750,000 people a year. The causes are alcoholism, breakdown of the public health service, and industrial pollution that has had a disastrous effect on men's fertility. In China, the state enforces quotas of offspring numbers, and it is expected that its population will peak at 1.5 billion by 2019 then go into steep decline. Some analysts suggest the country could lose twenty to thirty per cent of its population every generation. There is also the exodus from the countryside, a trek happening across the globe. Soon half the world's population will have urban homes. But in cities, children become a cost rather than an asset for helping to work the land, and again pressures mount for people to cut the size of their families.

The impact of all this is harder to gauge. In Europe, demographers forecast a major drop in the numbers who will work and earn money, while the population of older people – who need support and help – will soar. So, the urging by a British politician that it is the patriotic duty of women to have children makes sense. There will be no workforce if people do not have children. At present the median age of people is twenty-six; within a hundred years, if current trends continue, that will have doubled. More and more old people will have to be supported by fewer and fewer young people. In China, the problem is worse. Most young Chinese adults have no brothers or sisters and face the prospect of having to care for two parents and four grandparents on their own. Pensions and incomes are simply not able to rise fast enough to deal with the crisis.

There are people who cling to the hope that it is possible to have a vibrant economy without a growing population, but mainstream economists are pessimistic. On the other hand, it is clear that reduced human numbers can only be good for the planet in the long term. Until we halt the spread of our own species, the destruction of

the last great wildernesses, such as the Amazon, will continue. Just after the last Ice Age, there were only a few hundred thousand humans on Earth. Since then the population has grown ten thousandfold. Such a growth rate, and our imperfect attempts to control it, are bound to lead us into an uncertain future.

## Passage Two

### Global Warming is Real

In the past 1,300 years, the earth has not experienced such a warming trend as we are having now (NASA, 2016). In fact, the World Meteorological Organization has stated that the global temperature is 1.2C above pre-industrial levels and for three years in a row, it has been the hottest year on record (Carrington, 2016). Though the scientific evidence seems overwhelming in favor of global warming, there are those, for various reasons, who believe that global warming is a hoax or not empirically verified. This is disappointing, as the future of our planet is at stake, and the last thing we should do in this critical time is argue whether or not our world is being destroyed. In order to enlighten those who believe global warming is not currently happening, I will present evidence that will show that global warming is real due to sea levels rising, global temperatures rising, warming oceans, shrinking ice sheets, declining Arctic sea ice, glacial retreat, extreme temperature events, ocean acidification, and decreased snow cover. In turn, I will also discuss counterarguments and their refutations.

The world over, sea levels are rising at an unprecedented rate. Two reasons why sea levels are rising is because of the warming of sea water (water expands when it warms) and the melting of land-based ice, such as glaciers and ice sheets. According to scientists John Church and Neil White, the global sea level rose 17 centimeters (6.7 inches) in the last century. Furthermore, the rate in this last decade has been nearly double compared to the last century (Church & White, 2006). So, if we compare the sea levels from this century to the last, it is obvious that sea levels are taking an unexpected turn—and the global rise in temperature has much to do with this.

A global rise in temperature has been obvious for some years now. T.C. Peterson et.al., in their analysis for the Special Supplement to the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, **found most of the warming happened in the past 35 years, with 15 of the 16 warmest years on record occurring from 2001.** In addition, 2015 was the first time the global average temperatures were 1 degree Celsius or more above the 1880-1899 average (T.C. Peterson et.al, 2016). This clearly demonstrates that global warming is a recent phenomenon, and should be considered especially dangerous if it continues at its current rate.

Like sea levels rising from warming, the oceans are also shown to be warming. According to geophysical research by Levitus, et. al., **the oceans have absorbed the increasing global heat, with the topmost 700 meters (about 2,300 feet) of oceans demonstrating a warming of 0.302 degrees Fahrenheit since 1969 ( Levitus, et. al., 2009).** Even on the surface of oceans, something that is easy to record scientifically, global warming is more than noticeable.

Another happening that is also easy to detect is the shrinking of ice sheets. Specifically, the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets are decreasing in mass at an accelerated rate. Information from NASA's Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment point to Greenland, which lost 150 to 250 cubic kilometers (36 to 60 cubic miles) of ice per year between 2002 and 2006, and to Antarctica, which lost about 152 cubic kilometers (36 cubic miles) of ice between 2002 and 2005 (NASA, 2016). This is not normal by any means, and shows there is an uncertain future for animals that inhabit those ice sheets and for us as a species, as higher ocean water levels means certain masses of land will be covered by water.

Along with ice sheets, Arctic sea ice is declining rapidly. The National Ice & Snow Data Center show that the extent and thickness of Arctic sea ice has dissipated quickly over the past several decades (National Snow and Ice Data Center, 2016). This is a telltale sign that global warming is at work.

Glaciers are also being attacked by global warming, like other frozen bodies of water. The National Ice & Snow Data Center presents evidence that glaciers are retreating globally. This includes areas such as the Alps, the Himalayas, the Andes, the Rockies, Alaska, and Africa (National Snow and Ice Data Center, 2016). It is not a rarity or a strange, local phenomenon: it is a global catastrophe that needs to be addressed.

Extreme events come hand in hand with catastrophes. According to the National Centers for Environmental Information, the amount of record-high temperature events in the United States has been increasing, while the amount of record-low temperature events has been decreasing, since 1950. In addition, the U.S. has seen increasing amounts of intense rainfall events (Gleason, 2016). There is no doubt we still have cold winters, but the extreme high temperatures we continue to experience worldwide are becoming more and more harsh, which can kill more people and ravish crop lands.

Another dangerous result of global warming that is present is ocean acidification. The PMEL Carbon Group states that since the start of the Industrial Revolution, the acidity of surface ocean waters has grown by approximately 30 percent (PMEL Carbon Group, 2016). To put this conundrum into greater perspective, C. L Sabine, in his article, "The Oceanic Sink for Anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub>," noted that the amount of carbon dioxide absorbed by the upper layer of the oceans is growing by near to 2 billion tons per year (Sabine, 2004). This leaves coral reefs and many other species living in the oceans vulnerable to adverse effects and points to our own demise as a species in the near future.

Now let us rise to the mountains from the oceans. Spring snow, that beautiful sight we have while driving through the mountains, is in danger. Gleaned from the research done by the National Snow and Ice Data Center, we get to know that satellite observations demonstrate that the amount of spring snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere has decreased over the past five decades. In addition, the snow is melting earlier than usual (National Snow and Ice Data Center, 2016). Not only does this mean less of a chance to do winter sports, but it also endangers the habitats that these mountains maintain.

Despite all these factors involved and the evidence shown from highly-credible

sources (mostly governmental), there are critics of global warming as a scientific fact. One such criticism is that there is no real consensus that it is real, and that it is something up for discussion. However, the fact is that according to the authors of seven major climate consensus studies, about 97% of climate scientists believe in global warming (Skeptical Science, 2016). The critics who try to debase these results point to minor studies funded by far-right politicians and lobbyists.

Another significant criticism of global warming as a true phenomenon is that what is happening now is a part of Earth's geophysical processes. Every 1500 years, approximately, the heat distribution of Earth switches between hemispheres, though total heat globally remains the same. However, this is a much different happening than human-produced global warming, which has been created by emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere within the last 200 years. Unlike natural heat variations, the present temperature increase made by CO<sub>2</sub> is being recorded globally—on the ground, in the air, and in the oceans (Skeptical Science, 2016). So, it is not a natural heat distribution issue that happens precisely at the same time (the 1500 year hemisphere seesaw), but rather an issue of global heat increase that has been happening since the Industrial Revolution.

Though this was only a glimpse at the mountains of evidence pointing to the fact of global warming, it is difficult to dismiss. From frozen bodies of water melting more rapidly, to water levels rising and having more acidity, to global temperatures rising to increasingly-common events of extreme heat, global warming is showing its signs in a variety of ways. However, there are those that are against global warming as a fact, citing counter arguments, though most of them are illogical when faced with the growing mounds of empirical evidence that demonstrate global warming as a real phenomenon and the strong consensus in favor of it being a fact within the scientific community. And if you still do not believe in global warming after reading this essay and after seeing the data proving it, you have to admit that emitting CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere cannot be healthy for Earth in the long run, and that we should do whatever we can to change the way we treat our planet and ultimately ourselves.

### **Passage Three**

#### **Travel Accounts**

There are many reasons why individuals have traveled beyond their own societies. Some travelers may have simply desired to satisfy curiosity about the larger world. Until recent times, however, trade, business dealings, diplomacy, political administration, military campaigns, exile, flight from persecution, migration, pilgrimage, missionary efforts, and the quest for economic or educational opportunities were more common inducements for foreign travel than was mere curiosity. While the travelers' accounts give much valuable information on these foreign lands and provide a window for the understanding of the local cultures and histories, they are also a mirror to the travelers themselves, for these accounts help them to have a better understanding of themselves.

Records of foreign travel appeared soon after the invention of writing, and fragmentary travel accounts appeared in both Mesopotamia and Egypt in ancient times. After the formation of large, imperial states in the classical world, travel accounts emerged as a prominent literary genre in many lands, and they held especially strong appeal for rulers desiring useful knowledge about their realms. The Greek historian Herodotus reported on his travels in Egypt and Anatolia in researching the history of the Persian wars. The Chinese envoy Zhang Qian described much of central Asia as far west as Bactria (modern-day Afghanistan) on the basis of travels undertaken in the first century BC while searching for allies for the Han dynasty. Hellenistic and Roman geographers such as Ptolemy, Strabo, and Pliny the Elder relied on their own travels through much of the Mediterranean world as well as reports of other travelers to compile vast compendia of geographical knowledge.

During the postclassical era (about 500 to 1500 CE), trade and pilgrimage emerged as major incentives for travel to foreign lands. Muslim merchants sought trading opportunities throughout much of the eastern hemisphere. They described lands, peoples, and commercial products of the Indian Ocean basin from east Africa to Indonesia, and they supplied the first written accounts of societies in sub-Saharan west Africa. While merchants set out in search of trade and profit, devout Muslims traveled as pilgrims to Mecca to make their hajj and visit the holy sites of Islam. Since the prophet Muhammad's original pilgrimage to Mecca, untold millions of Muslims have followed his example, and thousands of hajj accounts have related their experiences. One of the best known Muslim travelers, Ibn Battuta, began his travels with the hajj but then went on to visit central Asia, India, China, sub-Saharan Africa, and parts of Mediterranean Europe before returning finally to his home in Morocco. Fast Asian travelers; were not quite so prominent as Muslims during the postclassical era, but they too followed many of the highway and sea lanes of the eastern hemisphere. Chinese merchants frequently visited southeast Asia and India, occasionally venturing even to east Africa, and devout East Asian Buddhists undertook distant pilgrimages. Between the 5th and 9th centuries CE, hundreds and possibly even thousands of Chinese Buddhists traveled to India to study with Buddhist teachers, collect sacred texts, and visit holy sites. Written accounts recorded the experiences of many pilgrims, such as Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing. Though not so numerous as the Chinese pilgrims, Buddhists from Japan, Korea, and other lands also ventured abroad in the interests of spiritual enlightenment.

Medieval Europeans did not hit the roads in such large numbers as their Muslim and east Asian counterparts during the early part of the postclassical era, although gradually increasing crowds of Christian pilgrims flowed to Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago de Compostela (in northern Spain), and other sites. After the 12th century, however, merchants, pilgrims, and missionaries from medieval Europe traveled widely and left numerous travel accounts, of which Marco Polo's description of his travels and sojourn in China is the best known. As they became familiar with the larger world of the eastern hemisphere and the profitable commercial opportunities that it offered - European peoples worked to find new and more direct routes to Asian



and African markets Their efforts took them not only to all parts of the eastern hemisphere, but eventually to the Americas and Oceania as well.

If Muslim and Chinese peoples dominated travel and travel writing in postclassical times, European explorers, conquerors, merchants, and missionaries took center stage during the early modern era (about 1500 to 1800 CE). By no means did Muslim and Chinese travel come to a halt in early modern times. But European peoples ventured to the distant corners of the globe, and European printing presses churned out thousands of travel accounts that described foreign lands and peoples for a reading public with an apparently insatiable appetite for news about the larger world. The volume of travel literature was so great that several editors, including Giambattista Ramusio, Richard Hakluyt, Theodore de Bry, and Samuel Purchas, assembled numerous travel accounts and made them available in enormous published collections.

During the 19th century, European travelers made their way to the interior regions of Africa and the Americas, generating a fresh round of travel writing as they did so. Meanwhile, European colonial administrators devoted numerous writings to the societies of their colonial subjects, particularly in Asian and African colonies they established. By midcentury, attention was flowing also in the other direction. Painfully aware of the military and technological prowess of European and Euro-American societies, Asian travelers in particular visited Europe and the United States in hopes of discovering principles useful for the reorganization of their own societies. Among the most prominent of these travelers who made extensive use of their overseas observations and experiences in their own writings were the Japanese reformer Fukuzawa Yukichi and the Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat-sen.

With the development of inexpensive and reliable means of mass transport, the 20th century witnessed explosions both in the frequency of long-distance travel and in the volume of travel writing. While a great deal of travel took place for reasons of business, administration, diplomacy, pilgrimage, and missionary work, as in ages past, increasingly effective modes of mass transport made it possible for new kinds of travel to flourish. The most distinctive of them was mass tourism, which emerged as a major form of consumption for individuals living in the world's wealthy societies. Tourism enabled consumers to get away from home to see the sights in Rome, take a cruise through the Caribbean, walk the Great Wall of China, visit some wineries in Bordeaux, or go on safari in Kenya. A peculiar variant of the travel account arose to meet the needs of these tourists: the guidebook, which offered advice on food, lodging, shopping, local customs, and all the sights that visitors should not miss seeing. Tourism has had a massive economic impact throughout the world, but other new forms of travel have also had considerable influence in contemporary times. Recent times have seen unprecedented waves of migration, for example, and numerous migrants have sought to record their experiences and articulate their feelings about life in foreign lands. Recent times have also seen an unprecedented development of ethnic consciousness, and many are the intellectuals and writers in diaspora who have visited the homes of their ancestors to see how much of their forebears' values and cultural traditions they themselves have inherited. Particularly notable among their

accounts are the memoirs of Malcolm X and Maya Angelou describing their visits to Africa.

#### Passage Four



Robert L. Leahy Ph.D.

#### **Ten Steps to Freeing Yourself from Your Worry: Turning worry on its head**

February 05, 2018, *Psychology Today*

Are you dwelling on negative thoughts about the future—predicting that dire or terrible things will happen? Do you lose sleep because of your worry, find yourself distracted, feel nauseated, exhausted, and tense? Worry is one of the most common psychological problems that many of us face, but some people find themselves worried about something on a daily basis. If that is the case, then you might be suffering from Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

What can you do?

You don't have to be a passive victim of your intrusive and annoying worries. Let's organize your response to worry by taking ten simple steps to address your worried thoughts. We are not going to try to think positively or ignore your worry. I am not telling you to believe in yourself or to think positively or to hope for the best. No, let's ask some questions about your worry—let's interrogate your worry. If you are like a lot of worriers you may find that your worry hijacks your mind, you find yourself chasing after thoughts and feelings that seem to control you, and you don't have any tools to deal with your worry. Let's find those tools now—and start using them.

1. What are you predicting will happen?

Are you predicting that you are going to get fired, get a deadly diagnosis, lose your relationship? Exactly what are you predicting? This is called fortune-telling—so write down exactly what you predict will happen. How likely do you think this will be from 0-100 percent?

2. What is the worst, best, and most likely outcome?

Consider a full range of possible outcomes. For example, you might predict that your partner will leave you—and that might be the worst outcome that you can imagine. But consider what might be the most likely outcome. Perhaps you will have difficulty for a while and still continue in the relationship. Maybe the best outcome is that you will never have any difficulties. That might be unrealistic, too.

3. What is the evidence for and against your prediction?

Your negative predictions may be based on limited or biased information. For

example, your prediction that your partner will leave may be based on a recent argument. Or perhaps you are predicting the future based on your anxiety—"I feel anxious, therefore something bad will happen". What is the evidence against your prediction? You might consider some of the positive things in your relationship, your past history, and what the two of you enjoy together. Weigh the evidence. Is it 50-50, 60-40, 40-60?

4. How many times have you been wrong in the past?

If you are a worrier you may have been making predictions that never come true. You just keep predicting the worst and then feel relieved that the sky hasn't fallen. Is this a habit of thinking or is it realistic? You decide. If it's a habit, is it one that you need to change?

5. What are the costs and benefits of worry for you?

What do you hope to get out of your worry? How will repeatedly focusing on the negative help you? You might think that the benefits are that you won't be surprised, you will be prepared, or you will get out before it's too late. OK. How about the costs? Is your worry making you anxious, depressed, irritable? Does it make it hard for you to concentrate on things, impair your memory, lead you to procrastinate, or interfere with your sleep? How would you weigh the costs and benefits? 50-50? Or do the costs outweigh the benefits?

6. Is there any evidence that worry has really helped you?

Look back at all the worry that you have engaged in and what has it gotten you? You might think that it motivated you to work hard—but can't you work hard without worry? Can't you be prudent, planful and prepared—without the added burden of persistent worry? Is worry really helping you get things done—or is taking action, confronting problems directly, and getting your work done more helpful?

7. How could you handle a bad outcome if it did occur?

For example, if you lost your job, would you be able to cope and find another job? If your relationship ended, would your world fall apart or would you be able to cope and move on? Maybe you are more resilient than you give yourself credit for. Do you underestimate your ability to solve real problems?

8. What difficulties in the past have you coped with?

Many worriers believe that they can't solve real problems if they occur. But haven't you solved real problems in the past, overcome obstacles, and gone through difficulty? Worriers are often resilient and they can solve real problems—except they generate more problems in their head than they can solve. Think of past difficulties, disappointments, and losses and ask yourself if you were able to cope with them eventually.

9. How will you feel about this in the future?

When your worry pops into your head you think that there is a sense of urgency for the answer and the solution. It's as if an emergency has occurred. But how do you think you will feel about this in a week, a month, a year or ten years? It may be that things you worried about last month don't even occur to you now. If that is so, maybe things resolve themselves on their own—without worry.

10. What advice would you give a friend?

You are probably more rational, calm and reasonable in giving advice to someone else. What advice would you give a friend with your worries? Try to think of yourself as the compassionate friend that you are to other people—but direct that good advice and compassion toward yourself.

Your worry is not going to go away, it won't evaporate, it will keep popping in your head. You may have been a worrier for years. But now you can use some tools to address the worry, put things in perspective, try to view things more rationally, and use these tools to answer your worries. It will take time. It's like being out of shape for years and now starting a new training program. It's cumulative. Give yourself time.