

Reflective Narrative

A reflective narrative looks back at a change in the writer's life. Linc wrote about his changing relationship with his little brother.

Beginning

The beginning provides background and introduces the topic.

Middle

The middle provides details and events leading up to the change.

The writer comes to a realization.

Not Taken for Granted

I guess I was spoiled. At first, I was an only child, cuddled and cooed over by parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Up until I was eight years old, life was sweet. Then along came Grant, and everything changed.

Grant is my little brother. I don't remember all the details, but he was born a month prematurely, so he needed a lot of extra attention, especially from Mom. My mom and dad didn't ignore me, but I was no longer the center of their universe, and I resented the change in dynamics. And at first, I also resented Grant.

Fortunately, Grant's early birth didn't cause any real problems in his growth, and he crawled, toddled, and talked pretty much on schedule. My parents were still somewhat protective of him, but as he got older, he developed the obnoxious habit of attaching himself to me, following my every move. My parents warned me to be nice to him, but I found him totally annoying. By the time I became a teenager, he was, at five, my shadow, following me around, copying my every move, asking questions, and generally being a pest.

Still, despite my irritation, I began to enjoy him. He was a funny little guy, and I began to find his hero-worship endearing. He copied the way I walked, the way I talked, and even the way I ate.

I remember one time we were eating jelly sandwiches, and he was humming away as he ate.

"Grant, why are you humming?" I asked.

He looked genuinely surprised. "You do it, too."

"Do not," I growled. I took a bite then and realized I had been humming! Apparently, I hummed a lot and never even knew. I looked at Grant and the delighted little smirk on his face and had to laugh. He laughed, too, although I don't think he understood exactly why. Still, from then on, whenever one of us hummed, we both burst into laughter.

The writer reflects on the way the realization affected him.

As we got older, we established boundaries and alliances, becoming more considerate of each other. Grant stopped asking to go along on dates with me, and I set aside time to go fishing with him. He cheered me on at my soccer games, and I volunteered to coach his T-ball team. I taught him to moonwalk, and he taught me to laugh at myself.

I wonder if the transition happened because as he grew older he became less annoying and more of a buddy. Or was it because I had done the growing, becoming more patient, more able to share, more receptive to the unconditional love he offered? Looking back, I have come to the conclusion that maybe it was a combination of both.

Today, I am happy to say that after a rocky beginning, Grant and I are a team. We've already talked about how he'll come visit me when I am in college. It will be hard to be separated, but I know that we will always be close, if not in age or distance, then in that love shared by brothers.

Ending

The ending sums up the writer's reflection about the change.



Narrative



Respond to the reading. Answer the following questions about the sample reflective narrative.

Ideas (1) What change does the writer reflect on? (2) What details and events does the writer use to show what life was like before the change and afterward?

Organization (3) How do the first and last paragraphs differ? How are they related? (4) What would you consider the turning point in the relationship?

Voice & Word Choice (5) What descriptive words show the changing relationship?



Literature Connections: For a historical example of a reflective narrative, consider reading *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*.

Prewriting Selecting a Topic

One way to find a topic for a reflective narrative is to think of ways that you have changed and explore the reasons for those changes. Linc made a chart of several ways he has changed and put an asterisk by the one he wanted to write about.

Then/Now Chart

Then	Now	Reason for Change
I wanted to be a professional football player when I grew up.	I plan to become a marine biologist.	I wasn't any good at football, but I love sea life.
*My little brother, Grant, was a real pest.	My brother is a lot of fun, and we're friends.	We both grew up.
I really wanted to date Bette.	I'm going out with Lyndsey.	Lyndsey and I have more in common.

Prewrite



Make a then/now chart. List how things used to be and how they are now. Then tell why they changed. Put an asterisk by the topic you would like to write about.

Gathering Details

Once you have your topic, you can collect and arrange your details to create the frame of your essay. Linc made a T-chart, listing events and details about life before and after the change.

T-Chart

Things that annoyed me then	Our relationship now
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - He took up all the family's attention. - He tattled on me to Mom and Dad. - He asked a lot of annoying questions. - He copied how I walked, talked, and ate. - We were kind of adversaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I don't mind when he gets attention. - We have some "secrets." - I like his questions, and he listens to me. - I encourage him to be himself. - We are friends.

Prewrite



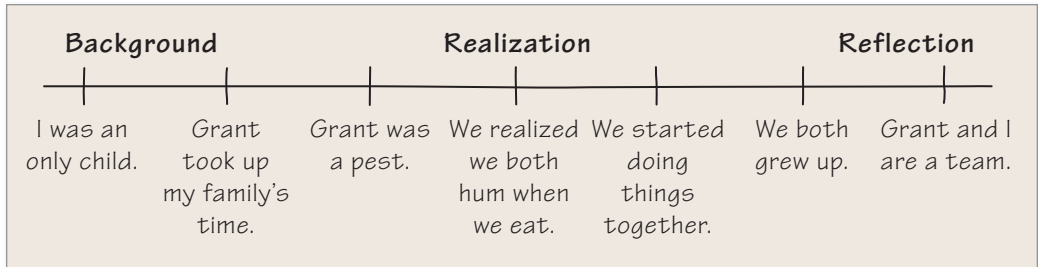
Make a T-chart. List events that happened "then" and "now." Try to include at least five events and details in each list.

Organizing Details

Your reflective narrative may cover quite a long period of time, so you can't include every event or detail. Instead, you should include only events that demonstrate how your life was before, during, and after the change.

Linc used a time line to plot his narrative. First he focused on background (before the change), then on his realization (during the change), and finally reflection (after the change).

Time Line



Prewrite

Create a time line for your reflective narrative. Order the points of your story to include your background, realization, and reflection.

Narrative

Writing Creating Your First Draft

Use your prewriting to write your first draft. If you think of new ideas, go ahead and add them. Write freely, and don't worry about spelling or grammar at this time.

Beginning	Middle	Ending
Provide background details and events that build your narrative and lead up to the change.	Include an anecdote that helps demonstrate the change. Remember to show readers what is happening and use dialogue.	Reflect on events after the change and think about how your life was different.



Write

Write your first draft. Be sure to include a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Use all of your planning notes as a guide, and remain open to new ideas as you write.

Revising Improving Your Writing

Use the following checklist to decide how to improve your writing. Number your paper from 1 to 11. If you can answer “yes” to a question, place a check next to the number. If not, go back and revise your paper for that trait.

Revising Checklist

Ideas

- 1. Is the change that I write about interesting?
- 2. Have I included details and events that demonstrate the change?

Organization

- 3. Does my beginning provide background and introduce the topic?
- 4. Do the middle paragraphs show how I changed?
- 5. Does the ending reflect on how my life was altered by this experience?

Voice

- 6. Do I sound interested in the topic?
- 7. Does my dialogue sound natural?

Word Choice

- 8. Have I used specific nouns and vivid verbs?
- 9. Have I used descriptive modifiers?

Sentence Fluency

- 10. Do my sentences read smoothly?
- 11. Have I varied the lengths and beginnings of my sentences?

Revise



Revise your first draft. Use the checklist above to revise your first draft. When you are finished, make a clean copy to edit.

Editing Checking for Conventions

Once you have revised your reflective narrative, you're ready to edit your writing for conventions. Use the following checklist to review your writing for punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar errors.

Editing Checklist

Conventions

PUNCTUATION

- _____ 1. Have I used end punctuation correctly?
- _____ 2. Have I used apostrophes to show possession (*Grant's smile*)?
- _____ 3. Have I used commas correctly?

CAPITALIZATION

- _____ 4. Have I capitalized all proper nouns?
- _____ 5. Have I capitalized each speaker's first word in dialogue?

SPELLING

- _____ 6. Have I checked my spelling?

GRAMMAR

- _____ 7. Have I used the correct forms of verbs (*I saw*, not *I seen*)?
- _____ 8. Do my subjects and verbs agree in number (*We were going*, not *We was going*)?
- _____ 9. Have I used the right words?

Edit



Edit your narrative. Use the checklist above to find and correct any errors. Then ask someone else to check your work. Create a neat final copy and proofread it.

Publishing Sharing Your Writing

When you publish something, you make it public. By sharing your reflective narrative with an appreciative audience, you can let them know more about who you are.

Publish



Share your reflective narrative. Ask a friend or family member to read your narrative, or read it aloud to the person.

Expository Writing

Writing an Informative Article

When you pick up a newspaper or magazine, you are entering a world of information. It's almost impossible to read a periodical and not learn something new. Informative articles in newspapers or magazines cover every topic under the sun, from aardvarks to zoology. These articles share common characteristics: They're created to inform and entertain. They contain timely information, even when the topic is historical. And they employ a lively writing style to hook the reader, present information in a logical sequence, and explain a topic clearly.

The best way to learn about article writing is to read articles in your favorite periodicals. Pay careful attention to the topic and focus, the way in which the writer hooks the reader, the development of the middle part, and so on. Then incorporate some of these techniques in your own writing.

In this chapter, you'll learn how to develop a well-organized, entertaining informative article suitable for publication in a newspaper or magazine.

Writing Guidelines

- Subject:** A timely topic
- Form:** Informative article
- Purpose:** To engage and inform
- Audience:** Local or school newspaper or magazine readers



"All glory comes from daring to begin."

—Eugene F. Ware

Expository Writing Warm-Up Processing Information

As a student, you are an expert at handling information. Every day in class, you hear information, you see it, you write it down, and you discuss it. Here are examples of the many types of information you process every day.

Facts: Things that can be proven

The great American author William Faulkner had a tough time making enough money in his early years.

Statistics: Facts that give precise numerical values

Faulkner wrote his novel *As I Lay Dying* in only six weeks while working the night shift at a local power plant, making less than seventy cents an hour.

Quotations: The exact words of a speaker

“Everything goes by the board: humor, pride, decency . . . to get the book written. If a writer has to rob his mother, he will not hesitate; the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is worth any number of old ladies.”

—William Faulkner

Anecdotes: Little stories that give insight

Faulkner hired himself out to write screenplays but hated living and working in Hollywood. Once when he struggled over a tough screenplay in his office, he asked his boss if he could go home to work on it. The boss agreed, thinking Faulkner was heading back to his Hollywood apartment. Instead, he headed back to Mississippi.

Try It!

Think about the classes you have had so far today. Which was most memorable? Choose one class period and write down a fact, a statistic, a quotation, and an anecdote that came from that class period. You will be using these details as you write an informative paragraph on the next page.

Writing an Informative Paragraph

An informative paragraph focuses on one main idea, supporting it with different types of details. Alex wrote the following informative paragraph about the money troubles of William Faulkner. Remember that a paragraph has three parts.

- The **topic sentence** introduces the main point of the paragraph.
- The **body sentences** use a variety of details to support the main point.
- The **closing sentence** restates the main point in an interesting way.

Writing on a Dime

Though William Faulkner became one of the most famous American writers of the twentieth century, he had to struggle to make enough money. After publishing his classic novel *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner wrote the novel *Sanctuary* just to make money, but his publisher rejected it. Desperate, he took a night-shift job at a factory, making less than seventy cents an hour. Over a six-week period, while working at the factory, he spent his days writing the classic *As I Lay Dying*. Later, Faulkner hired himself out to write screenplays, but he hated working in Hollywood. Once he asked his boss if he could go home to work on a screenplay, and the boss agreed—not realizing Faulkner was heading all the way back to Mississippi. Faulkner had a sense of humor about his money troubles: “If a writer has to rob his mother, he will not hesitate; the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is worth any number of old ladies.” Luckily for his mother, Faulkner never stooped so low, and luckily for modern readers, he kept writing, even when he wasn’t getting paid.

Topic Sentence

Body Sentences

Closing Sentence

Expository

Write



Write your own informative paragraph. Write about an interesting class period you had today. Create a topic sentence that focuses on a main point about the class and include a variety of details to support your topic sentence.

Understanding Your Goal

Your goal in this chapter is to write a well-organized informative article that engages and informs the reader. The traits listed in the chart below will help you plan and write your article. The rubric on pages **198–199** should guide your response.

Traits of Expository Writing

■ Ideas

Choose a topic that will interest the reader, write a clear focus statement, and include details that support the focus.

■ Organization

Start with a hook that captures the reader's attention. Expand the main focus in the middle paragraphs. Sum up the topic in the closing paragraph.

■ Voice

Use an engaging voice that shows your knowledge of the topic.

■ Word Choice

Choose words that explain your topic clearly. Use technical terms accurately.

■ Sentence Fluency

Write clear sentences with varied beginnings and lengths.

■ Conventions

Be sure that your punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar are correct.



Literature Connections: For an example of an informative article, you can read “The Fight Against Alzheimer’s” by Bill Glauber, first published in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

“There are a thousand ways to write, and each is as good as the other if it fits you.”

—Lillian Hellman

Informative Article

An informative article provides information in the form of statistics, anecdotes, quotations from experts, and even the writer's own experiences. In this sample, a student presents information about the high-risk sport of ice climbing.

Beginning

The beginning introduces the topic and presents the thesis statement (underlined).

Middle

The first middle paragraph uses a personal example to explain the sport's popularity.

The second middle paragraph explains how many ice climbers get their start.

Life on Ice

For most people, walking across an icy sidewalk is enough danger for one day. The thought of scaling a frozen waterfall with ropes and an ice ax might seem like a sure shortcut to the intensive-care unit, but for many high school students, the thrill of ice climbing is irresistible. More and more young outdoor enthusiasts are discovering the sport of ice climbing—and living on the edge.

Ice climbing isn't for everyone, but it's attracting a steady stream of newcomers. Danielle Harris is typical of the new breed of ice climbers. She's a high school senior who is tired of "ordinary" recreational pursuits like in-line skating and cycling. So last winter, Harris headed to New Hampshire's White Mountains to give ice climbing a try. "I was terrified at first," Harris says. "It looked just plain crazy." But once she was on the ropes, she discovered that while physically and mentally demanding, the sport was far from impossible. "I was able to do some good climbing on that first day," says Harris. "And from then on, I was hooked." She isn't alone. The number of high school students who have tried ice climbing continues to grow.

Believe it or not, many ice climbers get their start indoors—and for good reason. Indoor rock gyms have become increasingly popular as training grounds for inexperienced climbers ("Ice Geeks"). The gyms consist of vertical walls studded with hundreds of plastic handholds of various sizes and shapes. The handholds simulate the holds a climber might find on a real rock face, from large, chunky handles to tiny nubs of rock. Steve Carstens, a high school junior who has been ice climbing for two years in New York's Adirondack Mountains, got his start at an indoor rock gym. "Ice climbing isn't for everyone," Carstens points out. "And the rock gym is a great way to get a taste of the thrills of ice climbing without so much risk."

The third middle paragraph provides important safety information.

The fourth middle paragraph gives the reader a feel for the experience of climbing.

Ending

The ending summarizes the article's main ideas and gives the reader something to think about.

Because ice climbing is so risky, many first-time climbers find an experienced instructor to guide them. Every year, dozens of deaths and serious injuries happen to careless or unprepared rock and ice climbers (Brown and William 32). Falling, avalanches, and even hypothermia (a dangerously low body temperature caused by overexposure to cold weather) are all dangers of ice climbing. Guides can help beginning climbers follow safety rules and avoid taking unnecessary risks. “We have a saying in this business,” says Ellen Gustafson, a veteran ice-climbing guide in Colorado. “There are old climbers. And there are bold climbers. But there are no old, bold climbers” (“Ice Forum”).

If the risks of ice climbing are greater than in other sports, so are the thrills. From a hundred feet up a massive blue-green wall of ice, the view is breathtaking, and getting there means a physical and mental challenge that few have experienced. From the bottom of a wall, it's a constant battle of mind and muscle, as the climber chooses a viable route and uses a combination of poise and power to get to the top. “There's no workout like it,” says Danielle Harris, “and there's no gym in the world as beautiful as an ice wall” (“Ice Forum”).

Boosted by the enthusiasm of new participants such as Danielle Harris, the sport of ice climbing is growing, drawing climbers to ice walls from Alberta's Jasper National Park to the Bitterroot Mountains of Montana and New Hampshire's White Mountains. Ice climbing's unique combination of challenging workouts and heart-racing thrills is part of the draw. The feeling of accomplishment is no doubt another attraction for participants. After all, few individuals can show up at school on Monday morning and talk about scaling a 100-foot tower of ice over the weekend.



Respond to the reading. Answer the following questions.

Ideas (1) What are some of the characteristics of newcomers to ice climbing? (2) Why do many ice climbers get their start in the rock gym?

Organization (3) What is the purpose of the first sentence of each paragraph? Of the other sentences in each paragraph? (4) How does the ending paragraph help to summarize the main ideas in the essay?

Voice & Word Choice (5) Does the writer's interest in the topic come through in the writing? Explain.

Prewriting



All effective writing begins with prewriting. In the prewriting stage, you'll choose a topic, do some research, gather details, and organize your ideas.

Keys to Effective Prewriting

1. Choose a topic that you know well or would like to know more about. Focus on finding a topic that will interest your reader as well.
2. Identify sources of information and begin your research.
3. Gather a variety of interesting details about your topic.
4. Write a thesis statement and topic sentences.
5. Plan your essay using an outline or an organized list.

Prewriting Selecting a Topic

To create an interesting and effective informative article, you need to select a topic that interests both you and your reader. One way to begin your search is to look at a “Basics of Life” list, which includes general subject areas. Karla read through the list and selected four subject areas that interested her.

“Basics of Life” List

communication	energy	medicine	sports
computers	environment	politics	travel
economics	food	schools	weather

Gathering Details

Then she created a gathering chart, writing the general subject areas across the top and listing specific topic ideas under each one. She put a star beside the topic that interested her most.

Gathering Chart

Environment	Politics	Energy	Weather
pollution hybrid cars land conservation	computer voting new political parties our new governor	biofuels “green” building* windmills	hurricanes global warming raindrops

Prewrite



Create a gathering chart. Select four general subject areas that interest you and list them across the top of a piece of paper. Then, beneath each one, list specific topic ideas. Place a star (*) beside the topic you would like to explore.

Focus on the Traits

Ideas Make sure that the topic you select is neither too broad nor too narrow. For example, a topic such as “pollution” would be too difficult to cover in a single article. On the other hand, a topic such as “raindrops” would be too narrow. Select a topic that can be broken down into a number of parts.

Researching Your Topic

In order to create an informative article that engages and informs an audience, you'll need to do some research. Remember that you'll need the most current information possible. The following strategies can help you to find engaging, informative content for your article.

- **Begin with your own experience.** Think about why this topic interests you. What connection do you have to the ideas? What personal experiences or anecdotes could you share?
- **Search traditional sources.** Visit a library and use the *Readers' Guide* to find recent magazine articles on your topic. Also check out books with recent copyright dates. Surf the Internet, but carefully evaluate each Web page: Is it current? Is it correct? Is it reliable? Is it balanced (not biased)?
- **Do some investigating.** Experts surround you. Think of teachers in your school who are knowledgeable about your topic, or people in your community who are involved with the issue. Arrange an interview with such a person, or go someplace to gather information firsthand.

Listing Your Sources

Karla made a list of sources of information about “green” building practices.

Sources List

Personal Experience:

Buying a new water heater
Insulating the basement

Traditional Sources:

Green Builder magazine
Nature's Architect by Ronald Stratt
U.S. Green Building Council Web site

Experts and Special Sites:

Hal Jefferson, Green City Contractors
Karen Johnson, Energy Alliance



Prewrite



List sources and begin your research. Write down the personal experiences, traditional sources, and experts and special sites you can investigate. Then conduct your research.

Prewriting Gathering Different Types of Details

An informative article should be filled with different types of details:

- **Facts** are details that can be proven. Facts provide strong support for the main points of your essay, and they show that you understand the topic.

The generous use of foam insulation provides protection from summer heat and winter cold, thus reducing both heating and air-conditioning costs.

- **Statistics** present significant numerical information about your topic. Statistics make the information you present precise and quantifiable.

After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, gas and oil production in the Gulf fell 60 percent, and prices of home heating oil rose to record levels.

- **Quotations** are the exact words of someone involved with your topic. A quotation provides significant opinions or information about your topic.

Hal Jefferson of Green City Contractors says, “People understand that they’ll be paying utility bills on a new home or business for a long time. That’s why more and more of them are asking us to make energy efficiency a part of our plans.”

- **Examples** are representative items or ideas that illustrate a main point. Examples demonstrate an abstract idea in a concrete way.

Other designs may include alternative heating technologies, such as furnaces that burn wood pellets, wood chips, or even corn stalks.

- **Anecdotes** are little stories that prove your point. Use anecdotes from your own life or the lives of others, but make sure that each story demonstrates a specific point about your topic.

Green building can also be expressed in small ways. When the water heater at my home broke down, my dad turned bad luck into good luck by buying a model that was 30 percent more efficient. We now enjoy more hot water for less money.

Prewrite



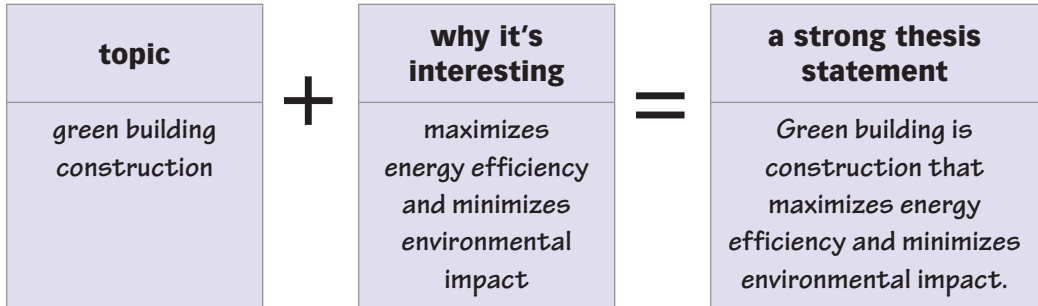
Gather different types of details. As you research, gather a variety of details that will explain your topic and strengthen your essay.

Focus on the Traits

Organization As you gather the different types of details above, remember to note the source. If your teacher requires you to include parenthetical references and a works-cited page, see pages [425–438](#) and [392](#).

Writing a Thesis Statement

After completing her research, Karla was ready to write her thesis statement. She used the following formula:



Prewrite



Write your thesis statement. Use the model above to create a thesis statement for your essay. Try different versions until you are satisfied.

Writing Topic Sentences

Every thesis needs the support of three or more main points. Karla reviewed her research, listed main points, and wrote a topic sentence for each.

Main Points List

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Energy problems make green building important. | <u>Topic sentence 1:</u> Problems with energy are changing people's ideas about building construction. |
| 2. Green buildings use energy efficiently. | <u>Topic sentence 2:</u> Green buildings are designed to use energy efficiently. |
| 3. Some green buildings generate energy. | <u>Topic sentence 3:</u> Green building practices not only save energy but can also generate it. |
| 4. Location and materials also are important. | <u>Topic sentence 4:</u> Builders of green structures also pay attention to where they build and what materials they use. |

Prewrite



Write topic sentences. List main points that will support your thesis statement. Then, for each main point, write a topic sentence.

Prewriting Outlining Your Paper

Before writing your informative article, organize your ideas and details in an outline. Include topic sentences and supporting points. Karla wrote a sentence outline, but your teacher may prefer a topic outline.

Sentence Outline

●	<p>I. Problems with energy are changing people's ideas about building construction.</p> <p>A. Oil prices rose dramatically after Katrina.</p> <p>B. Demand for electricity causes blackouts and brownouts.</p> <p>C. People are growing more aware of the value of energy efficiency and want energy-efficient homes.</p>
	<p>II. Green buildings are designed to use energy efficiently.</p> <p>A. Building sites make use of natural sunlight.</p> <p>B. Efficient materials and appliances are built in.</p> <p>C. Designs save water as well as energy.</p>
●	<p>III. Green building practices not only save energy but can also generate it.</p> <p>A. Some designs use solar panels and windmills.</p> <p>B. Other designs use furnaces that burn wood chips or other biofuels.</p> <p>C. Some designs even use fuel cells.</p>
	<p>IV. Builders of green structures also pay attention to where they build and what materials they use.</p> <p>A. Green building sites are chosen to minimize dependence on cars.</p> <p>B. They recycle building sites and use materials that have low environmental impact.</p>

Prewrite



Create an outline. Use the example above as your guide to create a sentence outline, or create a topic outline if your teacher prefers. (See page 591.)



You have identified a topic, done some research, and created an outline with main ideas and details. Now you are ready to draft your informative article.

Keys to Effective Writing

1. Use your outline as a writing guide.
2. Write on every other line or double-space if you are using a computer. This will allow room for changes.
3. Introduce the topic and state your thesis in the first paragraph.
4. Include your topic sentences in your first draft.
5. Use specific details to support your topic sentences.
6. Restate your thesis at the end.

Writing Seeing How the Parts Fit Together

The graphic below shows how the elements of an informative article should fit together. Use this graphic as a guide to help you write your first draft. (The examples are from the student essay on pages 177–180.)

Beginning

The **beginning** introduces the topic and states the writer's thesis.

Thesis Statement

Green building is construction that maximizes energy efficiency and minimizes environmental impact.

Middle

The **middle** paragraphs support the writer's thesis.

Topic Sentences

Problems with energy are changing people's ideas about building construction.

Green buildings are designed to use energy efficiently.

Green building practices not only save energy but can also generate it.

Builders of green structures also pay attention to where they build and what materials they use.

Ending

The **ending** restates the thesis, sums up the main ideas, and gives the reader something to think about.

Closing Sentence

This powerful combination of monetary savings and environmental benefits is the reason builders and buyers everywhere are going green.

Starting Your Article

The beginning paragraph of your informative article should engage the reader, introduce your topic, and provide a thesis statement. Here are three strategies for engaging the reader:

- **Make a startling statement.**

The United States faced serious energy problems long before Hurricane Katrina ravaged Gulf Coast oil refineries.

- **Ask a provocative question.**

How can consumers fight high energy costs?

- **Begin with a strong quotation.**

According to Alan Davidson of the Energy Council, “The secret to solving the energy crisis is not to use less energy, but to make better use of the energy.”

- **Connect the idea with current events.**

After the rolling blackouts during the heat wave last summer, many local residents are wondering how they can conserve energy.

Beginning

Middle

Ending

Beginning Paragraph

Karla began her essay by connecting with current events. Then she introduced the topic and presented her thesis statement.

The writer engages the reader and states her thesis (underlined).

With energy costs rising, owners of homes and businesses are taking the heat. They're paying more to heat and cool the buildings they own, and they're spending more to run appliances and office machines, too. But green building, a new trend in the construction industry, is making things easier on homeowners, business owners, and the environment. Green building is construction that maximizes energy efficiency and minimizes environmental impact.



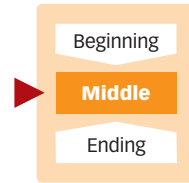
Write



Write a beginning paragraph. Use the guidelines above to help you begin your informative article. (Also refer to the sample beginning on page 167.)

Writing Developing the Middle

The middle part of your informative article adds ideas and details that expand upon your thesis statement. To write the middle part of your article, begin each paragraph with a topic sentence. Write additional sentences that add a variety of supporting details. Be sure to use your outline (see page 174) as a guide.



Middle Paragraphs

This is the middle part of Karla's informative article on green building practices. Read it carefully and notice how she has used topic sentences, facts, statistics, examples, and quotations to build her paragraphs.

The topic sentence offers a main point (underlined).

The body includes facts, statistics, examples, and quotations that expand on the topic sentence.

Each paragraph explores a new main idea about the topic.

Problems with energy are changing people's ideas about building construction. After Hurricane Katrina, gas and oil production in the Gulf of Mexico fell 60 percent, and prices of home heating oil rose to record levels ("Post Katrina" 6). For that matter, brownouts and blackouts, or partial and total losses of electricity, regularly plague urban areas during the summer. These problems, says Hal Jefferson, president of Green City Contractors, have made people more aware of the importance of energy-efficient building. "People understand that they'll be paying utility bills on a new home or business for a long time," Jefferson says. "That's why more and more of them are asking us to make energy efficiency a part of our plans."

Green buildings are designed to use energy efficiently. Builders start by using materials that maximize efficiency. The generous use of foam insulation provides protection from summer heat and winter cold, thus reducing both heating and air-conditioning costs. In addition, light-colored exterior paints and roofing materials reflect sunlight, cutting cooling costs even more. Carefully placed windows take advantage of free natural lighting, and motion-detecting light switches turn lights on when people enter a room and off when they leave it. Water costs can be reduced, too, by using low-flow water fixtures and high-efficiency water heaters.

Green building practices not only save energy but can also generate it. Some designs for green homes and

businesses incorporate on-site energy generation technologies such as solar panels or windmills. Other designs may include alternative heating technologies such as furnaces that burn wood pellets, wood chips, or even corn stalks. And even more efficient technologies such as fuel cells have also begun to find their way into green designs (Stratt 263). Over the long run, these technologies help building owners cut energy costs and save money.

Builders of green structures also pay attention to where they build and what materials they use. Whenever possible, they recycle building sites instead of carving up untouched land. In addition, builders prefer sites near city centers, thus decreasing the need for residents and workers to use cars. Wherever a structure is placed, green builders study the natural light and shade of the spot so that they can make the best use of the environment. Green builders also prefer recycled building materials. If new materials are used, builders prefer those that have a minimal environmental impact, such as bamboo flooring and low-vapor paint.

The final middle paragraph addresses the last main idea.



Write

Write your middle paragraphs. Create middle paragraphs that expand upon your thesis statement. Start each paragraph with a topic sentence. Then follow with explanations and details that support the topic sentence.

Expository

Focus on the Traits

Organization As you write, remember to connect your ideas. Repeat a key word from one sentence in the next.

Builders start by using materials that maximize efficiency. The generous use of foam insulation provides protection from summer heat and winter cold.

Use transition words and phrases like these:

after	for that matter	thus	in addition	too
some	whenever possible	both	other	also

Writing Ending Your Article

The ending paragraph needs to effectively wrap up your essay. The following guidelines will help.

- **Restate your thesis.**

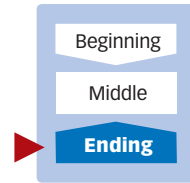
Green building has found new ways to apply the old maxim “Reduce, reuse, and recycle.”

- **Summarize the main ideas of your article.**

Due to increased energy demand, dwindling supply, and higher prices, builders are designing dwellings that use less energy and even generate their own.

- **Make the reader think.**

By building more efficient homes and using the free energy supplied by the sun and the wind, green builders are constructing the future, one house at a time.



Ending Paragraph

Karla’s ending paragraph restates her thesis and supports it with a powerful example and a final insight.

The thesis is powerfully restated.

The essay ends with a final insight.

With energy prices predicted to rise, it looks like green building is here to stay—and for good reason. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, building green admittedly adds about 2 percent to the initial construction cost of an average home. But, over a 20-year period, the energy savings will replace 20 percent of the construction cost and benefit the environment besides. This powerful combination of monetary savings and environmental benefits is the reason builders and buyers everywhere are going green.

Write



Write the ending paragraph. Restate your thesis in the topic sentence, summarize the supporting ideas, and leave your reader something to think about.



Prepare a copy of your entire article. Double-space on a computer or write on every other line. This gives you room to revise.





Revising



Revision improves your work in many ways. When you revise, you may add or delete details, rearrange parts of your writing, or create a more engaging, informative voice. You also check your word choice and sentence fluency.

Keys to Effective Revising

1. *Read your essay aloud to yourself or to a friend.*
2. *Be sure you have provided engaging, accurate information about your topic.*
3. *Check your topic sentences to confirm that you have followed your outline.*
4. *Be sure you have included a variety of details—facts, statistics, quotations, and examples.*
5. *Check your draft for strong word choice and variety in sentence length and structure.*
6. *To mark revisions on your first draft, use the editing and proofreading marks found on the inside back cover of this book.*

Revising for Ideas

6 My essay brims with fascinating details that engage the reader.



5 My essay includes a clear thesis statement and a wide variety of details.



4 My thesis statement is clear, but I need more variety in my details.



When you revise for *ideas*, you make sure you have written a clear thesis statement and included a variety of details. The rubric strip above will guide you.

Have I included a variety of details?

You have included a variety of details if you have used facts, statistics, quotations, examples, and anecdotes. Use a details grid to check your details.

Details Grid

	Facts	Statistics	Quotations	Examples	Anecdotes
Beginning	✓		✓		
Paragraph 1	✓			✓	
Paragraph 2	✓	✓		✓	✓

Exercise

Create a details grid for the following paragraph. Make a check mark for each kind of detail you find.

1 Scientists have made many recent discoveries that indicate life spans could
 2 be lengthened—possibly indefinitely. One study conducted on mice showed that a
 3 low-calorie diet caused a “survival gene” to trigger, making the mice superefficient
 4 at using energy and repairing damage to their bodies. Another study, performed on
 5 fruit flies, indicated that reproduction was the key to longevity. Flies, whose normal
 6 life spans were 35 days, were prevented from reproducing until much later. After a
 7 few generations, the life spans reached 70 days. Of course, most people faced with
 8 the option of eating very little and not reproducing until late in life may wonder if it
 9 just seems that you live longer!

Revise



Check the variety of your details. Create a details grid and check the types of details you used in each paragraph.

3 I need a clearer thesis statement and more types of details to support it.



2 I need a thesis statement and many more supporting details.



1 I need help understanding how to write a thesis statement and conduct research.



Have I created a clear thesis statement?

You have created a clear thesis statement if it does the following:

1. Identifies your topic.
2. Provides interesting, engaging information.

Check your thesis statement by underlining the part that identifies the topic and double-underlining the part that provides interesting information.

Scientists who work on aging envision a future in which human beings can outlive 240-year-old Galápagos turtles.

Exercise

Copy each of the following thesis statements. Underline the part that identifies the topic and double-underline the part that provides interesting information. If a thesis statement lacks one or both parts, write a replacement.

1. In the fight against aging, scientists have enlisted the aid of some unlikely helpers: fruit flies and field mice.
2. Scientists are working hard to discover things.
3. In addition to promoting diet, exercise, and medical care, scientists now are devising gene therapies to help all of us live longer.
4. Everybody gets to benefit from science—well, everybody but flies.

Revise



Check your thesis statement. Make sure you name your topic and reveal what is interesting about it.

Ideas

A statistic provides more specific support.

After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, gas and oil production in the Gulf of Mexico fell ^{60 percent}, and prices of home heating oil rose to record levels. For that matter, brownouts and blackouts . . .

Revising for Organization

6 Each part of my essay does its job perfectly, providing engaging information.



5 My essay has a clear beginning and ending, and the middle paragraphs are ordered and unified.



4 My essay has a beginning and ending. The middle paragraphs are in order, but some lack unity.



When you revise for *organization*, you check the structure of your essay. Make sure the paragraphs are in order and have unity. The rubric strip above will guide your revision.

Have I chosen the best order for my paragraphs?

You have chosen the best order for your paragraphs if you begin with basic information and advance toward the more-complicated ideas. Ask yourself these questions:

- What **background information** does my reader need to know?
- What **basic information** should I provide next?
- What **higher-level knowledge** can I supply afterward?
- What **complex ideas** should I present last?

Exercise

The topic sentences below are out of order. Read the thesis statement and then use the questions above to decide how to order the topic sentences.

Thesis statement: A black hole seems to break all the laws of physics, but actually those laws demonstrate that black holes exist.

If the force of gravity is powerful enough to overcome both electron degeneracy and neutron degeneracy, the star shrinks until all its mass takes up no more space than a pinpoint.

The first law of black holes is gravity—the force that forms and feeds a black hole.

As the star shrinks, it reaches the point where the electrons are pressing upon each other—a phase called *electron degeneracy*.

When a massive star runs out of fuel, it may explode, becoming a supernova, or implode, becoming a black hole.

Revise



Check the order of your paragraphs. Make sure that you have begun with background and basic information and progress to more complex issues.

3 My essay has a beginning and an ending, but the middle paragraphs are out of order and lack unity.



2 My essay runs together without a clear beginning, middle, or ending, and the paragraphs lack unity.



1 I need help understanding how to organize an informative essay.



Does each paragraph have unity?

A paragraph has unity if each of its details supports the topic sentence. If a detail does not support the topic sentence, it should be cut.

Exercise

The following paragraph includes details that do not support the topic sentence. Indicate which sentences should be eliminated to create unity.

- 1 Not all salamanders that begin the annual migration finish it. That's because
- 2 they face a number of hazards along the way. At road crossings, automobiles take
- 3 a heavy toll on the tiny amphibians. Birds, which migrate by air, do not face this
- 4 particular hazard. Raccoons are always on the look out for salamanders, which
- 5 make an easy meal. But owls are no threat because they eat rodents instead. And
- 6 even curious humans can harm salamanders by picking them up with dry hands,
- 7 which can transmit diseases.

Organization

Any detail that does not support the topic sentence is cut, giving the paragraph unity.

Green building practices not only save energy but can also generate it. Some designs for green homes and businesses incorporate on-site energy generation technologies such as solar panels or windmills. ~~Both of these technologies have been around for decades.~~ Other designs may include alternative heating technologies . . .

Revising for Voice

6 My voice sounds professional and polished from start to finish.



5 My voice is knowledgeable. Level of language and tone are appropriate.



4 My voice is knowledgeable, but either the level of language or tone needs adjusting.



When you revise for *voice*, you make sure you have used an appropriate tone and the correct level of language. The rubric strip above can guide you.

How can I create an appropriate tone?

You create an appropriate tone by using language that is courteous and shows your interest in the topic. The chart below includes words that would create an appropriate tone as well as those that would not.

Create a voice that sounds . . . interested	Avoid a voice that sounds . . .		
	sarcastic	flippant	bored
unique	weird	wacky	odd
gigantic	bloated	puffy	fat
microscopic	insignificant	wee	puny

Exercise

Read the following paragraph from an informative article about growing giant pumpkins. The tone should be friendly and interested, but it currently sounds hostile. For each underlined word or phrase, write a replacement that would make the tone more appropriate.

- 1 It's important, says Smith, to keep your pumpkin patch weed free. To do this,
- 2 he uses some disgusting-looking composted manure. The compost attracts these
- 3 nasty little bugs that help to slaughter garden pests like hornworms. If this doesn't
- 4 work, Smith uses deadly natural pesticides. These chemicals come from plants and
- 5 so won't kill or maim humans.

Revise



Check your tone. Watch for words and phrases that create an inappropriate tone. Replace them with synonyms that show your interest in the topic in a courteous way.

3 My voice is sometimes uncertain because of inappropriate level of language and tone.



2 I need to make my tone consistent and use the right level of language in my writing.



1 I need help understanding what level of language and tone are.



How can I create the right level of language?

You create the right level of language by making sure your voice does not sound too formal or informal for your audience: your classmates.

- A voice that is **too formal** sounds stuffy and arrogant, uses long, impressive-sounding words, avoids contractions, and seems self-important.
- A voice that is **too informal** uses slang, catchphrases, and jargon and sounds sloppy and slapdash.
- A voice that is **just right** sounds conversational, welcoming, and knowledgeable.

Exercise

Each of the following sentences deals with the same topic, though only one has the right level of language. Identify which sentence is too formal, which is too informal, and which is just right. Explain your choices.

1. Though the labor may prove taxing, the final product—an elephantine gourd—justifies the effort.
2. Though you gotta work yourself near to falling over, you get this big huge punkin pal when all's said and done.
3. Though growing giant pumpkins takes hard work, the hobby offers big rewards.

Revise



Check your level of language. Make sure your article isn't too formal or informal for your audience.

Voice

The writer improves the language level and tone of the essay.

The generous use of foam insulation

~~Builders squirt all this foamy junk in the walls to provide~~^S
 protection from summer heat and winter cold, ~~so these~~^Q
~~thus reducing both heating and air-conditioning costs.~~
~~dudes at the gas company don't wind up with so much cash.~~

Revising for Word Choice

6 Precise word choice makes my essay informative and enjoyable to read.



5 I have carefully chosen words, avoiding “trapped” verbs, and I define any unfamiliar terms.



4 My writing does not have many “trapped” verbs, and I usually define unfamiliar terms.



When you revise for *word choice*, you check for “trapped” verbs and define any unfamiliar terms. The rubric strip above will guide you.

How can I check for “trapped” verbs?

You have trapped a verb if you have turned it into a noun by adding an ending such as *ion*, *tion*, *ing*, *ent*, *ance*, *ence*, *ancy*, *ency*, *tian*, or *sis*. Sentences that contain trapped verbs tend to be wordy and should be rewritten to free the verbs.

Sentence with Trapped Verbs

The **occurrence** of global warming is partly due to the **production** of greenhouse gases by automobiles.

Sentence Rewritten to Free Verbs

Global warming **occurs** partly because automobiles **produce** greenhouse gases.

Exercise

Rewrite each sentence below, freeing the trapped verb (in bold).

1. The **tendency** of Americans to drive large vehicles adds to the problem.
2. Scientists performed an **analysis** of the worldwide climate.
3. Their **conclusion** is that the temperature is already changing.
4. Governments cannot seem to offer a **solution** to the problem.
5. Individual drivers, however, can make the **resolution** to buy fuel-efficient cars.

Revise



Free trapped verbs. Read your article, watching for words that end in *ion*, *tion*, *ing*, *ent*, *ance*, *ence*, *ancy*, *ency*, *tian*, or *sis*. Look for the verb trapped in the word. Then think of ways to rewrite the sentence using the freed verb.

3 I have a number of “trapped” verbs in my writing, and I need to define some terms.



2 My writing sounds wordy because of “trapped” verbs, and I need to define many technical terms.



1 I need help choosing the right words in my writing.



How should I handle unfamiliar terms?

You can handle unfamiliar terms in one of two ways:

Replacing the Term

Extruded polystyrene provides a high **R-value** for buildings.

Foam insulation helps create **fuel-efficient** buildings.

Defining the Term

Some houses in Iceland use geothermal energy, which literally means heat from the earth.

Exercise

Read the paragraph below, noting the words highlighted in blue. Rewrite the paragraph, replacing some of the highlighted terms and defining others. If necessary, use a dictionary.

- 1 Energy companies have found a unique source of energy—your local landfill.
- 2 When garbage **undergoes decomposition**, it produces large amounts of **methane**.
- 3 This methane can be used to power **turbines** that produce electricity. Because the
- 4 **combustion** of methane produces little **particulate matter**, the gas is a relatively
- 5 clean fuel.

Revise



Check for unfamiliar terms. Read your essay and underline terms the reader may not understand. Replace the terms or define them.

Word Choice

The writer defines unfamiliar terms.

For that matter, brownouts and blackouts, ^{or partial and total losses of electricity,} regularly plague urban areas during the summer. These problems, . . .

Revising for Sentence Fluency

6 My sentences are skillfully written and easy to follow.



5 My sentences flow well, and I have avoided rambling sentences and fragments.



4 Most of my sentences flow well, but one or two may ramble a bit.



When you revise for *sentence fluency*, you make sure your sentences have a variety of lengths and beginnings. Break up any rambling sentences and fix sentence fragments. The rubric strip above can help you revise for fluency.

How can I fix rambling sentences?

To fix a rambling sentence, watch for places in which coordinating conjunctions such as *and*, *or*, or *but* are used to join several clauses. Break any rambling sentences into shorter sentences, rewriting as necessary.

Rambling Sentence

Snowboarders are more likely to visit the slopes during the week and weekends tend to be more popular with downhill skiers but cross-country skiers can be found in equal numbers on weekdays and weekends.

Separate Sentences

Snowboarders are more likely to visit the slopes during the week, while weekends tend to attract more downhill skiers. Cross-country skiers can be found in equal numbers on weekdays and weekends.

Exercise

Rewrite the following paragraph to eliminate rambling sentences.

- 1 Many people like portable table saws because they are versatile. A portable
- 2 table saw can cut plywood and such saws can also be used for precision cuts
- 3 in furniture making and they are perfect for cutting framing timber for home
- 4 construction. In addition, you can take a portable saw with you wherever you go
- 5 and maybe that's why sales of such saws have increased 50 percent since 2003.

Revise



Fix rambling sentences. Read your essay carefully. Fix any rambling sentences by creating shorter sentences, rewriting as necessary.

3 Some of my sentences ramble, and I have a few fragments.



2 My sentences sound uneven, with rambling sentences and many fragments.



1 I need help recognizing and correcting sentence errors.



How can I fix sentence fragments?

You can fix sentence fragments by making sure that each of your sentences has a subject and a predicate and represents a complete thought.

Sentence Fragments

Hungry bears.

missing verb

Catch salmon with their paws.

missing subject

When they fish.

incomplete thought

Complete Sentence

Hungry bears catch salmon with their paws when they fish.

Exercise

Rewrite the following paragraph to eliminate sentence fragments.

- 1 Geese migrate to avoid winter weather. When they stop in fields and marshes
- 2 along the way. Eat grains, grasses, and other plant products. Once they arrive in
- 3 warmer climates. The geese adapt to life there. They generally spend about six
- 4 months in the South.


Revise



Eliminate sentence fragments. Correct groups of words that are missing a subject or a predicate or do not express a complete thought.

Sentence Fluency

A sentence fragment is corrected.

In addition, builders prefer sites near city centers.  Thus decreasing the need for residents and workers to use cars.

Revising Improving Your Writing

Revise



Check your revising. On a piece of paper, write the numbers 1 to 12. If you can answer “yes” to a question, put a check mark next to that number. If not, continue to work on that part of your article.

Revising Checklist

Ideas

- _____ 1. Have I chosen an interesting topic?
- _____ 2. Do I state my thesis clearly?
- _____ 3. Have I included a variety of details to support my thesis?

Organization

- _____ 4. Have I created an effective beginning, middle, and ending?
- _____ 5. Have I chosen the best order for my middle paragraphs?
- _____ 6. Does each paragraph have unity?

Voice

- _____ 7. Do I use an appropriate tone?
- _____ 8. Have I created the right level of language?

Word Choice

- _____ 9. Have I avoided “trapping” any verbs?
- _____ 10. Have I replaced or explained any unfamiliar terms?

Sentence Fluency

- _____ 11. Have I avoided rambling sentences?
- _____ 12. Have I fixed sentence fragments?

Revise



Make a clean copy. When you’ve finished revising, make a clean copy of your essay for editing.

Editing



Now that you have finished revising your essay, you are ready to edit for conventions: punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar.

Keys to Effective Editing

1. Use a dictionary, a thesaurus, and the “Proofreader’s Guide” (see pages 604–763) as editing resources.
2. Check your writing for punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar errors.
3. Edit your essay on a printed copy and enter the corrections on your computer. Otherwise, complete a clean handwritten copy that includes the corrections.
4. Use the editing and proofreading marks on the inside back cover of this book.

~~automobile, it would be difficult to uphold these obligations without the use of the transportation of goods. Also, the automobile necessary. For example, if a company were to ship goods over a fifteen-mile distance, it would be much more economical to use a truck rather than a train or a plane.~~

^{professional} ~~without~~ ^{headlines} ~~the use of the~~

^{without a car} ~~Also, the~~

^{more economical} ~~much more economical~~

Editing for Conventions

6 My grammar and punctuation are correct, and the copy is free of spelling errors.



5 I have a few minor errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation, but they won't distract the reader.



4 I must correct some errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar that may distract the reader.



When you edit for *conventions*, check your punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar. The rubric strip above will guide your editing.

How can I check my subject-verb agreement?

You can check your subject-verb agreement by making sure **singular subjects** have **singular verbs** and **plural subjects** have **plural verbs**. (Remember that a singular verb often ends in *s*, and a plural verb often does not.)

The planet **Mercury orbits** nearest the sun, but **Venus is** the hottest planet.

The terrestrial **planets include** Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars.

Compound Subjects with *and*

Compound subjects connected with *and* require a plural verb.

Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars have solid surfaces.

Compound Subjects with *or*

If the subjects are joined by *or*, the verb must agree with the subject nearest to it.

Either **Pluto** or **Uranus is** farthest from the sun at any given time, due to Pluto's elliptical orbit.

Grammar Exercise

Rewrite each sentence below to correct subject-verb agreement errors.

- Both Saturn and Jupiter has rings around them.
- The rings around Saturn is much more spectacular.
- The Kuiper Belt contain billions of asteroids.
- Halley's comet or other occasional visitors flies into view every few decades or so.
- Either Jupiter or Saturn are almost massive enough to become a star.

Edit



Check your subject-verb agreement. Make sure that singular subjects have singular verbs and plural subjects have plural verbs.

3 I need to correct a number of errors that will confuse my reader.



2 I need to fix many errors that make my writing hard to read and understand.



1 I need help finding errors and making corrections.



Are my pronouns clearly linked to their antecedents?

Your pronouns are clearly linked to their antecedents if the pronoun clearly refers to the most recent noun with the same number and gender.

Galileo discovered four moons of Jupiter with **his** homemade telescope.

If another noun intervenes, the antecedent may be unclear. The pronoun should be replaced or the sentence should be rewritten.

Galileo's **discovery** showed that not all things revolved around Earth, and **it** angered many people.

Galileo's **discovery** showed that not all things revolved around Earth, and **this idea** angered many people.

Grammar Exercise

Rewrite each of the following sentences to clear up the antecedent problems.

- Most **people** believed the planets and stars circled Earth, and **they** held to their belief.
- Galileo's **denial** of his belief was reluctant, and **it** made him feel sick.
- Even after recanting, Galileo murmured about **Earth** and its orbit around the sun, "And yet, **it** moves."

Edit



Check your antecedents. Make sure each pronoun refers to the last noun that agrees with it in number and gender.

Conventions

A sentence is rewritten because of an unclear pronoun.

If new materials are used, builders prefer Green builders also prefer recycled building materials. ~~When they choose new materials, they use~~ those that have a minimal environmental impact, such as bamboo flooring . . .

Editing Checking for Conventions

Edit



Check your editing. On a piece of paper, write the numbers 1 to 10. If you can answer “yes” to a question, put a check mark after that number. If you can’t, continue to edit for that convention.

Editing Checklist

Conventions

PUNCTUATION

- _____ 1. Do I use end punctuation after all my sentences?
- _____ 2. Do I use commas after long introductory phrases and clauses?
- _____ 3. Have I cited sources correctly in my essay?
(See pages **425–438**.)

CAPITALIZATION

- _____ 4. Do I start all my sentences with capital letters?
- _____ 5. Do I capitalize proper nouns and adjectives?

SPELLING

- _____ 6. Have I spelled all words correctly?
- _____ 7. Have I double-checked words my spell-checker may have missed?

GRAMMAR

- _____ 8. Do my subjects and verbs agree in number?
- _____ 9. Are my pronouns clearly linked to their antecedents?
- _____ 10. Have I used the right words (*there, their, they're*)?

Creating a Title

After your editing is complete, add a title that engages your reader and sums up your article. Here are a few ways to approach this task.

- Be creative: **Building Green and Saving Green**
- Use a line from the article: **Maximum Efficiency and Minimum Impact**
- Use a saying: **It Is Easy Being Green**



Publishing Sharing Your Essay

The purpose of an informative article is to engage and inform your reader. After preparing a final copy of your essay, consider reaching the public with your ideas in one of the ways presented below.



Format your final copy. To format a handwritten essay, use the guidelines below or follow your teacher's instructions. (If you are using a computer, see pages 91–95.) Make a clean copy and carefully proofread it.

Focusing on Presentation

- Write neatly using blue or black ink.
- Place your name in the upper left corner of page 1.
- Skip a line and center your title; skip another line and start your essay.
- Indent every paragraph and leave a one-inch margin on all four sides.
- Write your last name and the page number in the upper right corner of every page.

Publish Your Article

Use e-mail or the postal service to send your article to a local or school-based magazine or newspaper. Before sending your article, make sure it conforms to the publication's submission guidelines.

Publish It Yourself

With today's desktop publishing software, you can easily format and print copies of your article. Depending upon the topic you've chosen, you may even be able to add your own photographs or illustrations. Once you've printed your article, you can give it to members of your audience or post it on a bulletin board or other prominent site. Be sure to get permission before posting.

Give a Public Reading

Another way to share your article is to give a public reading to classmates, friends, or family. Schedule a time that is convenient for you and your audience. Practice reading your article in advance to ensure a smooth, clear presentation.





Rubric for Expository Writing

Use the following rubric to guide and assess your expository writing. Refer to it whenever you want to improve your writing using the six traits.

6 Ideas

The ideas in the essay are compelling from start to finish.

5

The essay shows a clear relationship between thesis and supporting evidence.

4

The essay presents a clear topic and thesis. More support is needed.

Organization

The essay shows thoughtful use of an organizational pattern. Transitions are strong.

The essay uses an effective organizational pattern. Transitions are appropriate.

The essay follows an organizational pattern. Transitions could be stronger.

Voice

The writing voice is lively, engaging, and memorable.

Voice is appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience and sounds knowledgeable.

Voice fits the audience and sounds knowledgeable in most places.

Word Choice

Word choice is vivid and precise. Special terms are defined or explained.

Word choice is effective. Words are not repeated and special terms are defined.

Word choice is adequate. Some overused words could be replaced.

Sentence Fluency

Sentences are carefully crafted. Sentences flow naturally and vary in type and length.

Sentences flow well and are varied in type and length.

Sentences could use more variety in type and length.

Conventions

Editing shows mastery of conventions. Essay is error free.

Editing is effective, but a few errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation remain.

A few too many errors remain.

3	2	1
The essay shows some understanding of the topic and thesis. More support is needed.	The topic and thesis should be more focused. The essay needs specific support that relates to the topic.	The topic should be reworked and a new thesis formed.
The essay does not follow an organizational pattern. Key points need separate paragraphs and transitions.	The beginning, middle, and ending parts need to be made clear.	The essay must be rewritten using an organizational plan.
Voice sounds uneven. It should match topic, purpose, and audience.	Voice sounds as if the writer does not have a good understanding of the subject.	Voice does not show confidence.
Word choice needs to be more precise, and overused words need to be replaced.	A thesaurus is needed to find more-expressive words in many places.	The writer needs help choosing stronger words throughout.
Sentences are basic. More variety is needed in sentence type and length.	Too many sentences are simple and begin the same way.	Most sentences need to be rewritten.
Control of conventions is basic. Errors sometimes get in the way of understanding.	Many corrections are needed to make the essay less confusing.	The writer needs help in understanding editing conventions.

Evaluating an Informative Article

Read the informative article below, focusing on its strengths and weaknesses. **(The article contains some errors.)** Then read the student's self-assessment.

A Good Cold Is Hard to Beat

If you're like most people, you catch a cold 2-4 times each year. Each cold means 1-2 weeks of sneezing, sniffing, and misery, and while you're feeling so lousy, you may be doing some thinking (National 3). Science can put people on the moon—and on the bottom of the ocean. It has discovered new treatments for all sorts of serious diseases, from diabetes to cancer, but why can't doctors find a cure for the one of the most common disease—the cold? The answer is both simple and complex. The fact is that the cold is an extremely difficult bug to beat.

People have been battling colds for thousands of years. In fact, the ancient Egyptians even had a hieroglyphic that represented the illness (Paris 328). Over that long time, people have tried any number of cures—from medicinal herbs to antibiotics—with little success. For the longest time, people didn't know what caused a cold—or even how people got them. That changed in 1914, when scientists learned that colds were caused by viruses. Tiny disease-carrying microbes. Unfortunately, discovering the cause of colds hasn't made things easier.

One reason for this is that viruses can reproduce very quickly. Here's how they work to make you sick. A virus come along and grabs one of your cells. It injects the cell with genetic information. The genetic information hijacks the cell and reprograms it to make more viruses. The cell gets so full of viruses that it explodes, sending its deadly cargo out to invade even more cells. In no time, they've invaded your system, and the sneezing, sniffing, and misery begin. But why is this so hard to stop?

Another reason cold viruses are hard to stop is that there are many different kinds of them. Over 200 different viruses can cause a cold ("Cold"). In order to stop people from getting sick, scientists would have to invent a treatment that works on every one of them. That would be a tall order. Even now, medical science has a hard time just keeping up with the flu virus, which only has about half a dozen different varieties.

Another reason the cold virus is hard to stop is because viruses can mutate quickly. Each year, scientists prepare a vaccine to deal with the influenza virus, but that vaccine won't work the following

year. That's because the virus has mutated. Cold viruses do the same thing, very quickly. So even if scientists found a treatment that would kill most of the cold viruses in your body, it probably wouldn't kill all of them. Some would be resistant to the treatment, and those would survive to quickly multiply. In no time, an individual's body would be full of viruses again.

The good news is that even if people can't beat a cold, they can try to make cold symptoms less severe. Warm fluids and rest will help. Gargling with salt water or using throat lozengers will ease a sore throat. Antibiotics, however, won't do a thing to help a cold. That's because antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses. When a person gets a cold, he or she is not alone. All people get them—and they all feel miserable when it happens!

Student Self-Assessment

Expository Rubric Checklist

Title: A Good Cold Is Hard to Beat

Writer: Allison Carter

5

Ideas

- Does my article include a clear thesis?
- Do I support my thesis with a variety of details?

5

Organization

- Does the beginning introduce the topic?
- Are the middle paragraphs in order?
- Does my ending restate my thesis?

4

Voice

- Does my voice have an appropriate tone?
- Do I use the right level of language?

4

Word Choice

- Do I use words that are powerful and precise?
- Do I explain technical terms?

4

Sentence Fluency

- Do I use different types of sentences?
- Do I vary their lengths and beginnings?
- Do I avoid rambling sentences and fragments?

4

Conventions

- Does my essay avoid most errors in punctuation, spelling, and grammar?

OVERALL COMMENTS:

I think my article offers some interesting information about colds. My organization is also quite strong.

My tone is confident, engaging, and informative. I could improve my article by defining some technical terms such as "vaccine."

My article includes a few errors in spelling and punctuation and one sentence fragment. I should check more carefully for errors like these in the future.



Review your essay. Rate your essay and write comments that explain why you gave yourself the scores you did.

Reflecting on Your Writing

Now that you have completed your informative article, take some time to reflect on your writing experience. On a separate sheet of paper, complete each sentence below. This writing will help reinforce what you've learned about writing an informative article.

My Informative Article

1. The strongest part of my article is . . .
2. The part that still needs work is . . .
3. The prewriting activity that worked best for me was . . .
4. The main thing I learned about writing an informative article is . . .
5. In my next informative article, I would like to . . .
6. One question I still have about writing an informative article is . . .

Expository Writing

Writing a Comparison-Contrast Essay

A CD player and an MP3 player have some things in common. Both are digital music technologies, both can be portable, and both are quite popular. But they are different in some ways, too. A CD player does not store digital files; it only plays files stored on a disk. However, an MP3 player can store thousands of songs, offering users the ability to take hours of music with them wherever they go.

In a comparison-contrast essay, a writer takes a close look at two separate ideas—technologies, cultures, people, events, and so on. Then he or she explains the ways in which the two are similar and the ways in which they are different. A well-written comparison-contrast essay provides the reader with fresh insight into two topics by examining how they relate to each other.

In this chapter, you'll read a sample comparison-contrast essay about gasoline-electric hybrid cars and fuel-cell cars. Then you'll write your own comparison-contrast essay that shows the similarities and differences between two other technologies.

Writing Guidelines

- Subject:** Two technologies
- Form:** Comparison-contrast essay
- Purpose:** To show how two topics are the same and different
- Audience:** Classmates



"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate."

—William Shakespeare

Comparison-Contrast Essay

In the following essay, Ang looks at the similarities and differences between hybrid and fuel-cell cars.

Beginning

The writer clearly identifies the topics and provides a thesis statement (underlined).

Cars of Today—and Tomorrow

For many years, people have understood the main problem with the internal-combustion gasoline engine. This engine, which powers most American cars, burns gasoline for fuel, a process that releases many pollutants into the air. Today's carmakers have developed two similar—yet ultimately different—solutions to the car pollution problem. Hybrid and fuel-cell cars both battle pollution, but one is the car of today, and the other is the car of the future.

Middle

The first middle paragraph presents the major similarities.

Gasoline-electric hybrids and fuel-cell cars have a number of structural and operational similarities. Both vehicles look and handle like regular cars. They come equipped with the features common to all automobiles—tires, steering wheels, brakes and signals, safety features like air bags and seat belts, and even optional features like air conditioning and CD players. To the people who drive them, both hybrid and fuel-cell vehicles seem like regular cars.

The second middle paragraph details one major difference.

Look under the hood, however, and the differences between the two cars begin to emerge. A hybrid car has two motors. The first is a standard internal-combustion motor that runs on gasoline. It drives the car at high speeds, during acceleration, or with heavy loads that require hauling power. The second motor is electric, powered by a battery, and it drives the car at low speeds, during stops and starts, and with light loads. The battery is charged using a system called regenerative braking—the force that slows the car also runs a generator that charges the battery (“How it Works”). In contrast, a fuel-cell car has an electric motor, too, but this single motor drives the car at all times. The fuel cell is powered by a chemical process that extracts electrons from hydrogen. The only emission from this process is water (Davidson 132).

Another major difference is explained.

The differences in the drive systems mean differences in the amount of emissions created by each. Both hybrid and fuel-cell cars pollute less than traditional gasoline engines, but the fuel-cell car is potentially cleaner. The

The most critical difference is explained.

Ending
The ending summarizes the writer's thesis.

hydrogen needed to run a fuel cell can be extracted from water using solar or wind power (“Fuel”). Fuel produced in this way would make a fuel-cell car pollution free. Hybrid cars, on the other hand, run on gasoline, so they always produce some pollution, no matter what. Still, the hybrids generally produce 30 to 50 percent fewer pollutants than gasoline engines do (Clark 17).

Perhaps the most critical difference between the two car types is availability. Ten different hybrid models are on the market today, and buyers have purchased more than 200,000 of them (Clark 23). With current trends, as many as 780,000 may be purchased in 2012 (“Hybrids on the Rise”). Unfortunately, today’s fuel-cell cars are mostly experimental and might not be available to consumers for years. One reason for this is that there are very few fueling stations that can dispense hydrogen. In order for fuel-cell cars to become popular, a network of fueling stations must be available (Davidson 135).

Hybrid and fuel-cell cars look alike and operate in similar ways, but the differences between the two are substantial. While the fuel-cell car offers the potential of pollution-free operation, mainstream production is still years away. Hybrids, on the other hand, offer both significant pollution reduction and current availability. These differences make hybrids the high-tech model for today, and fuel-cells the cars of the future.



Respond to the reading. Answer the following questions.

Ideas (1) What are the main similarities between hybrid and fuel-cell cars?
(2) Name two differences between fuel-cell and hybrid cars.

Organization (3) How does the writer organize the presentation of similarities and differences?

Voice & Word Choice (4) What phrases signal comparisons and contrasts?



Literature Connections: You can find examples of comparison-contrast techniques in the essay “Joyas Voladoras” by Brian Doyle. Doyle contrasts the heart of the tiny hummingbird with the heart of the enormous blue whale.

Prewriting Selecting the Topics

The purpose of your comparison-contrast essay is to take a closer look at two technologies and explain their similarities and differences. To find topics for his essay, Ang made a list of tasks and related technologies.

Tasks and Technologies List

Tasks	One Technology	Another Technology
send messages	e-mail	telephone
travel on land	gas-electric hybrid car*	fuel-cell car*
travel in the air	propeller-driven plane	jet plane
play music	CD player	MP3 player
cook food	microwave oven	gas oven

At first, Ang thought he might write a comparison-contrast essay about microwave and gas ovens. But he thought his audience would be more interested in the similarities and differences between hybrid and fuel-cell automobiles. He chose automobiles as his topics.

Prewrite



Select the topics. Make a three-column chart. In the first column, list tasks that can be performed using technology. In the other columns, list technologies for accomplishing the tasks. Consider your own interests and those of your audience before choosing your topics.

Focus on the Traits

Ideas Remember that the goal of a comparison-contrast essay is to show not only how things are the same, but also how they are different. Make sure your topics have a balance of similarities and differences.

Hybrid engine



Gasoline engine

Gathering and Organizing Details

After you choose two topics for your comparison-contrast essay, you need to gather and organize details about them. Ang did this with a T-chart.

T-Chart

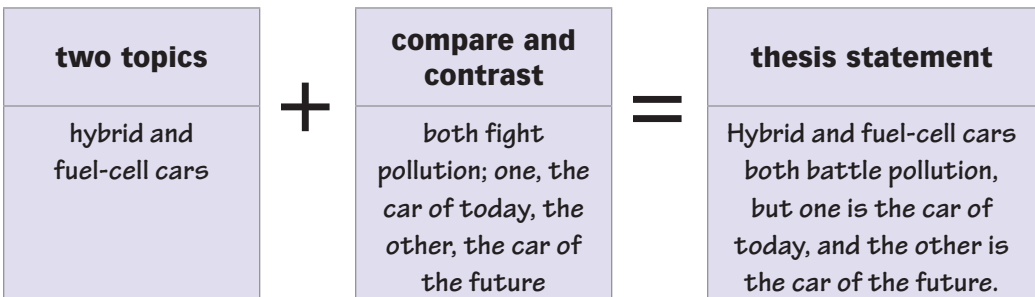
Hybrid Car	Fuel-Cell Car
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operates and has features like a regular gas car - Has two motors; one is gas powered and the other runs on batteries that recharge by braking - 30 to 50 percent cleaner than gas engine - Available today; more than 200,000 on the road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operates and has features like a regular gas car - Has one motor powered by an electric fuel cell that uses hydrogen - Potential to be 100 percent pollution free - May take years before widely available



Gather your details. Make your own T-chart. On each side, list characteristics of one of the technologies you will write about.

Writing a Thesis Statement

A thesis statement offers the focus of your essay. For a comparison-contrast essay, your thesis statement should name the two topics and sum up the comparison and contrast. Ang used this formula to develop his thesis statement.



Write your thesis statement. Name the two technologies and sum up the comparison and contrast between them. Try two or three versions of your thesis statement until you are satisfied with it.

Writing Creating Your First Draft

The following tips will help you to write your comparison-contrast essay. Use your prewriting as a guide.

Writing Your Beginning Paragraph

The **beginning** paragraph should introduce your two topics and make a clear thesis statement.

- Get your reader's attention and introduce the topic.
For many years, people have understood the main problem with the internal-combustion gasoline engine.
- End with your thesis statement.
Hybrid and fuel-cell cars both battle pollution, but one is the car of today, and the other is the car of the future.

Creating Your Middle Paragraphs

The **middle** paragraphs explain how your topics are similar and different.

- Start each paragraph with a topic sentence that indicates the similarity or difference that will be addressed.
Gasoline-electric hybrids and fuel-cell cars have a number of structural and operational similarities.
- Include examples to support each topic sentence.
They come equipped with the features common to all automobiles—tires, steering wheels, brakes and signals, safety features like air bags and seat belts, . . .

Finishing with a Strong Ending Paragraph

The **ending** paragraph restates your thesis.

- Take a final look.
While the fuel-cell car offers the potential of pollution-free operation, mainstream production is still years away. Hybrids, on the other hand, offer both significant pollution reduction and current availability.
- Restate your thesis.
These differences make hybrids the high-tech model for today, and fuel-cells the cars of the future.

Write



Write your first draft. Use the guidelines above, your prewriting work, and the sample essay to help you write a first draft of your comparison-contrast essay.

Revising Improving Your First Draft

As you revise, use the checklist below to polish your first draft.

Revising Checklist

Ideas

- _____ 1. Do I clearly introduce my topics?
- _____ 2. Do I include a thesis statement that names the topics and sums up the comparison and contrast?
- _____ 3. Do I include both similarities and differences?
- _____ 4. Do I support my topic sentences with examples?

Organization

- _____ 5. Does my essay have a strong beginning, middle, and ending?
- _____ 6. Have I presented my points in a logical order?

Voice

- _____ 7. Is my voice confident and convincing?
- _____ 8. Does my voice show interest in my topics?

Word Choice

- _____ 9. Have I chosen words that make my explanations clear?

Sentence Fluency

- _____ 10. Do my sentences flow and exhibit a variety of lengths?

Revise



Revise your first draft. Read your essay carefully. Then use the checklist above to help you revise your first draft.

Creating a Title

- Draw on your thesis: **Cars of Today—and Tomorrow**
- Ask a question: **Can Hybrids and Fuel Cells Save Earth?**
- Appeal to your reader's interest: **Your Future Car**

Editing Checking for Conventions

After revising your essay, you can use the following checklist to edit your writing for punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar errors.

Editing Checklist

Conventions

PUNCTUATION

- _____ 1. Have I ended my sentences with the correct punctuation?
- _____ 2. Have I used commas, semicolons, and colons correctly?
- _____ 3. Have I punctuated quotations correctly?

CAPITALIZATION

- _____ 4. Do I capitalize the first word in every sentence?
- _____ 5. Do I capitalize all proper nouns and adjectives?

SPELLING

- _____ 6. Do I spell all my words correctly?
- _____ 7. Have I double-checked for easily confused words that my spell-checker would miss?

GRAMMAR

- _____ 8. Do I use the correct forms of verbs (*they did*, not *they done*)?
- _____ 9. Do my subjects and verbs agree in number?
- _____ 10. Do my pronouns agree with their antecedents?

Edit



Edit your essay. Use the checklist above to edit for conventions. Ask a partner to help you review your essay, too. Then prepare a final copy and proofread it.

Publishing Sharing Your Work

You can share your comparison-contrast essay by reading it aloud in the classroom or by posting it on a bulletin board. If you present your essay, consider taking questions from the audience as a follow-up.

Publish



Publish your essay. Give your writing to classmates or family members to read. Also consider presenting it as a speech, posting it on a bulletin board, or uploading it to a Web site.

Writing for Assessment

Responding to Expository Prompts

In expository writing, you share your knowledge about a topic by explaining or informing your reader about it. Depending upon the topic and approach you've chosen for your essay, you might summarize, illustrate, analyze, classify, or compare. Sometimes, you'll be given days to complete an expository essay. Other times, you'll be given minutes to respond to an expository prompt. In such a situation, you'll need to quickly plan, draft, revise, and proofread your writing.

Many high school exit exams and college entrance exams include timed-writing components. This chapter will show you how to respond to an expository prompt with a well-organized, powerful essay within minutes—your ticket out of high school or into college.

Writing Guidelines

Subject: Expository prompt

Form: Response essay

Purpose: To demonstrate competence

Audience: Instructor



"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."

—Albert Einstein

Prewriting Analyzing an Expository Prompt

In order to respond effectively to an expository prompt, you need to read and analyze the prompt. To analyze a prompt effectively, use the **STRAP questions**:

Subject: What topic should I write about?

Type: What form of writing should I create (*essay, letter, editorial, article, report*)?

Role: What role should I assume as the writer (*student, son or daughter, friend, employee, citizen*)?

Audience: Who am I writing to (*teacher, parents, classmates, employer, official*)?

Purpose: What is the goal of my writing (*inform, summarize, illustrate, analyze, classify, compare*)?

Subject

Type

Role

Audience

Purpose

Holiday celebrations are important in most families. Yet each family has its own traditions that make the celebration of a holiday unique. Choose a holiday that your family celebrates. As a member of your family, write an article informing your classmates about the family traditions that make your celebration of that holiday unique.

Try It!

Analyze these prompts by answering the STRAP questions. (Some answers may be implied or left open. Use your best judgment.)

1. The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees freedom of expression. The framers of the Constitution believed this freedom essential to a strong democracy. Write an essay that explains how freedom of expression contributes to democracy.
2. People travel by many different means, each with advantages and disadvantages. Choose two of the following modes of transportation and write an essay comparing and contrasting them: walking, bicycling, driving a car, taking a train, flying, and sailing by ship.

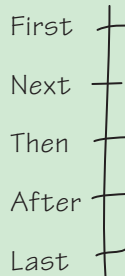
Planning Your Response

After answering the STRAP questions, you need to begin planning your expository response. Graphic organizers are wonderful tools for planning and organizing an effective response.

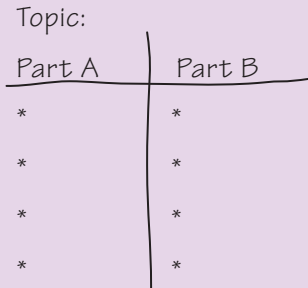
Quick List (Any Essay)

1. First Point
 - Detail 1
 - Detail 2
2. Second Point
 - Detail 1
 - Detail 2
3. Third Point
 - Detail 1
 - Detail 2

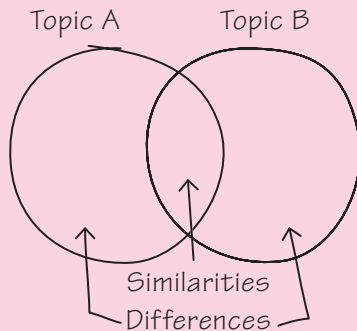
Time Line (How-To/Process)



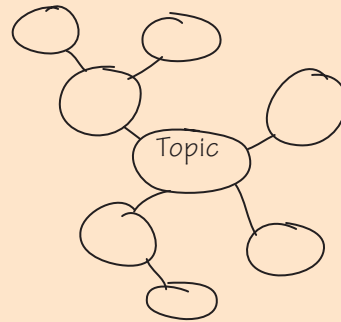
T-Chart (Two-Part Essay)



Venn Diagram (Compare-Contrast)



Cluster (Definition/Classification)



Prewrite



Use a graphic organizer. Reread the expository prompts on page 212. Choose one prompt and then use a graphic organizer to plan and organize your response. Keep the STRAP questions in mind as you work.

Tip

Be sure to manage your time carefully. For example, if you have 45 minutes to respond to a prompt, use the first 5 minutes to analyze the prompt and plan your response, the last 5 minutes to revise and edit your response, and the 35 minutes in between for writing your response.

Writing Responding to a Prompt

Once you have answered the STRAP questions and planned your response using a graphic organizer, you can begin writing.

Sample Expository Prompt

Millions of Americans enjoy movies. Today's technology offers people the option of viewing movies in the theater or watching them at home on DVD. Both of these viewing choices have advantages and disadvantages. Write a brief essay comparing and contrasting the experience of watching a movie at home on DVD and watching it in a theater.



Try It!

Answer the STRAP questions for the sample expository prompt above.

Sample Response

Beginning

The beginning paragraph gives the thesis statement (underlined).

Every weekend, millions of Americans travel to their local theater to watch movies, and millions of others stay at home and watch rented DVD's. Some viewers wouldn't trade the movie theater experience for anything. Others wouldn't give up the pleasure of enjoying a film in the comfort of their own home. For most people, though, the choice isn't as clear. While the movie and "home theater" experiences are similar, each offers unique advantages and disadvantages.

Movie theaters and home theaters have a lot in common. Both offer the opportunity to watch a range of current films. Both also offer comfortable settings, a range of snacking options, and the chance to share quality time with family members or friends. With advances in video and audio technology, a home theater can deliver both picture and sound that rival those at a movie theater. Yet the differences between the two viewing options are significant.

One major difference between watching a movie in a theater and watching one at home is comfort. While newer movie theaters offer more comfortable seats, many home cinema fans argue that nothing beats the opportunity to curl up on the sofa in one's home. In addition, while the movie theater offers a range of snacks, they are usually limited to sweets, popcorn, and soda. At home, it's possible to watch a movie while enjoying healthful snacks like fruit, or even a full meal.

Middle

Each middle paragraph supports and explains the thesis.

Cost is another major difference between going to a movie theater and watching a movie at home. Movie tickets for a family of four can cost \$40 or more, and that's before the expense of concession-stand snacks, which can easily add another \$25. In contrast, a current-run DVD can be rented for about \$5. And snacking at home is a lot cheaper than eating at the movie theater. So the total cost of the home-theater experience is usually much less—provided, of course, that the viewer returns the video on time, thus avoiding late fees.

So far, it may sound like home theater is a hands-down winner, yet one main difference remains—the opportunity to see a film on the first run. Many movie buffs don't want to wait for the film to come out on DVD—they want to see it as soon as possible. They also want to see the movie with an eager crowd. Theaters make movies into events.

Ending

The ending sums up the comparison and contrast.

The similarities and differences between watching a movie in a theater and watching one at home provide choices for everyone. Most people who prefer the movie-theater experience probably rent DVD's on occasion. And most people who prefer renting movies will occasionally find their way to the movie theater. Diehard film fans, however, continue to flock to the movie theaters.

Write



Respond to an expository prompt. Review the prompt you chose on page 212. Then use your answers to the STRAP questions and your graphic organizer to write a response within the time limit set by your teacher.

Revising Improving Your Response

Before you begin a writing test, find out whether you will be allowed to make revisions to your response or not. If changes are allowed, make them as neatly as possible. Use the STRAP questions to guide your revisions.

Subject: Have I responded to the topic of the prompt?
Do my main points support my thesis?

Type: Have I responded in the correct form (essay, letter, article)?

Role: Have I assumed the role called for in the prompt?

Audience: Have I used an appropriate level of language for my audience?

Purpose: Does my response accomplish the goal outlined by the prompt?

Revise



Revise your work. Read your response carefully. Use the STRAP questions above as your guide to revise your response within the allotted time period.

Editing Checking Your Response

Be sure to check your expository response and correct any errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar.

Editing Checklist

Conventions

- _____ 1. Have I used end punctuation for every sentence?
- _____ 2. Have I capitalized all proper nouns and the first word of every sentence?
- _____ 3. Have I spelled all words correctly?
- _____ 4. Have I made sure my subjects and verbs agree?
- _____ 5. Have I used the right words (*their, they're, there*)?

Edit



Check your conventions. Review your response for any errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar. Make neat corrections within the allotted time.

Expository Writing on Tests

Use the following tips when you respond to an expository writing prompt.

Before you write . . .

- **Analyze the prompt.**
Use the STRAP questions. Remember that an expository prompt asks you to explain or inform.
- **Budget your time carefully.**
Be sure to spend several minutes planning and organizing your response before beginning to write. Use a graphic organizer to gather details and organize your response.

As you write . . .

- **Provide a clear thesis statement in your opening paragraph.**
Keep your main idea and purpose in mind.
- **Include examples.**
Choose examples that support and clarify your focus.
- **End by restating your thesis.**
In the final paragraph, summarize your explanation.

After you've written a first draft . . .

- **Revise and edit.**
Use the STRAP questions to guide your revision.
- **Check conventions.**
Check your punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar.

Try It!

Plan and write a response. Choose one of the prompts below. Analyze it with the STRAP questions and use a graphic organizer to gather details and make a plan. Then write, revise, and edit your response.

- Cell phones provide an incredible amount of convenience, but they cause problems, too. People who use their phones in inappropriate settings can cause tempers to flare—and can even cause auto accidents. Write a set of guidelines for the safe and respectful use of cell phones.
- Cross-country and downhill skiing share certain similarities, yet they offer different experiences. Field hockey and ice hockey also require different skills. Think of two similar sports or activities that you enjoy, and write a brief essay to compare and contrast them.