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Writing in Paragraphs



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With Answer Key



MACMILLAN

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To the Teacher

Writing is an important form of communication in day-to-day life, but it is especially important in secondary school and university. Writing is also one of the most difficult skills to master in both a first language and a second language. Students can find it challenging to find ideas to include in their writing, and each culture has its own style for organising academic writing. However, with the help of this book and your guidance, your students will learn to recognise good academic paragraphs and develop their own paragraph writing skills.

Writing in Paragraphs is designed to help low-intermediate students analyse model paragraphs, find ideas for their writing, put their ideas into sentences, organise their sentences into paragraphs, review their paragraphs, and revise their paragraphs so that they become even stronger. This process approach to writing will not only develop your students' paragraph writing skills, but will also encourage them to become independent and creative writers.



Each main unit provides an interesting theme to engage your students and motivate them to read and analyse the model paragraphs. The unit themes also inspire your students to create their own writing. An introductory unit looks at how students can format their writing and introduces the idea of process writing.

The activities in each unit help students with a particular aspect of paragraph writing, such as brainstorming, writing topic sentences, and developing paragraphs with supporting sentences. A unit's activities might also teach correct punctuation for academic writing and useful grammatical functions for writing, such as conjunctions and transition expressions. The units also show students how to review their own and their classmates' writing in order to make revisions.

Each unit ends with a structured writing assignment that provides an opportunity for students to use everything presented in the unit. Included in this book are samples of a paragraph from brainstorming to final draft, with a completed Peer Review Form. There is also a guide to common grammatical terms and concepts useful for writers, a list of irregular verbs and their past tense forms and participles, and a guide to punctuation. Finally, there is an answer key with answers to most of the exercises and a photocopiable section with blank Peer Review Forms and a Writing Survey you may like to do with your students at the start of the course.

Learning to write well takes a lot of practice and patience. Students need clear guidance, positive feedback, and interesting ideas to write about. We hope this book provides this for you and you enjoy using it.

To the Student

Writing is a very important part of your school and university study. You will write assignments that may be one paragraph or several paragraphs, and you will write answers for tests and exams that may be a few sentences, a paragraph or two, or a complete essay.

Academic writing in English may be different not only from academic writing in your own language, but even from other writing in English. The purpose of this book is to help you recognise and produce the sort of paragraph writing that will be expected of you in academic situations.

During this course, you will have many opportunities to study and discuss examples of English academic paragraph writing. You will also have many opportunities to discuss your own paragraphs and the paragraphs of your classmates. You will learn how important the reader is to the writer, and how to express clearly and directly what you mean to communicate. We hope that what you learn in this course will help you throughout your academic studies and beyond.

You should come to your writing class every day with energy and a willingness to work and learn. Your teacher and your classmates have much to share with you, and you have much to share with them. By coming to class with your questions, taking chances and trying new ways, and expressing your ideas in another language, you will add not only to your own world, but to the world of those around you. Good luck!

Introduction

In this unit, you will learn ...

- formatting for assignments.
- how to write headings.
- about process writing.

Layout/Formatting

1a Match the words about layout with their definitions.

- a. paragraph
- b. margin
- c. double line spacing
- d. indent (v)
- e. title
- f. font

1. To start a paragraph further in from the edge of the page than the rest of the text.
2. The space at the side of the page where nothing is written.
3. A set of letters in one size and style used for printing and computer documents.
4. A section of a piece of writing that starts on a new line and contains several sentences.
5. The name of a piece of writing.
6. A style of spacing where there are two blank lines between each line of text.

There are no set rules about how you set out your paragraphs and they can be hand written or word-processed. It is down to personal preference whether you use indentation, double line spacing or a certain font, unless your school or university has specific requirements. However, the general rule is that paragraphs should be clearly visible, easily readable and in one font, which is usually black.

1b Look at these student papers. Tick (✓) the one that is better for an academic assignment.

a.

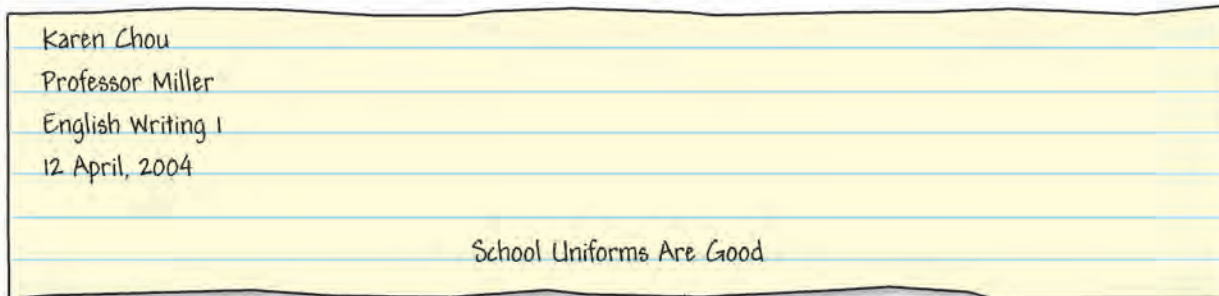
School uniforms are not good for students. They are not attractive, so students feel bad when they are wearing them. Students like to express their personalities by choosing their own clothes.

b.

School uniforms are not good for students. They are not attractive, so students feel bad when they are wearing them. Students like to express their personalities by choosing their own clothes.

2 Look at these different ways of writing headings for student papers. Answer the questions below.

a.

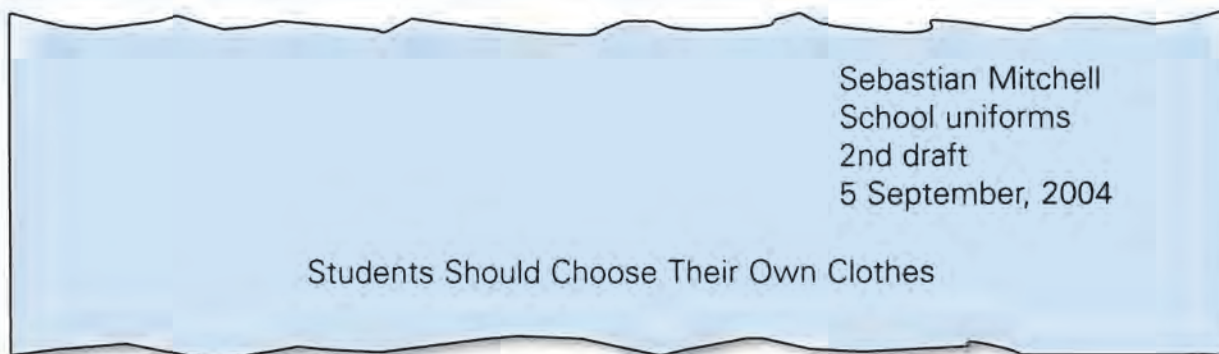


Karen Chou
Professor Miller
English Writing 1
12 April, 2004

School Uniforms Are Good

1. What is the writer's name?
2. What is the name of the class?
3. Who is teaching the class?
4. What is the title of the assignment?

b.




Sebastian Mitchell
School uniforms
2nd draft
5 September, 2004

Students Should Choose Their Own Clothes

1. What is the writer's name?
2. What is the title of the assignment?
3. What is the assignment about?
4. What does '2nd draft' mean?
5. When did the writer write the assignment?

How does your teacher want you to write headings in this class?
Write an example here:



Process writing

i Take a quiz! First guess the correct answers. Then read the paragraphs below to check your guesses.

- a.** 'Process writing' means
- writing in English.
 - writing with a word processor.
 - writing in several stages (steps).
- b.** Before you begin to write, you should
- finish the homework for your other classes.
 - get some ideas.
 - ask your friends for help.
- c.** Your teacher may ask you to read a classmate's paper and answer some questions about it. This is because
- you can learn a lot by reading your classmate's assignment.
 - your teacher is too busy to read all the students' papers.
 - you are a better writer than your classmate.
- d.** Your teacher may ask you to write another draft. This is because
- your teacher can't think of any new assignments.
 - the first time, your paper was bad.
 - you can make your paper better by making some changes.
- e.** Before you hand in your paper for a grade, you should
- ask your teacher to give you a good grade.
 - check it carefully.
 - put some pretty stickers on it.

- a.** Musicians practise their pieces many times before a concert. Athletes work out before a competition. In the same way, good writers go through several stages when they write. 'Process writing' will guide you through these stages so your final paper is really your best effort.
- b.** The first stage of process writing is getting ideas. In this course, you will learn and practise several different ways to get ideas. Try them all and see which way works best for you.
- c.** An important stage in process writing is sharing your writing. You can see how other writers like you handled the same assignment, and you can get some good ideas from them. You can also see how well someone else understands your ideas.
- d.** After you finish your assignment, put it away for some time. When you look at it again, you may have new ideas. Your classmates may help you find new ideas, too. Writing your paper again (called 'revising') gives you the chance to improve your paper.
- e.** Before you give your teacher your paper, check it carefully. Read it aloud. Does it sound natural? Did you forget any words? Did you remember to write the heading correctly? Does your paper look neat? Remember to give your teacher your best effort!

Beginning to Work

In this unit, you will ...

- recognize and write complete sentences.
- learn how to begin and end a sentence.
- learn the common features of a paragraph.
- identify the topic of a paragraph.
- identify strong and weak paragraphs.

1 Look at this chart. Check (✓) the answers for your country.

	It's common.	It's not common.	I'm not sure. / It depends.
a. High school students have part-time jobs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. University students have part-time jobs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. University students have volunteer jobs (jobs that don't pay a salary).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Part-time jobs pay a good salary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. After graduation, both men and women want to find a full-time job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 Share your information with a group of your classmates. Ask and answer these questions about part-time jobs.

- What are common part-time jobs?
- Have you ever had a job? What was your first job?
- What kind of job do you think is best for a high school / university student?
- (your idea)



- 3** You are going to read a paragraph called *Part-time Jobs and High School*. What do you think the paragraph is about? Circle the answer.
- Useful high school subjects
 - Working and studying at the same time
 - How much money a part-time job pays
- 4** Read the paragraph. Did you choose the right answer in exercise 3 above?

Part-time Jobs and High School

¹ High school students should not have part-time jobs. ² High school is a very important time for a student, and students are very busy. ³ Students have to study hard to enter a good university. ⁴ Many high school students also play sports, and they practice before and after school. ⁵ High school students also spend time with friends of the same age. ⁶ Those friendships can be important for the rest of their lives. ⁷ A part-time job takes time away from studying, playing sports, and making friends. ⁸ People work for most of their adult lives. ⁹ When they are in high school, it's important for them to just be high school students.



- 5** Which sentence tells the writer's most important idea?

1 2 3 8

- 6** What do sentences 3, 4, and 5 do?

- They show new ideas.
- They give examples.
- They show different opinions.

- 7** Do you agree with the writer? Why / Why not?

Writing focus: What is a sentence?

How many words are in the shortest English sentence? Except for one-word commands (*Sit!*), a complete sentence in English needs two words: a subject (a noun or pronoun) and a predicate (a verb) (*She sits*).

Of course, most English sentences are longer than just two words, but every sentence tells a complete thought. Groups of words that do not make complete sentences are called *phrases*.

If you need more information on complete sentences and phrases, see pages 85–89.

8 Work with a partner. Look at the following. Some of them could be sentences with the correct punctuation. Check (✓) the ones that could be sentences.

- a. after school
- b. we love writing in English
- c. his friends are not in his class
- d. the man in the striped suit
- e. at three o'clock in the afternoon
- f. graduated in May
- g. is going shopping this weekend

Language focus: Capital letters and final punctuation

Sentences in a paragraph ...

- start with a capital letter
Part-time jobs can be stressful.
- end with a period (.) question mark (?) or exclamation point (!)
Many students work as tutors.
How old were you when you got your first job?
I will never work in a restaurant again!

Note: Exclamation points are not as common in academic writing as they are in casual writing. Don't use them too often. Never use more than one exclamation point at the end of a sentence in academic writing.

The company offered me a part-time job!! = when writing to friends

The company offered me a part-time job. = when writing in school

9 Unscramble the sentences and write them on the lines below. Begin and end each sentence correctly.



- a. in a shop / my sister / works
My sister works in a shop......
- b. is / a useful subject / computer science

- c. don't / I / like / working with people

- d. can't find / many students / a job / easily

- e. more women / are / after college / working ?

- f. first job / was / my / wonderful / a / experience

10 Look again at exercise 8 on page 7. Write the complete sentences with correct punctuation. Add to the phrases to make complete sentences. Then share your sentences with a partner. How are they different?

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.

Writing focus: What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a group of about 6–12 sentences about one *topic*. Every sentence in a strong paragraph is about the same topic. All of the sentences explain the writer’s *main idea* (most important idea) about that topic. When the writer wants to write about a new main idea, he / she begins a new paragraph.

A paragraph can give information, tell an opinion, explain something, or even tell a short story. The sentences are arranged logically, so the reader can easily understand what the writer wants to say.

In academic writing, a paragraph has a *topic sentence* that directly tells the reader the main idea. The other sentences in the paragraph, called *supporting sentences*, give more information about the topic. They add specific details and explanations. In academic English, the topic sentence is usually (but not always!) first or last.

II Work with a partner. Read the groups of sentences below and on page 10. Circle the letters of the strong paragraphs. If you think the sentences make a weak paragraph, say why. Choose one or more of these reasons:

- The sentences are not all about the same topic.
- There are not enough sentences.
- There is no topic sentence.
- Some sentences say the same thing.

When I need a good place to study, I go to the library. It’s always quiet there, so I can concentrate. It’s easy to find the books I need, and I can search for information on the Internet because there are several computers. The other people in the library are also reading or working, so the mood is good for studying. I study better and faster in the library than in any other place.

a.
.....

I need to buy a motorcycle. With a motorcycle, I could get to my job more quickly. It takes two hours to get to work by train. That’s very slow. A motorcycle is much faster. If I had a motorcycle, I could save a lot of time. Taking the train is not fast enough for me.

b.
.....

Writing in Paragraphs

When starting to write assignments in English, students need to be able to

- find ideas for their writing and put them into sentences
- logically organise their sentences into paragraphs
- review and revise their paragraphs to make them even stronger

Writing in Paragraphs provides students with

- focus on particular aspects of paragraph writing, such as topics, style, and development
- writing support to help them find, organise, and express their ideas
- language support to help them with vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation
- guidance on reviewing their own and their classmates' writing in order to make revisions
- structured, graded writing assignments at the end of each unit

Writing in Paragraphs takes students from sentence formation to paragraph writing through a process approach. This not only develops students' paragraph writing skills, but also encourages them to become independent and creative writers. There are peer review forms and a grammar reference section at the back of the book.

Writing in Paragraphs includes a complete answer key and can be used in class or as a self-study book. It leads naturally into **Academic Writing**.

