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## Mechanics

### KEY TERMS

abbreviation 缩写词  
 acronym 首字母缩略词  
 capital letter 大写字母  
 capitalization 使用大写字母  
 compound 复合词  
 contraction 缩约形式  
 hyphen 连字符  
 hyphenation 用连字符连接  
 initialism 首字母缩略词  
 italics 斜体字  
 mechanics 写作的技术性细节  
 prefix 前缀  
 spelling 拼写  
 suffix 后缀  
 syllable 音节

### ① Introduction

In composition, those aspects such as spelling, hyphenation, capitalization, numbers, abbreviations, and italics are often referred to as mechanics. Mechanics are as important as ideas, organization, or coherence (连贯) in writing. For example, if we make several mechanical mistakes in a letter of job application, our reader may assume that the applicant is a careless person or that the application is not taken seriously. An application with mechanical mistakes gives the reader a reason to reject it quickly. Likewise, if there are mechanical errors in a memo (备忘录) that we write to our boss or to a committee, it may give the impression that our thoughts are as hasty as our writing. In short, frequent or even occasional mechanical mistakes in our writing can make people believe that we are careless or ignorant. This unit aims to help students to avoid making such mistakes and to take the first step toward a successful writing.

# Spelling

English spelling has long been accused of being illogical: The English alphabet does not represent English sounds consistently. For example, the letter *o* is pronounced differently in *hot*, *note*, *book*, and *door*. The alphabet used has always been inadequate to represent the sounds. But this does not justify misspelling. Good spelling is the result of study and memory. The following are some tips to help us toward correct spelling.

- (1) We should write down in a notebook all the words we misspelled. Writing the word over and over again when we realize we have made a mistake will help fix the correct spelling in our mind as well as in our fingers.
- (2) We should try to group our errors. Misspellings often fall into patterns—errors with prefixes, with suffixes, with plurals, and so on.
- (3) We should pronounce words carefully. Many people misspell words because they pronounce them incorrectly.
- (4) We should recognize homonyms. Homonyms are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings, for example, *whether* and *weather*, *site* and *sight*, *break* and *brake*, *their* and *there*, *compliment* and *complement*.
- (5) We should learn the rules that generally hold for spelling, and learn the exceptions to those rules.
- (6) We should proofread (校对) our writing carefully to get rid of careless errors. Many spelling errors are the results of poor handwriting or typing errors.
- (7) We should use dictionaries frequently when we proofread our work. Whenever we doubt the correctness of a word we have spelled, we should look it up in a dictionary. Writing continually and using a dictionary continually are two excellent ways to become a good speller.

Of the above tips, two are prerequisites and more important than the others: One is to pronounce words carefully and the other is to learn spelling rules.

## Pronounce words carefully

Imprecise pronunciation often leads to misspelling familiar words. Some people, for example, add an extra syllable (音节) to the word *athletic*, spelling it with an extra *e*. On the other hand, some people delete a syllable from the word *privilege*, spelling it without the second *i*. If we study the following list, we can train our eyes and our ears to spot the parts of the words in which we are prone to make spelling errors.

- ⊙ February      NOT      Febuary
- ⊙ laboratory    NOT      labratory
- ⊙ government    NOT      goverment
- ⊙ arithmetic     NOT      arithemetic
- ⊙ mischievous   NOT      mischievius

## Learn spelling rules

Some principles of English spelling are so generally applicable that learning them will help us become better spellers. When in doubt, we should always use a dictionary.

(1) Consider the previous letter and the sound of the word when deciding between the combinations *ei* and *ie*. The old rhyme for *ie* and *ei* is usually helpful: “*i* before *e*, except after *c*, or when sounded like *a*, as in *neighbor* and *weigh*.”

- ⊙ ***i* before *e*:** believe, relieve, grief, chief, yield, field
- ⊙ ***e* before *i*:** receive, deceive, ceiling, conceit, receipt
- ⊙ **when sounded like *a*:** eight, vein, veil, feign, sleigh

**Exceptions:** species, science, seize, foreign, neither, leisure

(2) For each word ending in a silent *e*, drop the *e* from the root word before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel, such as *-ing*, *-ible*, *-able*, and *-ion*.

- ⊙ **Before the suffix *-ing*:** force—forcing, surprise—surprising
- ⊙ **Before the suffix *-ible*:** force—forcible, sense—sensible
- ⊙ **Before the suffix *-able*:** observe—observable, advise—advisable
- ⊙ **Before the suffix *-ion*:** locate—location, complete—completion
- ⊙ **Before other suffixes:** guide—guidance, fame—famous, future—futurism

Note that the final *e* is needed in the following two cases:

a. Keep the sound of soft *g* or *c*:

- ⊙ change—changeable
- ⊙ notice—noticeable

b. Distinguish homonyms or potentially confusing words:

- ⊙ dye—dyeing (not dying)
- ⊙ singe—singeing (not singing)

(3) Keep the final silent *e* in the root word before a suffix that begins with a consonant (辅音).

- ⊙ nine—ninety
- ⊙ peace—peaceful
- ⊙ move—movement

**Exceptions:** true—truly, awe—awful, argue—argument, nine—ninth

(4) Keep the final *y* in the root word or change it to *i* according to the nature of the root word and the nature of the suffix.

a. When the final *y* follows a consonant in the root word, change the *y* to *i* before adding an ending other than *-ing*.

- ⊙ happy—happier/happiest/happiness
- ⊙ supply—supplier/supplied/supplies

b. When the final *y* follows a vowel in the root word, keep the *y* when adding an *s* to make the plural of a noun or the third person singular of a verb.

- ⊙ valley—valleys
- ⊙ toy—toys
- ⊙ delay—delays

- ⊙ enjoy—enjoys
- c. The past tense of verbs ending in a final *y* preceded by a vowel is usually made by keeping the final *y* and by adding the suffix *-ed*.
  - ⊙ play—played
  - ⊙ enjoy—enjoyed
- (5) Spell correctly the words formed by adding a suffix that begins with a vowel to a root word that ends with a consonant. These suffixes are *-ing*, *-er*, *-est*, *-ed*, *-ence*, *-ance*, *-ible*, and *-able*.
  - a. With most words of one syllable ending in a consonant immediately preceded by a vowel, double the final consonant.
    - ⊙ swim—swimming
    - ⊙ stop—stopping
    - ⊙ plan—planned
    - ⊙ sad—saddest
  - b. If the root word has more than one syllable and the accent (重音) of the root word falls on the last syllable, we usually double the final consonant.
    - ⊙ occur—occurrence
    - ⊙ refer—referred
    - ⊙ forget—forgetting
    - ⊙ recur—recurring
  - c. If the final consonant of the root word is preceded by a consonant or by two consecutive (连续的) vowels, the final consonant is not doubled.
    - ⊙ depart—departing
    - ⊙ repair—repairing
- (6) Use *-ally* to form adverbs if the root word ends in *ic*, and *-ly* if it doesn't.
  - ⊙ enthusiastic—enthusiastically
  - ⊙ dramatic—dramatically

**Exception:** public—publicly

### Activity 1

Add the suffixes to the following words.

- |                  |       |                 |       |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 1. advance + ing | _____ | 5. quote + able | _____ |
| 2. ironic + ly   | _____ | 6. sense + ible | _____ |
| 3. defy + ance   | _____ | 7. ban + ed     | _____ |
| 4. horrify + ing | _____ | 8. fancy + ful  | _____ |

# Hyphenation

A hyphen is a short line (-) that joins words or syllables. It is usually used to divide a word when the word is cut off at the end of a line. Hyphens are also used in some compound words to make the words easier to read as well as help clarify words that are used together.

## Divide a word at the end of a line

Generally, it is not recommended to divide a word at the end of a line, unless this last word would use up most of the right margin of the paper. If we have to divide a word, we can follow the following guidelines.

(1) Do not divide single-syllable words or very short words.

No matter how long a word is, if it has only one syllable or is pronounced as one syllable, do not divide it, for example, *cleansed*, *drought*, *wealth*. Do not divide short words, even those that have two or more syllables, for example, *area*, *every*, *envy*.

(2) Divide words between syllables.

The dictionary listing of a word shows its syllables clearly. The dictionary shows *distinction*, for example, as *dis-tinc-tion*, so we should divide it after the letter *s* or *c*, but nowhere else.

- ⊙ message—mes-sage
- ⊙ negate—ne-gate
- ⊙ number—num-ber

(3) Never leave one letter at the end of the line or carry over only one or two letters.

This guideline means that words like *alive* and *ocean* should not be divided at all, and a word such as *Americana* (*A-mer-i-can-a*) can be divided only after the letter *r* or *i*.

(4) Follow the rules for a double consonant.

Suffixes usually add syllables. If a root word ends in a double consonant, divide the word after the double consonant.

- ⊙ successful—success-ful (not succes-sful)

On the other hand, when we double a consonant only to add a suffix, we should divide the word between the double consonant.

- ⊙ regrettable—regret-table (not regrett-able)
- ⊙ swimming—swim-ming (not swimm-ing)

(5) Never violate pronunciation when dividing words.

Not all word endings add pronounceable new syllables. The *-ed* ending, for example, often simply adds a /d/ sound to the end of a word. If we divide such a word, we should be careful not to violate the pronunciation of the word. For example, *compelled* should be divided as *com-pelled*, not *compel-led*.

Also, do not divide a word like *issue*, because both its syllables, when separated (*is-sue*), will be pronounced differently from their original ones.

## Divide a word with a prefix

- (1) When dividing a word that has a prefix of three or more letters, divide after the prefix rather than between other syllables.
  - ⊙ misunderstand—mis-understand (not mis-under-stand)
- (2) Some prefixes must be followed by hyphens separating them from the root words.
  - ⊙ all-inclusive
  - ⊙ self-confidence
- (3) Hyphenate a prefix to avoid confusion in meaning or pronunciation.
  - ⊙ redress (to set right) vs. re-dress (to dress again)
  - ⊙ recover (to get well again after being ill) vs. re-cover (to cover again)
- (4) If the last letter of a prefix is the same as the first letter of the root word, or if adding a prefix results in three vowels in a row, use a hyphen after the prefix.
  - ⊙ re-elect
  - ⊙ anti-aircraft
- (5) In some commonly used words, the hyphen can be either kept or omitted.
  - ⊙ coordinate, co-ordinate
  - ⊙ cooperate, co-operate
- (6) When we use two prefixes with one root word, we may write the root word only once, after the second prefix, but follow both prefixes with a hyphen. Note that the first hyphen is separated from the next word by a space.
  - ⊙ pre- or post-test
  - ⊙ two- and four-year colleges

## Use hyphens in compound words

Compound words or compounds (复合词) are words composed of two or more words. Compound words are written either as a single word (e.g. *headache*), as hyphenated words (e.g. *self-government*), or as two words (e.g. *police station*). Whether a compound is one word or hyphenated depends on convention. We should always consult a dictionary when we are not sure how to spell a compound.

- (1) When a compound acts as a modifier—before a noun, it is usually hyphenated.
  - ⊙ a fast-paced lecture
  - ⊙ long-term commitment
  - ⊙ a nine-page report

Usually, that same modifier is not hyphenated if it functions as a predicative in a sentence.

- ⊙ The lecture seems fast paced.
  - ⊙ The report was nine pages.
- (2) When the first word in a compound is an adverb ending in *-ly*, the comparative (比较级) or superlative (最高级) of an adjective or an adverb, or a borrowed phrase, the hyphen is usually omitted.
    - ⊙ a happily married couple
    - ⊙ better fitting clothes

- Ⓐ ex post facto (有追溯效力的) law
- (3) Use a hyphen between the two components of a combined unit of measurement (计量单位).
  - Ⓐ kilowatt-hours (千瓦时)
  - Ⓑ light-years (光年)
- (4) Hyphenate some titles or identities, such as double titles, or three-word titles.
  - Ⓐ Italian-American
  - Ⓑ father-in-law
- (5) For specific descriptive purposes, we may coin our own compounds. Such specially coined compounds are always hyphenated.
  - Ⓐ a hard-to-detect bomb device
  - Ⓑ a do-anything-to-keep-your-life situation
  - Ⓒ an I-know-it-all look

## Use hyphens in spelled-out numbers

- (1) Use a hyphen between the numerator (分子) and denominator (分母) of a fraction.
  - Ⓐ three-hundredths (3/100)
  - Ⓑ two-thirds (2/3)
- (2) Use hyphens between the two components of numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine, whether those numbers are written alone or as part of larger numbers.
  - Ⓐ thirty-five
  - Ⓑ two hundred and thirty-five
- (3) When a number and a word are combined to form a modifier, use a hyphen between the number and the word.
  - Ⓐ a 50-minute class
  - Ⓑ a 10-kilometer race

If the word in the modifier is possessive (所有格的), omit the hyphen.

- Ⓐ a 5-day vacation—5 days' vacation
- Ⓑ a 2-week work—2 weeks' work

### Activity 2

**Insert necessary hyphens, delete unnecessary ones, and revise incorrect word divisions in the following sentences. If a sentence is correct as it stands, write Correct.**

1. Thirty-five thousand spectators watched the game.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Widely-held views cannot be easily changed.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. After the project is completed, you will have a seven day vacation.

\_\_\_\_\_



4. The long distance runner passed the fifteen mile mark.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. My favorite recreation is chess.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Rescue-workers rushed to the site of the plane-crash.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The anti violence demonstration attracted large crowds.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Shakespeare is the greatest English writer. Will there ever be such a-  
nother?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. After you told everyone the secret you had promised to keep, you became my  
ex friend.  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Rambo began to write as an escape from his on the move life, which included  
various odd jobs ranging from ditchdigging to grasscutting.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Capitalization

Capital letters give readers signals about the beginning of a sentence, names, titles, and proper nouns. Most rules for capitalization have been fixed by convention, but some of those rules are more flexible (灵活的) than others. An authoritative dictionary is a good guide to those items that should be capitalized.

(1) Capitalize the first word of a sentence.

The capital letter at the beginning of a sentence is an essential signal to readers that a new unit of thought is about to begin. It goes with the period (句号) or other marks at the end of the previous sentence to make reading easier.

In sentence fragments used for special effects, the first word should also be capitalized.

⊙ Work. Work. Work. It makes my life go round.

But practice varies for starting each question in a series of questions with a capital letter. The first letter of each question can be either capital letter or lowercase (小写的) letter.

⊙ What facial feature would most people change if they could? Their eyes? Their ears?

Their mouths?

- ⊙ What facial feature would most people change if they could? their eyes? their ears? their mouths?

Whichever practice we choose, we should be consistent throughout our writing. Of course, if the questions are complete sentences, we should start each with a capital letter.

Practice also varies for using a capital letter for a complete sentence after a colon (冒号).

- ⊙ I need advice about what to do: The instructions give contradictory commands.
- ⊙ I need advice about what to do: the instructions give contradictory commands.

The first letter in an independent clause following a semicolon (分号) is not capitalized unless it is a proper noun.

- ⊙ All in all, however, outside support counted for little; the men of the village did the work themselves.

(2) Capitalize proper nouns and their abbreviations.

Proper nouns are the names of specific people, places, things, or names that set off the individuals from their species. Sometimes words that are not ordinarily capitalized do take capitals when they are used as parts of proper names. Compare the following examples.

**Ordinary noun:** My aunt is arriving this afternoon.

**Part of proper noun:** My Aunt Lou tells fantastic stories that I think she makes up.

Titles like *mother*, *father*, *cousin*, *brother*, and *sister* may replace proper names in some kinds of speech and writing. If we intend to refer to a specific individual, we should capitalize the word.

- ⊙ I still miss Mother, although she has been dead for over a decade.
- ⊙ He supposed that his Uncle would come to his aid again as he had so many times in the past.

However, most of the time these words are not capitalized, since they do not replace proper names. Whether we capitalize such words depends on our intention.

Some titles that may be capitalized before a proper name are often not capitalized when they are used after the name. Compare the following examples.

**Before a proper name:** Governor Grover Cleveland of New York

**After a proper name:** Grover Cleveland, governor of New York.

Use capitals for words formed from the initial letters (首字母) of words in a proper name, for example, *NATO*, *FBI*, *BBC*, *UNESCO*, *WTO*, *VOA*, and *PLA*.

Abbreviations used as parts of proper names usually take capitals:

- ⊙ Sammy Davis, Jr.
- ⊙ George Sheehan, M.D.

(3) Capitalize the title of a work.

Capitalize the title of any piece of writing and of any work of art or architecture. Do not capitalize articles (*a*, *an*, and *the*), coordinating conjunctions, or prepositions of fewer than five letters unless they begin the title. Capitalize the first word after a colon in a title.

- ⊙ *Pride and Prejudice*
- ⊙ *Two Years Before the Mast*

- ⊙ Tragedy: Vision and Form
- ⊙ the Great Hall of the People

Note that the preposition *Before* in the second title is capitalized. The general rule is that a preposition of five letters or more is capitalized.

(4) Capitalize the first word of direct speech included within quotation marks (引号), even in the middle of a sentence.

- ⊙ "Free! Body and soul free!" she kept whispering.
- ⊙ Larry said, "The case is far from over, and we will win."

But do not capitalize quoted material that continues a sentence.

- ⊙ Larry said that the case was "far from over" and that "we will win." (*Far* and *we* are not capitalized.)

(5) Capitalize the first word of each line in a poem.

- ⊙ O, my Luve's like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June:  
O, my Luve's like the melodie  
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

Note that some poets do not capitalize each line. When we cite lines from poems that are not conventionally capitalized, we should copy them exactly as they appear in the original poem.

(6) Capitalize specific school courses.

School courses are usually capitalized: *Chinese History*, *Introduction to Linguistics*, *International Financial Market*, *Intermediate Accounting*, and so on. However, use lowercase letters for general subject areas. In the following example, *computer* and *math* are not capitalized.

- ⊙ This semester I'm taking mostly language courses, but I have a computer course and a math course as well.

Some beginners are tempted to use capitals for emphasis, and they capitalize too much. Unnecessary capitals may confuse readers or annoy them. In modern prose the tendency is to use lowercase letters whenever possible.

### Activity 3

Revise the following sentences, using capital and lowercase letters correctly.

1. "cut it off and sold it," said della. "don't you like me just as well, anyhow? i'm me Without my hair, ain't i?"  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. during Summer i like to visit the Ski Resorts in vermont, where few visitors disturb my meditations (沉思) among the Fir Trees (冷杉) and the Maples that dot the Landscape (风景).  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. when I was a child, thanksgiving day was one of the best holidays, not only

because the family always got together for a huge dinner, but also because thanksgiving came on thursday, and at Belmont high school, we were given both thursday and friday off.

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4. in your sophomore (大学二年级) course in english literature next fall, you may read at least one novel by daniel defoe, whose book *robinson crusoe* is sometimes called the first true novel in the english language.

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5. when we had an accident, we were taken to memorial hospital on greeley parkway, where a doctor named thomas babington examined us and told us that there was nothing wrong with us. later, when i discovered that i had a fractured kneecap and that my brother had a broken leg, we sued (控告) the hospital, but the hospital claimed that dr. babington was only visiting the emergency room that day and was not an employee of memorial hospital at all.

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## Numbers

Variations in the style of different writers and in the demands of different editors make it difficult to fix rules for the usage of numbers. In some newspapers and magazines, the use of numbers may be common; in books, numbers are less common, at least in the body of a text. In footnotes (脚注), bibliographies (参考书目), scientific or technical reports, tables, and graphs, numbers are frequently used.

As a general rule, we should use numbers according to the rules of our field of study. In standard essays, we should use numbers sparingly (节俭地).

(1) Generally, spell out numbers that can be written in one or two words.

In general, words are used instead of numerals for numbers that take only one or two words to spell out.

⊙ six boxes vs. 181 boxes

⊙ twenty-four dollars vs. \$235.88

**Inappropriate:** Last year, one hundred and twenty-three thousand four hundred people took the examination.

**Revised:** Last year, 123,400 people took the examination.

(2) When a number starts a sentence, it is usually spelled out.

**Inappropriate:** 123,000 people took the examination last year.

**Revised:** One hundred and twenty-three thousand people took the examination last year.

To avoid awkwardness, we usually recast the sentence so that the number does not come first.

**Inappropriate:** Nineteen sixty-six saw the happening of a great movement in America.

**Revised:** A great movement happened in 1966 in America.

**Inappropriate:** 123,000 people took the examination last year.

**Revised:** Last year, 123,000 people took the examination.

(3) Be consistent in the immediate context.

Use numerals for all numbers in a sentence if one of the numbers needs to be written in numerals.

**Inconsistent:** Of the 1870 students in our school, only twenty-eight come from Beijing.

**Revised:** Of the 1870 students in our school, only 28 come from Beijing.

(4) Use numerals according to convention.

In mathematical, statistical, technical, or scientific texts, physical quantities are generally expressed in numerals to avoid confusion.

- ⊙ The original plan for the house called for a dining room that would be  $18 \times 25$  and a living room that would be  $30 \times 34$  with glass windows at each end. The wall of the dining room was to include one enormous window measuring  $16 \times 5$ , to be set in the wall 1.5 feet above the floor.

Dates that include the year usually appear as numerals, but some writers prefer to spell them out.

- ⊙ October 9, 2019 vs. October the ninth, 2019
- ⊙ 9 October 2019 vs. the ninth of October, 2019
- ⊙ the 1960s vs. the nineteen-sixties

Numerals are always used when exact time is emphasized, for example, 5:22 a.m., 11:00 p.m. With *o'clock*, the number is generally spelled out.

- ⊙ I'll leave at six o'clock in the morning.

Street and highway numbers always appear as numerals; however, when a house number and the number of a street come together in an address, one of the numbers is written out.

- ⊙ 1 Park Avenue
- ⊙ State Highway 2
- ⊙ 850 Fifteenth Street

#### Activity 4

**Revise the following sentences, using numbers correctly. If a sentence is correct as it stands, write *Correct*.**

1. 5 weeks later, on November 6, they were secretly married.  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. 40 people were injured in the 2 accidents.  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. When I was in high school, I used to get up at 5 o'clock every day.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Your car is five thousand four hundred and thirty-two dollars more expensive than mine.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. You can travel around our college in about 2 hours.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. You can earn from \$1 million to five million dollars.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Have you received my letter of October the fifteenth?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The research found that the students under 20 years of age produced significantly more code-switches (语码转换) than the adults above 21 years of age.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase. It consists of a group of letters taken from a word or phrase. For example, the word *auto* is the abbreviation of *automobile*, *isn't* the abbreviation of *is not*, and *CEO* the abbreviation of *chief executive officer*.

There are different types of abbreviations, the most common being contraction, initialism, and acronym. A contraction is a word made by omitting certain letters or syllables and bringing together the first and last letters or elements, for example, *isn't*, *didn't*, and *they're*. Acronym and initialism refer to abbreviations that consist of the initial letters of a group of words, the difference being that the former can be pronounced as words (e.g. *NATO*) while the latter can only be pronounced as letters (e.g. *CEO*). All contractions, initialisms, and acronyms are abbreviations, but an abbreviation is not necessarily a contraction, an initialism, or an acronym, because it can also be made by cutting off a part of a word, for example, *memo*, *phone* (abbreviated respectively from *memorandum* and *telephone*), and so on.

Abbreviations are generally avoided in standard writing and should be used only in contexts where they are clear to readers. It is acceptable to use abbreviations for some personal titles, names of organizations, time expressions, and Latin expressions. This section will explain the conventions of using abbreviations.

- (1) Spell out most words in formal essay writing.

- a. Spell out the names of countries, cities, boroughs (区), and states; spell out the *Avenue*, *Boulevard* (林荫大道), *Highway*, *Street*, *River*, and *Mountain* and words like them used as parts of proper names when they appear in the body of the writing.

**Nonstandard:** The Catskill Mts. of NY is near the Hudson Riv.

**Revised:** The Catskill Mountains of New York is near the Hudson River.

- b. Spell out the month and the day of the week; spell out people's names.

**Nonstandard:** In Sept. and Oct. Chas. visits the botanical gardens every Sun.

**Revised:** In September and October Charles visits the botanical gardens every Sunday.

- c. Avoid using the ampersand (&) as a symbol for the conjunction, unless the ampersand is part of an official name or title.

Ⓒ Loneliness and poverty often accompany old age.

Ⓒ The A & P is one of the oldest supermarket chains in America.

- d. Spell out the words *pages*, *chapter*, *volume*, *edition*, and the names of courses of study.

**Nonstandard:** In Ch. 16 several pp. present new developments in open-heart surgery (手术).

**Revised:** In Chapter 16, several pages present new developments in open-heart surgery.

We may use abbreviations for *page*, *chapter*, and *edition* in footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies.

- e. Spell out the words such as *company*, *brothers*, and *incorporated*. Use the abbreviation *Inc.*, *Corp.*, *Co.*, or *Bros.* only when it is part of the official title of a company.

**Nonstandard:** His bros. formed a toy co. called Kidstuff, Inc., and later they changed the name to Goldstein Bros.

**Revised:** His brothers formed a toy company called Kidstuff, Inc., and later they changed the name to Goldstein Bros.

- f. Generally, avoid the use of *etc.* If we don't want to make a long list, it is better to use *and so on*, *and so forth*, *for example*, or *such as*.

**Nonstandard:** This garden is good for planting lettuce, cabbages, spinach, etc.

**Revised:** This garden is good for planting lettuce, cabbages, spinach, and other cool-weather vegetables.

**Revised:** This garden is good for planting cool-weather vegetables—lettuce, cabbages, and spinach, for example.

**Revised:** This garden is good for planting vegetables such as lettuce, cabbages, and spinach.

When we do use *etc.*, we should not put the conjunction *and* before it. The abbreviation *etc.* stands for the Latin *et cetera*, which means *and the rest*, so the *and* is included in the abbreviation itself. To add the word is redundant.

## (2) Abbreviate familiar titles.

Some commonly abbreviated titles always go before people's names. These include *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, *Dr.*, *St.* (Saint), *Rev.* (Reverend), *Hon.* (Honorable), *Sen.* (Senator), and *Rep.* (Representative).

Ⓒ Mrs. Jean Bascom designed the brick walkway in front of our building.

Ⓒ Dr. Epstein and Dr. Goodson had been here for ten minutes.

Ⓒ Rev. Dr. Karl Barth visited Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, shortly before he died.

Note that the abbreviations *Rev.* and *Hon.* are generally used before names when there is no definite article *the* before the titles. With *the*, such titles should be spelled out.

- ⊙ Rev. Jane Schaefer—the Reverend Jane Schaefer
- ⊙ Hon. Henry M. Brown—the Honorable Henry M. Brown

Some abbreviations are always used after proper names. Usually these indicate academic or professional degrees or honors. Note that a comma is placed between the name and the abbreviation and that a space follows the comma.

- ⊙ Larry Hails, Ph.D.
- ⊙ Elaine Leff, M.A.

Generally, avoid duplication by using either a title before a person's name or a degree after the person's name but not both. Spell out most titles used without proper names.

**Misused:** Dr. Karl Barth, Ph.D.

**Revised:** Dr. Karl Barth (or Karl Barth, Ph.D.)

**Nonstandard:** Mr. Carew asked if she had seen the Dr.

**Revised:** Mr. Carew asked if she had seen the doctor.

Notice that when an abbreviation ends a sentence, the period at the end of the abbreviation itself will also serve as the period of the sentence. If a question mark or an exclamation mark ends the sentence, we must place such a punctuation mark after the period in the abbreviation.

- ⊙ When he was in the seventh grade, we called him “Stinky,” but now he is William Percival Abernathy, Ph.D.!

### (3) Abbreviate certain proper names or technical terms.

Abbreviate the names of certain agencies, groups, people, places, or objects commonly referred to by capitalized initials. Some of these abbreviations use periods; others do not. We should follow the standard practice, and consult a dictionary if we have any doubts.

- ⊙ Central Intelligence Agency: CIA or C.I.A.
- ⊙ John Fitzgerald Kennedy: JFK or J.F.K.
- ⊙ United States of America: USA or U.S.A.
- ⊙ Washington District of Columbia: Washington, D.C.
- ⊙ Video Cassette Recorder: VCR

Many international agencies or organizations known by their initials are regularly referred to as abbreviations, especially in publications where they are frequently mentioned. Often the abbreviations of these agencies are so well known that they do not require further explanation.

- ⊙ She noted that ASEAN (东南亚国家联盟) countries and China are geographical neighbors, and have huge development potentials and market space.  
(ASEAN is the abbreviation for Association of Southeast Asian Nations.)
- ⊙ From September 3 to 5, 2017, the ninth BRICS Summit (金砖国家峰会) was held at Xiamen International Conference Center.  
(BRICS is the abbreviation for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.)

If we use the name of an agency or an organization frequently in an essay or a report, we may abbreviate it to make the repetition less tedious. Normally, we should spell out these names at the



first occurrence—at least in formal text—as a courtesy to readers who might not easily recognize them. We may give the abbreviation in parentheses immediately after we mention the name the first time.

- Ⓒ The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) began earnest and often dangerous work in Mississippi and other parts of the South during the summer of 1964. SNCC was far to the left of other civil rights organizations.

(4) Abbreviate words used with certain numbers, such as systems of chronology, time of the day, and unit of measurement.

- Ⓒ 498 B.C.
- Ⓒ A.D. 1066
- Ⓒ 6:00 p.m.
- Ⓒ 9:00 a.m.
- Ⓒ 1066 kg
- Ⓒ 50 km

### Activity 5

**Revise the following sentences to eliminate errors in abbreviations.**

1. The co. takes job applications from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m.

---

2. The story began in Oroville, Calif., on a Mon. afternoon in Mar., 2017.

---

3. That prof. met his students in his off. every Fri. afternoon.

---

4. Since it is only 90 pp. long, the text is really a novella, not a novel.

---

5. The Uni. of Wis. in Madison has an enrollment of over 44,000 students.

---

6. The Dr. is doing simple outpatient surgery in his own office to save the patient from high hosp. costs.

---

7. The Eng. class is reading ch. 4 of the textbook.

---

# Italics

To distinguish certain words and phrases from regular type, printers use italics, a typeface (字体) in which the characters slant (倾斜) to the right.

(1) Italicize the titles of books, magazines, journals, newspapers, plays, films, works of art, long poems, and musical works.

- ◎ Joan Didion, a former editor of *Vogue* and *National Review*, received glowing reviews in *The New York Times* for her novel *A Book of Common Prayer*.

The following are more examples.

- ◎ **Books:** *Jane Eyre*, *War and Peace*
- ◎ **Magazines:** *The New Yorker*, *The Economist*
- ◎ **Journals:** *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, *Nature*
- ◎ **Newspapers:** *USA Today*, *People's Daily*
- ◎ **Plays:** *Romeo and Juliet*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*
- ◎ **Films:** *Planet of the Apes*, *Spider-Man: Homecoming*
- ◎ **Works of art:** *Birth of Venus*, *Starry Night*
- ◎ **Long poems:** *The Iliad*, *Divine Comedy*
- ◎ **Musical works:** *The Marriage of Figaro*

Writers generally do not use italics for the initial *the* in the title of a periodical. But no hard-and-fast rule exists here. In most titles other than those of periodicals, *a*, *an*, or *the* as a first word is usually italicized and capitalized.

- ◎ Edwin Newman's book *A Civil Tongue* is an amusing essay on modern language.

It should be pointed out that for titles of short works—essays, newspaper and magazine articles, short poems in poetry anthologies, chapters or other subdivisions of books, unpublished dissertations and theses, and so on, quotation marks are used instead of italics.

(2) Italicize borrowed words and phrases not commonly regarded as part of English.

- ◎ These apples weigh as much as 15 *jin*, and cost me 50 *yuan*.
- ◎ When I was staying in a Chinese family, I learned to make *jiaozi*, a food like dumpling.

(3) Italicize words, letters, or numbers that are used as examples.

- ◎ The use of the word *sleep* at the end of the last line is effective and gives just the amount of emphasis required at the end of the poem.
- ◎ The word *bookkeeper* has three sets of double letter: double *o*, double *k*, and double *e*.
- ◎ You can see the number *505* on the door.

Also, some writers may use quotation marks to show that words are being spoken of as examples.

- ◎ When I was in graduate school in the late 1970s, "computer" was still a strange word.

(4) Italicize the names of certain ships, trains, and air or space vehicles.

- ◎ Lindbergh had flown his plane, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, from New York to Paris in 33.5 hours with no stop.

- ⦿ In 1912, the *RMS Titanic* sank on her maiden voyage.

(5) Use italics for emphasis.

For special effects, an occasional word in italics helps us emphasize a point.

- ⦿ Many people we *think* are powerful turn out on closer examination to be merely frightened and anxious.

Too many words italicized to show emphasis in writing will bore our readers: Their eyes may leap over the italicized words—opposite from what we intended. Too much emphasis may mean no emphasis; therefore, we should use italics to show stress only occasionally.

**Weak:** You don't *mean* that your *teacher* told the whole *class* that *he* did not know the answer *himself*?

**Revised:** It was your teacher, then, who astonished the class by not knowing the answer?

Through adjusting language and structure, the revised sentence shows the surprise that the first sentence shows weakly with so many italicized words.

◦ **Activity 6** ◦

**Underline the words or phrases that require italics in the following sentences.**

1. An advertisement in the San Diego Evening Tribune announced a cruise on the Queen Elizabeth II, but after I read the novel *Ship of Fools*, a vacation on the sea did not interest me.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Time reported that Da Vinci's painting *The Last Supper* had deteriorated seriously from pollution and neglect.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The word *hopefully* is common nowadays, but many people who take writing seriously object to it because they think the words *I hope* or *we hope* or *it is hoped* usually express the meaning more clearly.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Russell Baker's column *Observer* appears in *The New York Times* several days a week.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1** Revise the following paragraph to eliminate mechanical errors in spelling, hyphenation, capitalization, and abbreviations.

I like Summer Holidays because it brings me happyness and freedom. First, i don't need to go to sch. or do a-lot-of homework. I don't have to worry about my studys. Second, I have plentyful time to go swiming, fishing, or shoping. I can go out every day, enjoyyng the brilliant sunshine or doing sth. I like. Finaly, I can visit my Freinds and play foot-ball, basket-ball or bedminton with them.

**2** Revise the following passage to eliminate mechanical errors in spelling, hyphenation, capitalization, use of numbers, abbreviations, and italics.

**Dr. Ezra Muscatel**

1936 was the year he moved to our town and set himself up as a dr. He hung out the sign on his front porch (门廊) saying, "Dr. Ezra Muscatel, M.D." his house was on 2nd. Ave. next to the ware-house owned by the Ledbetter bros., & Doctor Muscatel used to sit out on the porch over-looking the ave. & stare at the mts. in the distence on the border between Tenn. and N.C.

Mister Ledbetter went to him first, with a stomachaches in the early morning., & Doctor Muscatel gave him 8 or 9 little pills that made him feel good right away, & after that people started going to Doctor Muscatel with stomachaches, headaches, *rheumatism* (风湿), etc. He was the only dr. in the town who would make house calls. You could call him up at six p.m., & he would come to your house & give you some pills, and etc., & you would feel better. he would come to your house to deliver a baby at three a.m. in the morning. He did not charge much mune, & he was always serious about things. He listened to people and nodded his head when they telled him their symptoms (症状) and never looked like one of those drs. that want to ran off after 5 or 6 mins. with a patient. He sat there, looking sober and Concerned, & afterward he would scribble something on his prescription pad (处方笺) & tell you to get it filled at the drugstore, & he would go shuffling off as if he was still thinking about you and what was wrong with you.

FDR was President of the U.S.A. back then, & we had a lot of people coming & going in our little town. One of them saw the old dr. one morning on Main St. and recognized him & began telling everybody that dr. Muscatel was an ex-con (囚犯) who had served thirty years in the Tenn. prison for manslaughter (过失杀人) & that he had never finished high sch.

## Composition writing

Childhood is the most colorful period in one's life. Do you have any memories of your childhood when something special happened and has left a deep impression on you? Write a composition of about 200 words on this topic. Give a proper title for your composition. You may use the first or the third person in narrating the story. Pay special attention to your spelling and the use of hyphen, capital words, numbers, abbreviations, and italics in your writing.

SAMPLE

## 拼写

- 1) 掌握正确的发音规则；
- 2) 学习拼写规则。

## 连字符

- 1) 掌握行尾单词的分割方法；
- 2) 掌握带有前缀的单词的分割方法；
- 3) 掌握复合词的分割方法；
- 4) 掌握用英语单词拼写的数字的分割方法。

## 大小写

- 1) 句子开头的第一个字母要大写；
- 2) 专有名词及其缩写形式要大写；
- 3) 各种文章、艺术作品或建筑作品的标题要大写；标题中冠词、并列连词和少于五个字母的介词不需大写（位于标题开头时除外）；标题中冒号之后的第一个词要大写；
- 4) 引号内直接引语的第一个字母要大写；
- 5) 诗歌中每行的第一个字母要大写；
- 6) 具体的课程名称的首字母要大写。

## 数字

- 1) 一般来说，只需一两个单词就可拼写出来的数字可用拼写的形式表示，需要三个或更多单词才能拼写出来的复杂数字用阿拉伯数字表示；
- 2) 阿拉伯数字一般不用于句子的开头；
- 3) 数字的使用格式在文内要前后一致；
- 4) 数字的使用格式要符合惯例。

## 缩写词

- 1) 在正式文体中，一般要使用单词的完整拼写形式，少用缩略词；
- 2) 同人名连用的称呼语可使用缩略词；
- 3) 某些特定的专有名词和术语可以使用缩略形式；
- 4) 与数字一起连用的某些词，如表示年代、时间和计量单位的词，可使用缩略形式。

## 斜体

- 1) 书籍、杂志、期刊、报纸、戏剧、电影、艺术品、长诗、音乐作品等名称需使

用斜体形式；

- 2) 外来词需使用斜体形式；
- 3) 作为示例的词、字母、数字可使用斜体形式；
- 4) 轮船、火车、飞机或飞行器的名称用斜体形式；
- 5) 表示强调的词语可使用斜体形式（注意不宜过多使用）。

SAMPLE

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# UNIT 1



## An overview of the writing process

### KEY TERMS

- editing 编辑, 编校
- prewriting 写前准备
- revising 修改, 修订
- rewriting 改写
- draft 草稿
- writer's block  
写作瓶颈, 文思枯竭
- writing process 写作过程

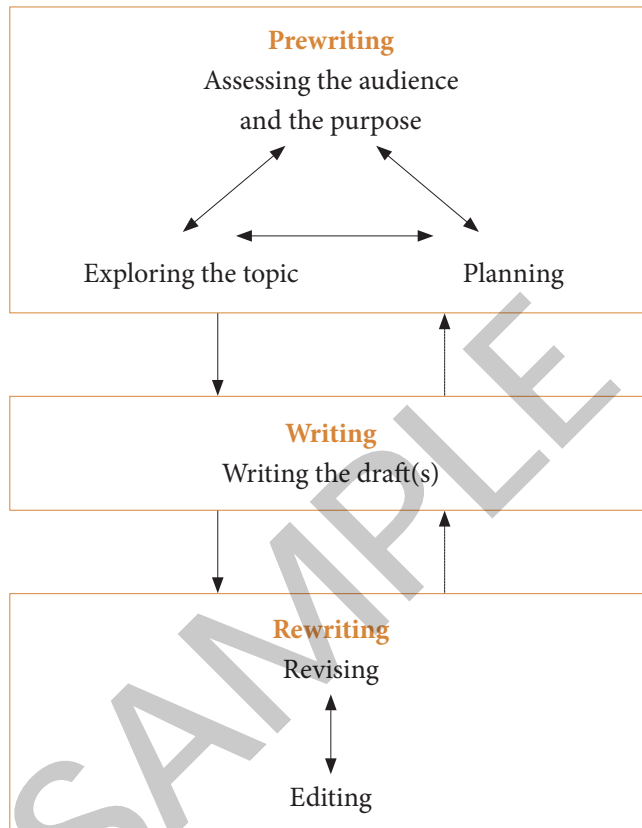
## Introduction

Many students think that a professional writer just sits down, grasps an idea, and dashes off a poem, a play, an essay, or a novel without any stops or mistakes. These students see the writing process as a series of steps consisting of the outline, the rough draft, and the final draft. Seldom, however, is this the case. Instead, the writer moves back and forth from the outline to the first draft, back to the outline, back to the draft, and so forth. The writing process involves considerable trial and error as the writer tries to present a message on the page as clearly and effectively as possible.

The process of writing is different for every writer. However, there are some logical stages that every writer should follow in the creation of an essay. We follow them at different speeds and to differing degrees. As a writer, you will need to become familiar with the various stages of the writing process. The process described in this unit outlines those basic stages.

# An overview of the writing process

The writing process generally consists of three stages: prewriting, writing, and rewriting. The diagram below provides an overview of the whole process.



The solid arrows indicate the major movement of the process; the dotted arrows indicate the likelihood of the writing having to go back in the process.

## Prewriting

Prewriting is at least a three-part process. You have to analyze your writing task by thinking about your intended audience and your purpose for the writing, the material you will use, and the plan of organizing the essay. The double-headed arrows in the diagram above mean that there is no set order in which you approach the components—you may start at different points on different occasions. You may also move freely back and forth among all the components in the prewriting stage.

Prewriting is essentially a preparatory and planning stage. You select a subject and begin to discover what you want to say about it and how to present your thoughts best to your intended

audience. The prewriting stage provides the foundation for discoveries made in the writing process; it is at this stage that the main ideas begin to take shape. Prewriting usually takes 80 percent of the whole writing time.

## Writing

Writing is the stage in which you produce a rough draft of the essay. Usually in this stage, you need to concentrate on actually writing down your ideas; you should not concern yourself with such matters as struggling for the exact words or restructuring sentences or paragraphs. The free flow of ideas is essential during this stage, and too much attention to those matters may interrupt the flow of ideas. Writing usually takes five percent of the whole writing time.

Sometimes, no matter how hard you try not to stop, you end up with a stop. If you find that you simply cannot continue, use freewriting to get back on track. Spend 10 minutes writing about the “stuck point.” Ask questions; try to identify the problem; and write whatever comes to your mind about the topic, or back up one paragraph or two and read what you have written and then freewrite with this rereading still fresh in your mind.

## Rewriting

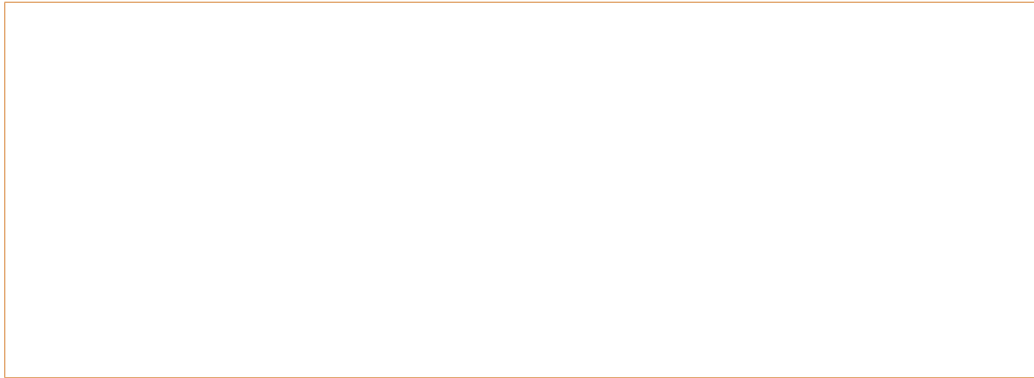
Rewriting is part of the writing process in which you revise and edit the draft produced in the writing stage. Revising often involves additional planning and writing, while editing involves reviewing the writing for appropriate and precise word choice, for various sentence structures, for correct punctuation and spelling, and for a proper manuscript form. An average writer devotes 15 percent of the whole writing time to revising and editing.

Rewriting is an important part of writing that is at times neglected by many beginners. This stage requires you to make decisions that determine the final shape and effectiveness of your writing; thus, rewriting is fundamental. On the one hand, it enables you to correct mechanical mistakes. On the other hand, it is just as creative as the other two stages. It may require that you change only a few things in the draft, or it may require an entirely new draft, or perhaps a third draft, until you are satisfied with your essay. Whatever changes you make at this stage, they must come in light of decisions already made in the other stages of the process. You are not restricted, however, by the previous decisions. Changes made at this stage reflect your ability to see the previous stages of the writing process from a new perspective.

There are many strategies you may use to revise. You may set the draft aside for at least a few hours so that you can return to the essay with a fresh vision. A good practice, once you return to the draft, is to read without marking anything and then to reread. When rereading, you can make notes about such things as what should stay, what should go, what should be rewritten completely, what should be reworded, what should be added, and what should be reordered or restructured.

### Activity 1

Different writers may have different approaches to writing. What is your writing process? Devise a diagram to illustrate your particular writing process.



## The recursiveness of the writing process

As is shown by the previous diagram, writing is a recursive series of activities that turn backward while moving forward. The writer may begin with an introduction, rush to develop the major points for the body of the essay, and then return to the introduction. He/she experiments with words, trying them out until he/she feels they are right. At any stage of the process, the writer may generate ideas which must be incorporated into the essay, ideas which had not occurred to him/her before he/she began writing. Sometimes those ideas require only a minor change of a few words, phrases, or sentences; at other times, they demand that the essay be reorganized all over. Whatever the demand is, it must be met if the essay is to be fully developed.

A piece of writing frequently takes on a life of its own; one idea fosters another, then another, and then still another, until the writer exhausts the topic. How does the writer establish this flow of ideas? At times, the ideas and the words just will not come. This, known as the “writer’s block,” is a common phenomenon. When you encounter such a block, how can you overcome it and continue the writing? First, you may examine the various stages of that process. Second, you may examine how you write. By doing so you can identify your “stuck points” and know how to remedy them. Third, it may help to consider such aspects of writing as the purpose, the thesis, the audience, the organization, and the language. They may throw light on your flow of ideas. In this way, you may begin to recognize and refine your own process.

After you have practiced writing as a process, moving through each of the stages, you will see your final product improved.

## Activity 2

The following is a questionnaire on the writing process. Answer each question honestly to determine what your writing process is like. Then compare your writing habits with others'.

### Questionnaire on the Writing Process

#### 1. Prewriting

- (1) How did you gather information?
  - a. Talking to others
  - b. Browsing WeChat Moments
  - c. Going to the library
  - d. Observing
  - e. Surfing the Internet
  - f. Others (describe)
- (2) How did you discover your main idea?
  - a. Talking to others
  - b. Browsing WeChat Moments
  - c. Surfing the Internet
  - d. Reading books
  - e. Writing
  - f. Others (describe)
- (3) How did you plan?
  - a. With a formal outline
  - b. With an informal outline
  - c. With a diagram
  - d. With a list
  - e. While writing
  - f. Others (describe)

#### 2. Writing

- (1) How many drafts did you produce?
- (2) Did you continue to modify your central idea as you wrote?
- (3) Did you continue to plan as you wrote?
- (4) Did you use an outline, a list, a chart, or notes as you wrote? If so, did you follow it closely?
- (5) Did you make any of the following changes in your draft?
  - a. Adding material
  - b. Changing material
  - c. Deleting material
  - d. Rearranging material
- (6) Did you pay attention to sentence patterns and wording as you wrote?
- (7) Did your attention to sentence patterns and wording significantly interfere with your writing?
- (8) Did you think in Chinese, and then translate your ideas into English in writing?
- (9) Did you often refer to dictionaries, especially Chinese-English ones, while writing?

#### 3. Rewriting

- (1) Did you make any major changes in your essay?  
The types of major changes: \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Did you make any minor changes in your essay?  
The types of minor changes: \_\_\_\_\_

- (3) Did you find any major problems that you had ignored before?  
The major problems: \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Did you check over the following specific parts of your essay?
- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| a. Introduction      | b. Conclusion      |
| c. Transitions       | d. Body paragraphs |
| e. Others (describe) |                    |
- (5) Did you read your writing out loud?
- (6) Which of the following do you take into consideration when you revise your essay?
- If the essay is in response to the task
  - If there is a main idea that controls the essay
  - If there are enough details about the main idea
  - If the essay is organized in a logical way
  - If the essay is free of grammar errors
  - If the essay is written in appropriate language
- (7) Did you make any changes in sentences
- as you were writing the first draft?
  - after you wrote the first draft?
  - both in and after writing the first draft?
- (8) Did you make any changes in words
- as you were writing the first draft?
  - after you wrote the first draft?
  - both in and after writing the first draft?
- (9) How many times did you edit your essay to eliminate mechanical mistakes?
- (10) If you edited your essay more than once, did you
- edit for different things each time?
  - edit the same way each time?
- (11) Did you share your writing with your classmates or other people and then consider their suggestions in revision?

## Description of your writing process

What do you do when you are faced with a writing assignment? How do you proceed? Do you prepare for days or do you write at one stretch? The following two essays, one written by an American student, and the other written by a Chinese student, answer these questions respectively.

Read them through and you will learn more about the writing process.

## Writing sample 1

### Writing My Way

Why is this such a difficult assignment? After all, it's my writing process I'm supposed to describe, so no one else can lecture me and say I'm wrong. What's the problem?—Wait a minute. I think I may have discovered a clue. That word, "wrong." There's always something wrong with what I write, so I guess there's something wrong with my process, too. How can any process which produces nothing better than mine does, possibly be worth describing? Obviously, if I had amassed great fame and fortune through my writing, I would feel justified in exploring my process for the benefit of mankind, but...

Sometimes when I'm stuck about how to begin, I just start writing—anything—whatever I think of. Often this gets thrown out, usually altered, and only rarely does it get to stay, but at least it gets me started.

This preliminary agonizing is part of the necessary prewriting process, and I believe the more I write, the more time I spend on the stage. I used to think writing meant taking pen in hand and putting words on paper, but this describes only the physical act, not the creative process involved in deciding what to write, and describing the thought process is a rather difficult task. Fragments of ideas and snatches of thoughts rise, sink, and rise again like bubbles in a viscous (黏稠的) liquid. Many times a day, while shopping or waiting in line somewhere, I shake the assignment container and watch the bubbles form again, hoping to discover a pattern, a solution to the problem of what or how to write about a particular subject.

Sometimes, after hours or days of agitation, it suddenly becomes clear. I know what I want to say and rush to put them down on paper before I forget. Of course, I have learned that the brilliant, perfect solution which appears at the end of a long day may, when exposed to scrutiny in the next morning's light, have changed into something dull and totally worthless. Occasionally when I have something I really want to say, the words seem to rush to get through pen to paper. This happens rarely, but it is exciting and satisfying when it does.

Seldom does a whole essay flow smoothly. There are always spots which are rough, sentences so awkward that I finally disown them, and paragraphs which refuse to fit together smoothly.

Sometimes most of the essay is satisfactory, but I have trouble with the conclusion, or I find that the introduction just doesn't work because the essay I thought it was introducing isn't the essay I wrote. Trouble spots like these are smoothed out in revision.

After I have completed the basic structure of the essay, I begin to revise. Writing, like jelly, needs to be set for a while before you can tell what it is really like. I must put it away for a few hours or overnight now and then so that I can take a fresh look and see what needs changing or is worth keeping. I have awakened at 5 a.m. knowing how I should change something, so ideas must percolate even in my subconscious. This may go on for days, with a few changes here one time and more somewhere else the next day.

With all these changes, my rough draft usually becomes such a messy conglomeration (混合物) of insertions and deletions (with alternative words and phrases in parentheses) that I can't even read it. At this point, I recopy, or even better, type a draft. Sometimes seeing sentences typed makes their faults more apparent or helps highlight awkward patterns.

Finally, because I can't think of a better way to say anything, or because I have run out of time, I type a final draft, heave a fatalistic sigh, and turn to something else. It seems that my writing process involves tossing ideas about, finally managing to get something on paper, and then revising and revising it. This seems to be a fairly standard procedure for many writers, so maybe I have something in common with the rich and famous after all.

### Activity 3

Answer the following questions based on the above passage.

1. How do you characterize this writer's writing process? How recursive is it?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What insights into writing does this essay help you gain?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What specific advice does this essay contain about the various stages of the writing process?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Writing sample 2

### My Writing Process

As a Chinese student with 13 years of training in English, I think the biggest torture of learning English is to write an English essay, and the biggest joy is to read it again after the teacher checks it and gives it a high mark. Through all these



years' training, I have formed my particular writing process, which takes three steps: prewriting, drafting, and revising.

My prewriting consists of establishing a thesis and working out an outline. To find the thesis, I brainstorm for ideas. Then I go through the list of ideas and search for a theme I am interested in. Finally I develop a thesis from my ideas and make a rough outline. The time needed for prewriting depends on the type of essay and my familiarity with the topic, and it usually takes about 20 minutes to write an essay of 350 words.

At the drafting step, I expound my thesis by providing specific material. I always pay special attention to my introductory paragraph, because a good introduction attracts readers more than any other part of an essay. Before moving on to the second paragraph, I usually have denied two or three unsatisfactory introductions. The body of the essay is relatively easier to write. However, quite often, I cannot find an English word for my meaning. To achieve smoothness of writing, I make do with a Chinese equivalent, and when the paragraph comes to an end, I consult a Chinese-English dictionary as well as an English-English one. It often happens that my thinking gets stuck in the middle of drafting. If an immediate way out is impossible and if time permits, I will put my draft aside to do some relevant reading or divert my attention to something else. When I come back, I am in a better state of mind to find a resolution.

When the draft is finished, the only work left is revising. However, I put this task off for a few hours so that I can take a fresh look at my draft, reconsider the content, and discover and correct the mistakes in spelling, grammar, mechanics, and so on. When I finish revising once or twice, I hand in my essay as a final product.

My writing process takes great effort and a painfully long time, but it has rewarded me a lot during the past years.

#### ◦ Activity 4 ◦

**Answer the following questions based on the above two passages.**

1. What is the Chinese writer's writing process? How many stages does it contain?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are the similarities and differences between the writing processes of the two writers?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What are the differences between your own writing process and those mentioned in the above two passages?  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Summary: writing is rewriting

Writing is not a single-step linear process. Instead, it is a recursive process that includes different stages: prewriting, writing, and rewriting.

Writing is rewriting. This is clearly stated by the American writing expert Donald M. Murray in his work *A Writer Teaches Writing*:

All effective writers know writing is rewriting. The inexperienced writer feels a revision is a failure. The amateur believes the writer is the person who can sit down and rip off an essay or a report. The professional writer knows better. Rewriting is what you do when you are a writer, for it is an essential part of the process of writing. It is the way in which you fit ideas into language.

As we stated earlier, it is not easy to distinctly divide the three stages of the writing process. Sometimes they come together. Think about your own writing. When writing a rough draft or answering an examination question, how many times have you combined writing and rewriting by crossing out a word, a sentence, or a paragraph and substituting a more appropriate choice? You have probably done so many times. You have probably also written sentences or paragraphs (writing) in your exploration of a subject (prewriting) and revised them on the spot (rewriting) before incorporating them into an essay. The fact that these steps frequently occur simultaneously reinforces the statement that writing is a recursive creative process that involves considerable trial and error as the piece of writing unfolds and takes shape.

## Writing assignments

- 1 Write an essay of about 300 words to describe your writing process. Use the “Questionnaire on the Writing Process” in Activity 2 as hints.
- 2 What was your first day of college classes like? How did you feel about it? Write an essay of about 300 words on this topic. Include specific examples to support your ideas. Pay attention to the different stages of your writing process.

SAMPLE

## Unit review

### 写作过程

写作不是一个能够一次性完成的线性过程，而是一个交叉进行的循环过程，包括写前准备、写作和改写三个阶段。

### 写前准备阶段

写前准备指写作前的准备和计划工作，由三部分构成：评估读者期待和自己的写作意图，构思话题和制定计划。这三部分之间没有固定的先后顺序，各部分之间可自由切换。

### 写作阶段

写作阶段即撰写草稿的阶段。在这个阶段，写作者最重要的任务是集中精力将现有的思想写出来，不必过度纠结于措辞、句子结构或段落结构。

### 改写阶段

改写指对草稿进行修改和编辑。修改意味着针对草稿中不够完善的内容重新思考、规划，进而对写作内容进行调整或补充；编辑指订正措辞、句法、拼写、标点符号和稿件格式等方面的错误。

### 结论

写作是一个创造性的发现过程，写作者在不断试写、犯错、纠错和发现新思想与新素材的过程中实现自己的写作目的，因此，写作过程的三个阶段相互交叉、循环往复，直至写作者满意为止。

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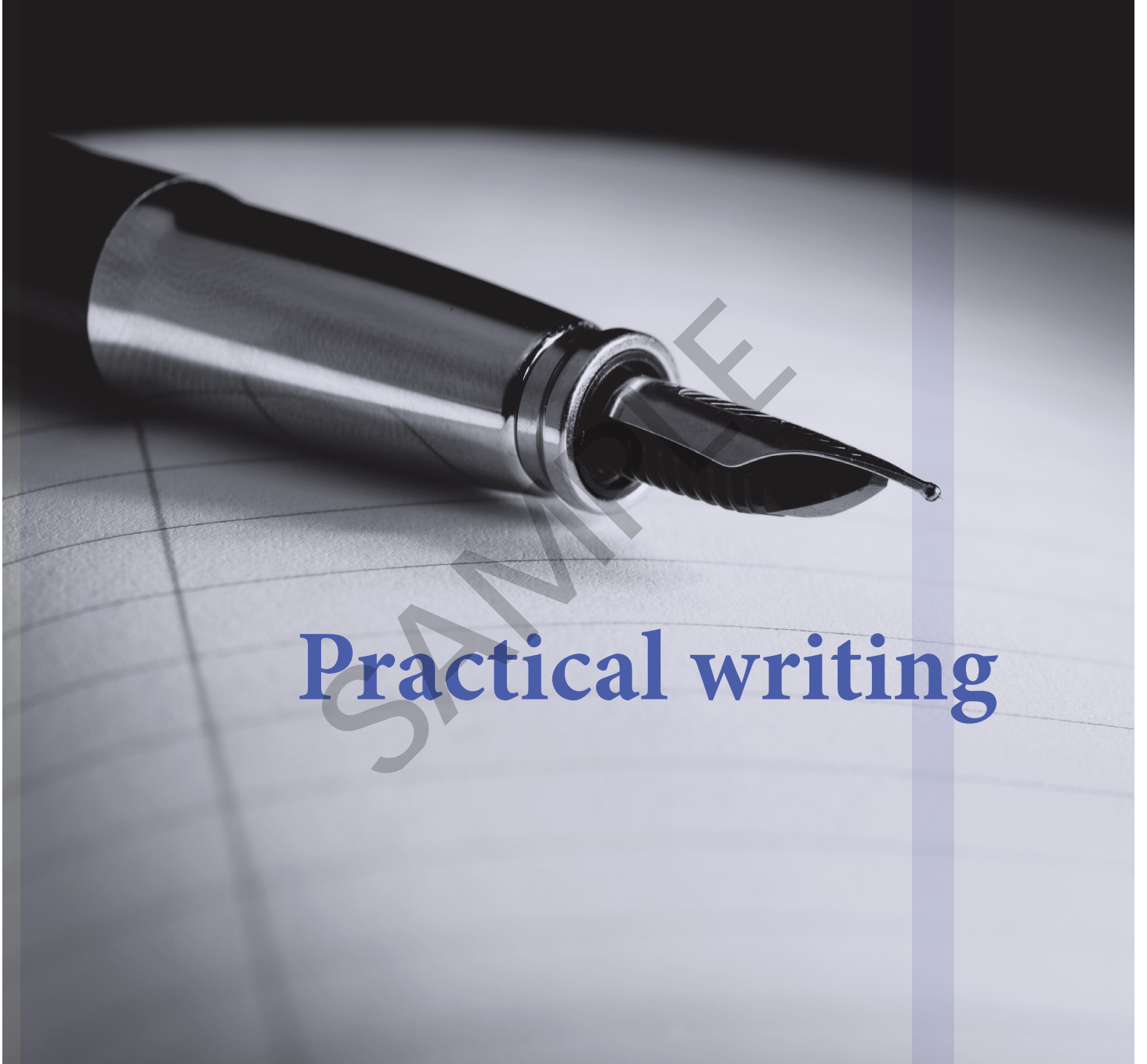
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SAMPLE

PART



**Practical writing**



# UNIT 1



## Précis

### KEY TERMS

— précis 摘要  
summary 概要

## Introduction

A précis is a brief statement, in your own words, of a speech or a piece of writing (an essay, a report, a newspaper article, a chapter in a book, etc.) giving only the main ideas of the original.

Précis writing is of great educational value to students. First, it helps students read actively and accurately. In order to detect the main points of certain reading material and its pattern of thought, students have to thoroughly understand it and become aware of the logic underlying the material. Thus they read more actively and accurately than they usually do.

Second, it is a good way to practice writing. The précis requires brevity and clarity. To write a good précis, students have to put ideas in the briefest and clearest possible grammatical structures. Therefore, précis writing teaches them to choose their words carefully and express their ideas clearly, concisely, and logically.

Third, précis writing can also sharpen students' skills in grasping the main idea of the original, organizing information, and expressing themselves in idiomatic English. After mastering the art of writing a précis, they will be able to take notes more carefully and accurately



when writing minutes, reports, or research papers, where it is often necessary for them to introduce what others say or write in the fewest possible words.

Furthermore, précis writing can train students to take various kinds of tests. As an excellent testing tool, précis writing has been used in proficiency tests and entrance examinations such as TEM4, TEM8, and so on. Therefore, learning to write précis directly benefits students in test taking.

## Précis and its synonyms

Before the discussion of how to write a précis, it is necessary to distinguish *précis* from its three synonyms: *summary*, *abstract*, and *synopsis*.

In the broad sense, the term *précis* can be defined as a summary, referring to a brief statement of the main points of something longer. But in the strict sense, *précis* is usually used in a more specialized way to designate a particular type of summarizing exercise used for academic purposes. There are several differences between a précis and a summary.

First, a précis states only the thought of the original, while the writer of a summary is free to interpret the material and to comment on it if the writer makes it clear that he or she is doing so. Therefore, the writer of a summary can write in his or her own voice, referring to the original author(s) by name, or as *he*, *she*, or *they*. The writer of a summary can also integrate the summary with information about the original author(s), the evaluation of the worth of the original, or the discussion of its methods or goals.

Second, a précis follows the order and the proportion of the material in the original, whereas the writer of a summary is relatively free to change the order and proportion if he or she wishes to do so. As a result, the writer of a summary may put more emphasis on the parts of the original material that are most appropriate for his or her writing purpose, provided that the writer does not falsify the original or mislead the audience about its true nature.

Third, a précis can only give the main points of one piece of material at a time, while a summary can bring several pieces of material together as a group. Therefore, the summary is often used in book reviews or research papers to blend analyses of the authors and the original material.

In spite of the above differences, people often use the word *summary* loosely to refer to a précis. So when you are required to write a summary, you should pay special attention to the instructions to learn whether the writing task requires a précis or a loose summary.

The two other synonyms of *précis*—*abstract* and *synopsis*—are more easily distinguishable from *précis* than *summary*. An abstract is a summary of the major points presented in reports, papers, or other scholarly or legal documents. An abstract is usually written by the writer of a document and is published along with the document itself. A synopsis, by contrast, is a short account of something longer, especially the story of a film, play, or novel.

This unit will focus on how to write a précis.

### Activity 1

**Read each of the following paragraphs (which are brief statements of the main points of a longer essay) and then tell whether it is a précis or a summary.**

1. The problem of overuse in our national parks was caused by a change in people's attitudes toward the wilderness between 1990 and 2010. The park service has implemented two solutions: limitations emphasizing quantity and limitations emphasizing quality. The heart of the problem and of the solutions is that everyone must compromise.

---

2. The essay opens with two contrasted personal experiences that show how the national parks changed for the better between 1990 and 2015. The writer examines the causes and effects of the change, and suggests effective remedies.

---

## Guidelines for précis writing

A good précis should possess such features as being complete, brief, faithful, and coherent. In order to achieve these qualities, précis writing should follow the following guidelines.

### (1) Completeness

Include all of the main points. Omission of a main point may lead to misunderstanding of the original material. All the main ideas reproduced from the original should form a compact whole and convey a sense of unity.

### (2) Brevity

State the important ideas and omit the specifics. Record the bare bones of the original, leaving out repetition, examples, detailed descriptions, subordinate ideas, and modifiers. Use the most economical possible wording.

### (3) Faithfulness

Write accurately and faithfully. Report exactly what you read in the order in which it is presented. Write as though the original author were explaining his or her own ideas to readers. Do not include your personal comments or opinions. For example, instead of saying *This article is about...*, simply state the idea of the material.

(4) Proportion

Follow the proportion of the original material. If the original devotes 70 percent of its content to one idea and only 30 percent to the other, your précis should reflect that emphasis.

(5) Tone

Maintain the same tone of the original. If the original material is humorous, use an informal tone in your précis writing. Similarly, if the original material is serious, use a factual, objective tone.

(6) The form of speech

A précis is always written in the indirect form of speech except in very rare cases where you cannot do justice to the author of the original without quoting a few words in their original forms.

(7) Coherence

Write clear, continuous sentences that go smoothly from one sentence to another. Your précis must not be a patchwork (拼凑之物) of phrases and sentences quoted from the original. Instead, you should learn to paraphrase, or express the meanings of the original in your own words by varying sentence structures, using synonyms, or changing the voice.

(8) Length

Observe the word limit given in the instruction. Often the required précis is about one third or one fourth the length of the original. Do not go beyond the word limit, but do include enough information to convey all the main ideas.

◦ **Activity 2** ◦

**Paraphrase the following sentences.**

1. Thin people come in all personalities.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Obviously there is nothing to do except perhaps curse the day that one was born.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. A shop with no front window showed its contents, public and private, clear through the rear window.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. He genuinely wished to hold on to his temper; his scenes with me had taken a great deal out of him.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. The entire cinema would explode into catcalls and foot stamping, calling dramatic attention to the irksome distortion of pictures.

\_\_\_\_\_

## The process of writing a précis

When writing a précis, you can refer to the following steps.

- (1) Read the instructions carefully to find out what you are required to do.
- (2) Read the original material carefully twice. Search for the main points. Find out the meanings of the words you do not know by using your dictionary.
- (3) Determine which parts of the original are essential and which parts serve only as transitions or nonessential details.
- (4) Highlight the main points (key words or phrases) or write them down in a list.
- (5) On the basis of the main points and your own interpretation of the main idea, write the rough draft of the précis, referring to the original only when you want to make sure of some points. This will help you reproduce the content of the original in your own words.
- (6) Read through the rough draft carefully, making any change you think necessary and bringing the number of words down to the set limit.
- (7) Write a fair copy of your précis in a single paragraph, stating the exact number of words you have used at the end of your précis if required.
- (8) Give your précis a title.

When you revise your précis, always remember the guidelines for précis writing stated in the previous section. You should, especially, bear two important points in mind. First, your précis must be accurate. You must derive all your information from the original and never distort its meaning or add your own ideas to it. Second, your précis should be written in such a way that it reads as a continuous paragraph. To achieve this, you should use devices, especially transitional expressions like *but*, *and*, *however*, *though*, *even if*, *also*, and so on, to connect your points.

## Two methods to highlight main points

There are mainly two methods to highlight the main points of certain material: the parenthesizing method and the underlining method.

### The parenthesizing method

Follow the steps below when you use the parenthesizing method to mark the main points of certain material.

- (1) Read through the material and put in parentheses the words, phrases, or sentences that you think unimportant and therefore can be left out.
- (2) Write a draft précis on the basis of the words and sentences that are left, adding words

where necessary, shortening word groups where substitution is possible, and linking everything together smoothly.

- (3) Read through your draft once more, make any further changes, and rewrite it to form a final version.

The following is a passage to be précised within 65 words.

⊙ **Transportation**

Have you ever thought about how important transportation is to the world? Without transportation modern life could not exist. We would have to get or make our food, our clothes, even our books, newspapers, and mail by ourselves. Everything that we have come to depend on is brought to us by transportation. Even the water that we drink is transported through pipelines from wells and reservoirs to our homes and offices. We have come to depend on the availability of three principal kinds of transportation: land, sea, and air. Automobiles, railroads, trucks, and pipelines are the principal means of land transportation. Just think how paralyzed our society would be without any mechanical means of land transportation! We would have to depend, once again, on animals such as donkeys, horses, oxen, camels, or even dogs (like the Inuit). Instead of streetcars, subways, buses, bicycles, and taxis, we would have to rely on our own feet. Ships, barges, and submarines form the chief means of water transportation, carrying people and goods across (even under) oceans, seas, and lakes, and along big and small rivers. Without our principal means of air transportation, the airplane, we would have to slow down our lives and commerce. It would not be possible to mail a letter in Istanbul in the morning and have it delivered to New York in the evening. We could not breakfast in San Francisco and have dinner in Paris. Other means of air transportation such as helicopters and supersonic passenger jets will bring the people of the world into even closer contact.

By using the parenthesizing method, you may mark the above passage like the following.

⊙ **Transportation**

(Have you ever thought about how) important transportation (is to the world? Without transportation) modern life (could not exist. We would have to get or make our food, our clothes, even our books, newspapers, and mail by ourselves.) Everything (that) we (have come to) depend on is brought to us by transportation. (Even the water that we drink is transported through pipelines from wells and reservoirs to our homes and offices.) We (have come to) depend on (the availability of) three principal kinds of transportation: land, sea, and air. (Automobiles, railroads, trucks, and pipelines are the principal means of land transportation. Just think how) paralyzed our society (would be) without (any mechanical means of) land transportation! We would have to depend, (once again,) on animals (such as donkeys, horses, oxen, camels, or even dogs [like the Inuit]. Instead of streetcars, subways, buses, bicycles, and taxis, we would have to rely on) our own feet. (Ships, barges, and submarines form the chief means of) water transportation, carrying people and goods across (even under) oceans, seas, and lakes, and along (big and small) rivers. Without (our principal means of air transportation,) the airplane, we would have to

slow down our lives and commerce. (It would not be possible to mail a letter in Istanbul in the morning and have it delivered to New York in the evening. We could not breakfast in San Francisco and have dinner in Paris.) Other means of air transportation (such as helicopters and supersonic passenger jets will) bring the people of the world (into even) closer (contact).

When the content in parentheses is deleted, the words left can be combined to make a draft précis as illustrated below.



### Transportation

Transportation is important to modern life. Everything we depend on is brought to us by it. We depend on three principal kinds of transportation: land, sea, and air. Our society would be paralyzed without land transportation. We would have to depend on animals and our own feet. Water transportation carries people and goods across oceans, seas, etc. Without the airplane, we would have to slow down our lives and commerce. Other means of air transportation bring the people of the world closer.

More compression, substitution, and rewriting can produce a more concise and coherent version as follows.



### Transportation

Transportation is essential to modern life because it brings us everything we need. There are three principal kinds of transportation: land, sea, and air. The mechanical means of land transportation release us from depending on animals and our own feet; water transportation carries people and goods across various waters; and air transportation speeds up our lives and commerce and brings people closer.

## The underlining method

Follow the steps below when you use the underlining method to mark the main points of certain material.

- (1) Read through the material and underline its key words, phrases, or sentences. Leave out any unnecessary content.
- (2) Write a draft précis, using the underlined parts and changing certain words to suit your own word preference.
- (3) Read through your précis once more, make any further changes, and rewrite it to form a final version.

In your précis writing, you can use a combination of both methods, as illustrated in the following passage.



### The Development of Writing

(Few people would disagree with the belief that primitive men learned to speak long before they developed a system of writing. But their early spoken language may have been nothing more than a few sounds. Early men transmitted messages across distances by means of signals from drums, smoke, and fire. It was probably) a desire to record messages (that) led to the development of alphabets. (Early men, who could speak and

send messages, could not put those messages into a permanent form. The desire to have permanent records may not be easily understood in today's world where electronic science has made recordings commonplace. If early men wanted to leave records of past events to remind them of the good times and the bad, they had to depend on their memory, and on primitive markings such as piles of stones, cuttings on sticks, etc. The limitations of this system led early men to turn to rock drawings for the expression of more sophisticated ideas. (This form of writing depended on pictures to convey ideas, and although it was more advanced than previous developments, it was still too limited for men to be entirely satisfied. Finally, men were able to develop a system of picture writing (that associated symbols and sounds. This system, which was originated by the Sumerians and the Egyptians in about 3000 B.C., (was based on the same principle that we use today in most world alphabets. It was) in about 1000 B.C. (that) the Phoenicians took the (complicated) picture alphabets of the Egyptians and simplified them into 22 symbols, (each one standing for a) consonant sound. (Finally,) the ancient Greeks, in about 800 B.C., refined this Phoenician alphabet and added signs for vowel sounds. The alphabet used in English, and in many other languages, is called the Roman alphabet because it was developed by the Romans who had taken over most of it from (another Italic people,) the Etruscans, who, (in their turn,) had learned it from the ancient Greeks. (Letters on ancient monuments in Rome prove that the) Roman alphabet, (the same alphabet used) today, (had been) perfected by around 114 A.D.

The following is the final précis of the above passage.

©

#### The Development of Writing

The desire to record messages led to the development of alphabets. First, rock drawings appeared to express ideas. In about 3000 B.C., the Sumerians and the Egyptians developed picture writing. It was simplified by the Phoenicians into 22 symbols for consonant sounds in about 1000 B.C. Then the ancient Greeks refined it by adding signs for vowel sounds in about 800 B.C. Through the Etruscans, the Romans took over most of the Greek alphabet and developed the Roman alphabet by around 114 A.D. It is now used in English and other languages.

#### Activity 3

**In the following passage, the main points have been underlined. Join them into a continuous paragraph of no more than 40 words.**

Automation is a term which describes the use of machines to control other machines. The process of automation is expected to increase production and to improve our standard of living. Certain forms of automatic equipment have been used by the auto industry for many years to move materials to the assembly lines. Ford Motor Company now uses some automatic controls. At its engine plant in Cleveland, rough cylinder blocks go through a series of 530 automatic operations and come out as finished products in just 15 minutes.

While many labor leaders fear that automation will cause workers to lose jobs, scientists say it will demand more workers to maintain and to repair the automatic machines.

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## Strategies for grasping main points

How do you decide what are the main points and what are transitional and inessential details? The following are a few strategies to use when you make these decisions.

(1) Pay attention to the title and the subtitle.

The title and the subtitle of a piece of material often summarize what the material is about. Think about how they may condense the meaning of the material. Take the passage “The Development of Writing” as an example. The title implies that the passage will discuss the different stages in the development of writing. Therefore, when searching for the main points, you should focus on looking for the answers to four questions: *who* invented *what* types of writing at *what time*, and *how*. If you can find statements or details in the passage that answer the above four questions, you have grasped the main points. All those details about the early spoken language of primitive men and about how they sent messages are thus unimportant and can be left out.

(2) Identify the topic sentence of each paragraph.

Most English paragraphs, especially expository ones, have topic sentences. A topic sentence usually appears at or near the beginning of the paragraph and states its main idea. Once you have the main idea in your mind, it is easy for you to find main subdivisions that support the main idea. For example, in the passage “Transportation,” the topic sentence is the second sentence, *Without transportation modern life could not exist*, from which we can derive the main idea *Transportation is essential to modern life*. Therefore, when summarizing the three principal kinds of transportation (main subdivisions), you should focus on their importance in modern life instead of the specific ways of transportation. You should avoid writing a précis like the following one, which fails to grasp the main points of the passage.





## Transportation

Transportation is important to modern life. Everything we depend on is brought to us by transportation. There are three principal kinds of transportation: land, sea, and air. Automobiles, railroads, trucks, and pipelines are the principal means of land transportation. Ships, barges, and submarines form the chief means of water transportation. Airplanes, helicopters, and supersonic passenger jets are the principal means of air transportation.

(3) Reduce examples and modifiers to the essential minimum.

If the writer of the original material uses examples or statistics to illustrate a point, you may refer to them briefly in your précis. Very often you may omit them altogether. Never attempt to give the details of an example. And leave out words, phrases, or sentences that merely restate or reinforce a point already made. For example, in the passage “Transportation,” the third sentence *We would have to get or make our food, our clothes, even our books, newspapers, and mail by ourselves* is a specific example that illustrates the point *Without transportation modern life could not exist*; the sentence *Even the water that we drink is transported through pipelines from wells and reservoirs to our homes and offices* reinforces the idea *Everything that we have come to depend on is brought to us by transportation*. Therefore, they can be omitted in the précis. Also, modifiers such as adjectives and adverbs generally contribute little to the main idea and thus can be deleted in a précis.

### Activity 4

Read the following passage, underline the main points, and then write a précis of no more than 100 words.

#### Bad Habits

It is very easy to acquire bad habits, such as eating too many sweets or too much food, drinking too much alcohol of any kind, or smoking. The more we do a thing, the more we tend to like doing it; if we do not continue doing it, we feel unhappy. This is called the force of habit, and the force of habit should be fought against.

Things which may be very good when only done from time to time, tend to become very harmful when done too often and too much. This even applies to such good things as work or rest. Some people form a bad habit of working too much, and others idling too much. A wise man always remembers that this is true of him and checks any bad habit. He says to himself, “I’m now becoming idle,” “I like too many sweets,” or “I smoke too much,” and then adds, “I will get myself out of this bad habit at once.”

One of the most widely spread bad habits is the use of tobacco. Tobacco is now smoked or chewed by men, by women, and even by children, almost all over the world. It was brought into Europe from America by Sir Walter Raleigh, about four centuries ago, and has hence spread everywhere. I very much doubt whether



- 1 Read the following passage and then answer the questions below by writing a précis of no more than 75 words.

## Writing assignments

### The Value of Education

Education is not an end, but a means to an end. In other words, we do not educate children only for the purpose of educating them; our purpose is to fit them for life. As soon as we realize this, we will understand that it is very important to choose a system of education which will really prepare children for life. It is not wise just to choose the first system of education one finds or to continue with one's old system of education without examining it to see whether it is in fact suitable or not.

In many modern countries it has for some time been fashionable to think that, by free education for all—whether rich or poor, clever or stupid—all the problems of society can be solved and a perfect nation can be built. But we can already see that free education for all is not enough: We find in such places a far larger number of people with university degrees compared with the available jobs for them to fill. Because of their degrees, they refuse to do what they consider "low" work; in fact, work with the hands is thought to be dirty and shameful in such places.

But we only have to think for a moment to understand that the work of a completely uneducated farmer can be far more important than that of a professor: We can live without education, but we die if we have no food. If no one cleaned our streets and took the rubbish away from our houses, we would get terrible diseases.

In fact, when we say that all of us must be educated to fit us for life, it means that we must be educated in such a way that, firstly, everyone can do whatever job that is suited to his or her intelligence and ability, and, secondly, we can realize that all jobs are necessary to society, and that it is very bad to be ashamed of one's own work, or to scorn someone else's. Only such a type of education can be called valuable to society.

1. What does the writer think education is for?
2. How does the writer disagree with the system considered fashionable in many modern countries?

**2** Read the following news excerpt carefully and then write a response of no less than 200 words in which you should first summarize the main message of the news excerpt and then comment on the rule banning electronic devices in the pub. You can support yourself with information from the excerpt.

### **Pub Chain Bans Phones to Protect “Social Conversation”**

U.K. pub chain Samuel Smith’s has reportedly banned customers from using mobile phones, iPads, and laptops in the pub.

A memo sent out to managers says the brewery’s policy is “not to allow customers to use mobile phones, laptops, or similar devices inside our pubs.” It states that if a customer receives a call, then he or she should go outside to take it in the same way as it is required with smoking. Whether outside or inside, tablets must be prohibited. It also declares that customers must not be allowed to receive transmitted pictures of sport or download music on the brewery’s premises either inside or outside.

The brewery’s policy is that “the pubs are for social conversation.” It follows a similar rule that has banned swearing in the chain’s 300 pubs. The strange rules are said to be enforced by the company’s 73-year-old owner, who is rumored to enter the pubs undercover to check that they are being kept to.

One pub manager said that while it can be “detrimental” to have people on the phone, any restriction should be informal and policed by the individuals themselves rather than being a strict rule.

## Unit review

### 摘要的定义

摘要是用自己的语言对短文、报告、报刊文章或图书章节等进行概述。

### 摘要写作的意义

- 1) 提升学生阅读的积极性和准确性；
- 2) 训练学生在写作时做到措辞正确、表达简练、合乎逻辑；
- 3) 增强学生捕捉要点、组织信息、表情达意、记录笔记的能力；
- 4) 训练学生参加各种考试的能力。

### 近义词辨析

- 1) *précis* 遵循原文的顺序和内容分配比例，且只陈述原文内容，不对原文进行评论；
- 2) *summary* 可以不遵循原文的顺序和比例，可以对原文进行评论；
- 3) *abstract* 是对报告、论文或其他学术类或法律类文件等的摘要陈述；
- 4) *synopsis* 是电影、剧本或小说等的故事梗概。

### 摘要写作的原则

- 1) 陈述所有要点；
- 2) 省略细节（包括重复、例子、细节描写、修饰语等）；
- 3) 忠实于原文，不要掺入摘要写作者自己的评论；
- 4) 摘要的内容分配比例要与原文一致；
- 5) 语气要与原文一致；
- 6) 引用原文内容时通常使用间接引语；
- 7) 使用写作者自己的语言，前后连贯；
- 8) 遵守字数要求；摘要通常为原文字数的三分之一或四分之一。

### 摘要写作的步骤

- 1) 认真阅读题目指令，了解题目要求；
- 2) 认真阅读原文两遍，搜寻要点，不认识的单词可查阅词典；
- 3) 判断哪些部分是要点，哪些只是过渡语或不重要的细节；
- 4) 标注好要点，或将要点一条一条列出来；可用括号法将不重要的单词、短语或句子放进括号，可用下划线法将要点（单词、短语或句子）划出，也可两种方法并用；
- 5) 根据列出的要点和对主旨的理解撰写摘要的初稿；
- 6) 阅读摘要的初稿，进行必要的修改，并控制好字数；

- 7) 将摘要誊写成一段；
- 8) 为摘要确定题目。

#### 捕捉原文要点的策略

- 1) 关注原文的标题和副标题，因为它们往往是原文主旨思想的缩影；
- 2) 找出各段的主题句，因为主题句往往阐述了所在段落的要点；
- 3) 尽量省略例子或修饰语；若原文使用了例子，可简要在摘要中提及，但更多情况下则可全部省略；重复性的词句及大多数修饰语也可删除。

SAMPLE