



**Independent Clause** An independent clause is a group of words with a subject-verb combination that can be a sentence by itself.

**I am taking a lot of science classes** because I want to go to medical school.

**Noun** A noun is a person, place, thing, or idea.

The **students** are reading **poems** about **friendship** and **love**.

**Object** An object is a word that comes after a transitive verb or a preposition. It is often a noun, noun phrase, pronoun, or gerund.

Jim bought **a new car**.  
I left my jacket in **the house**.

**Phrase** A phrase is a small group of words that create a larger unit, such as a noun phrase or prepositional phrase.

Kimchi is **a traditional Korean dish**.  
Jane forgot her phone **on the bus**.

**Preposition** A preposition is a word that shows location, time, or direction. Prepositions are often one word (*at, on, in*), but they can also consist of two words (*in between*) or three words (*on top of*).

The university is **in** the center of the city.

**Pronoun** A pronoun can replace a noun in a sentence. Using a combination of nouns and pronouns adds variety to your writing.

<sup>n</sup> **Whales** are mammals. <sup>subj pronoun</sup> **They** breathe air.  
<sup>n</sup> Some **whales** are endangered. We need to protect <sup>obj pronoun</sup> **them**.

**Punctuation** Punctuation refers to the marks used in writing to separate sentences and parts of sentences and to clarify meaning.

The colors of the American flag are red, white, and blue, and the colors of the Mexican flag are red, white, and green.

**Subject** The subject of a sentence tells who or what a sentence is about. It is often a noun, noun phrase, pronoun, or gerund.

**My teacher** gave us a homework assignment. **It** was difficult.

## VERB FORMS

| VERB FORM AND USE   | AFFIRMATIVE   | NEGATIVE  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Simple Present</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regular activities or habits</li> <li>facts or things that are generally true</li> <li>a process (how to make or do something)</li> </ul>  | I/you/we/they <b>work</b><br>he/she/it <b>works</b><br><br><i>Be:</i><br><b>I am</b><br>you/we/they <b>are</b><br>he/she/it <b>is</b>       | I/you/we/they <b>do not work</b><br>he/she/it <b>does not work</b><br><br><i>Be:</i><br><b>I am not</b><br>you/we/they <b>are not</b><br>he/she/it <b>is not</b>    |
| <b>Simple Past</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recent or historical events</li> <li>a narrative, or story, that is real or imagined</li> <li>events in a person's life</li> <li>result of an experiment</li> </ul>                       | I/you/we/they <b>worked</b><br>he/she/it <b>worked</b><br><br><i>Be:</i><br><b>I was</b><br>You/we/they <b>were</b><br>He/she/it <b>was</b> | I/you/we/they <b>did not work</b><br>he/she/it <b>did not work</b><br><br><i>Be:</i><br><b>I was not</b><br>You/we/they <b>were not</b><br>He/she/it <b>was not</b> |
| <b>Present Progressive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actions that are currently in progress</li> <li>future actions if a future time expression is used or understood</li> </ul>   | <b>I am working</b><br>you/we/they <b>are working</b><br>he/she/it <b>is working</b>  | <b>I am not working</b><br>you/we/they <b>are not working</b><br>he/she/it <b>is not working</b>  |
| <b>Future with <i>be going to</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>future plans that are already made</li> <li>predictions that are based on a present action</li> </ul>  | <b>I am going to go</b><br>you/we/they <b>are going to go</b><br>he/she/it <b>is going to go</b>  | <b>I am not going to go</b><br>you/we/they <b>are not going to go</b><br>he/she/it <b>is not going to go</b>  |
| <b>Future with <i>will</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>future plans/decisions made in the moment</li> <li>strong predictions</li> <li>promises and offers to help</li> </ul>   | I/you/we/they <b>will go</b><br>he/she/it <b>will go</b>  | I/you/we/they <b>will not go</b><br>he/she/it <b>will not go</b>  |
| <b>Present Perfect</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actions that began in the past and continue until the present</li> <li>actions that happened at an indefinite time in the past</li> <li>when a time period is not complete</li> </ul> | I/you/we/they <b>have worked</b><br>he/she/it <b>has worked</b>   | I/you/we/they <b>have not worked</b><br>he/she/it <b>has not worked</b>   |

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# CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION

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## Capitalization

Capitalize:

- the first word in a sentence

**We** go to the movies every week.  
**D**eserts are beautiful places to visit.

- the pronoun *I*

Larry and **I** are brothers

- people's formal and professional titles

**Mr.** and **Mrs.** Jenkins are on vacation.  
Lisa saw **Dr.** Johansen at the bank yesterday.

- proper names (specific people, places, and things)

**Kate** met her brother **Alex** at the park.  
The **C**oliseum in **R**ome is a beautiful old monument.  
**Nick** is taking **H**istory 101 this semester.

- names of streets.

Ruth lives on **W**ilson **A**venue.

- geographical locations (cities, states, countries, continents, lakes, and rivers)

I am going to travel to **L**ondon, **E**ngland, next week.  
The **A**rno **R**iver passes through **T**uscany, **I**taly.

- the names of languages and nationalities

My grandmother speaks **P**olish.  
Melissa is **V**enezuelan, but her husband is **C**uban.

- most words in titles of paragraphs, essays, and books

*The **L**ife of **B**illy **B**arnes*  
***I**n*to the ***W**ild*

## Commas

Use a comma:

- before the connectors *and*, *but*, *so*, and *or* in a compound sentence

Rick bought Julia a croissant, but she wanted a muffin.

- between three or more items in a list

Jen brought a towel, an umbrella, some sunscreen, and a book to the beach.

- after a dependent clause at the beginning of a complex sentence. Dependent clauses include time clauses, *if* clauses, and reason clauses

Because it was raining outside, Alex used his umbrella.

- between the day and the date and between the date and the year

The last day of class will be Friday, May 19th.  
I was born on June 27, 1992.

- between and after (if in the middle of a sentence) city, state, and country names that appear together

The concert was in Busan, Korea.  
I lived in Phuket, Thailand, for ten years.

- after time words and phrases, prepositional phrases of time, and sequence words (except *then*) at the start of a sentence

Every afternoon after school, I go to the library.  
Finally, they decided to ask the police for help.

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## SPELLING

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### -S Form Verbs and Plural Nouns

- Add *s* to most verbs to make the *-s* form, and to most nouns to make them plural.

student—students    teacher—teachers    apple—apples

- If a verb or noun ends in *ss*, *sh*, *ch*, *z*, or *x*, add *es*.

class—classes    brush—brushes    watch—watches    buzz—buzzes    box—boxes

- If a verb or noun ends in a consonant + *y*, change the *y* to *i* and add *es*.

party—parties    lady—ladies    library—libraries

- If a verb or noun ends in a vowel + *y*, do not change the *y*. Just add *s*.

boy—boys    day—days    toy—toys

## Regular Simple Past Verbs

- Add *ed* to the base form of most verbs.

start—started      finish—finished      wash—washed

- Add only *d* when the base form ends in *e*.

live—lived      care—cared      die—died

- If a verb ends in a consonant + *y*, change the *y* to *i* and add *ed*.

dry—dried      carry—carried      study—studied

- If a verb ends in a vowel + *y*, do not change the *y*. Just add *ed*.

play—played      stay—stayed      destroy—destroyed

- If a verb has one syllable and ends in consonant + vowel + consonant (CVC), double the final consonant and add *ed*.

stop—stopped      rob—robbed

- If a verb ends in a *w* or *x*, do not double the final consonant. Just add *ed*.

sew—sewed      mix—mixed

- If a verb that ends in CVC has two syllables and the second syllable is stressed, double the final consonant and add *ed*.

**admit**—admitted      **occur**—occurred      **permit**—permitted

- If a verb that ends in CVC has two syllables and the first syllable is stressed, do not double the final consonant. Just add *ed*.

**happen**—happened      **listen**—listened      **open**—opened

## IRREGULAR SIMPLE PAST VERBS

Here are some common irregular verbs in English.

| BASE FORM | PAST     | BASE FORM | PAST   | BASE FORM  | PAST       |
|-----------|----------|-----------|--------|------------|------------|
| be        | was/were | find      | found  | see        | saw        |
| become    | became   | flee      | fled   | sell       | sold       |
| begin     | began    | forget    | forgot | send       | sent       |
| bite      | bit      | get       | got    | set        | set        |
| bleed     | bled     | give      | gave   | sing       | sang       |
| blow      | blew     | grow      | grew   | sink       | sank       |
| break     | broke    | have      | had    | sit        | sat        |
| bring     | brought  | hear      | heard  | sleep      | slept      |
| build     | built    | hide      | hid    | speak      | spoke      |
| buy       | bought   | hit       | hit    | spend      | spent      |
| catch     | caught   | hold      | held   | stand      | stood      |
| choose    | chose    | hurt      | hurt   | steal      | stole      |
| come      | came     | keep      | kept   | swim       | swam       |
| cost      | cost     | know      | knew   | take       | took       |
| cut       | cut      | leave     | left   | teach      | taught     |
| do        | did      | let       | let    | tell       | told       |
| draw      | drew     | lose      | lost   | think      | thought    |
| drink     | drank    | make      | made   | throw      | threw      |
| drive     | drove    | pay       | paid   | understand | understood |
| eat       | ate      | put       | put    | wear       | wore       |
| fall      | fell     | read      | read   | win        | won        |
| feel      | felt     | run       | ran    | write      | wrote      |
| fight     | fought   | say       | said   |            |            |

# ARTICLES

## A and An

Use *a* or *an* before a singular count noun when its meaning is general. Use *a* before a word that starts with a consonant sound. Use *an* before a word that starts with a vowel sound.

Words that begin with the letters *h* and *u* can take *a* or *an* depending on their opening sound.

- When the *h* is pronounced, use *a*.

**a** horse / **a** hat / **a** hot day / **a** huge dog

- When the *h* is silent, use *an*.

**an** hour / **an** honor / **an** honourable man / **an** herbal tea

- When the *u* sounds like *you*, use *a* (because the first sound in the word is a vowel sound).

**a** university / **a** uniform / **a** useful invention / **a** unique idea

- When the *u* sounds like *uh*, use *an*.

**an** umpire / **an** umbrella / **an** ugly shirt / **an** uncomfortable chair

## The

Use *the*:

- before a singular count noun, plural count noun, or non-count noun when its meaning is specific

I need to ask my parents to borrow **the** car today.

- the second (and third, fourth, etc.) time you write about something

I bought a new coat yesterday. **The** coat is blue and gray.

- when the noun you are referring to is unique—there is only one

**The** Sun and **the** Earth are both in **the** Milky Way Galaxy.  
**The** Eiffel Tower is a beautiful monument.

- with specific time periods

You must be very quiet for **the** next hour.  
**The** 1920s was a time of great change in the United States.

- when other words in your sentence make the noun specific

**The** cat in the picture is very pretty.

- with geographic locations that end in the plural *s* (such as a group of islands), or the words *united*, *union*, *kingdom*, or *republic*

We are going to **the** Bahamas for our vacation.  
Who is the president of **the** United States?

- with most buildings, bodies of water (except lakes), mountain chains, and deserts

**The** White House is in Washington, DC.  
**The** Amazon is a very long river in South America.

Do not use *the*:

- with the names of cities, states, countries, continents, and lakes (except as mentioned above)

Sylvie is from Venezuela. She lives near Lake Maracaibo.  
Lake Baikal is a large freshwater lake in Russia.

- before names or when you talk about something in general

Mikhail Bulgakov is a famous Russian writer.  
Jason is going to make a table with wood.

# NOUNS AND PRONOUNS

## Common Non-count Nouns

Count nouns can be counted. They have a singular form (*phone*, *person*) and a plural form (*phones*, *people*). Non-count nouns are not countable. They have only one form (*money*, *information*).

Here are some common non-count nouns.

| COMMON NON-COUNT NOUNS   |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Food items</b>        | butter, sugar, salt, pepper, soup, rice, fish, meat, flour, bread      |
| <b>Liquids</b>           | milk, coffee, water, juice, cream                                      |
| <b>Academic subjects</b> | English, math, science, music, biology                                 |
| <b>Abstract ideas</b>    | love, honesty, poverty, crime, advice, luck, pain, hate, beauty, humor |
| <b>Others</b>            | homework, information, money, furniture, traffic                       |

## Possessive Pronouns

A possessive pronoun takes the place of a possessive adjective + noun combination. Possessive adjectives + nouns and possessive pronouns can be in the subject or object position.

| POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE + NOUN   | POSSESSIVE PRONOUN  |
|---|---|
| The pencil on the table is <b>my pencil</b> .                               | The pencil on the table is <b>mine</b> .                                |
| Because I left my book at home, I need to share <b>your book</b> with you.  | Because I left my book at home, I need to share <b>yours</b> with you.  |
| My ring is silver, but <b>his ring</b> is gold.                             | My ring is silver, but <b>his</b> is gold.                              |
| Carol has my cell phone, and I have <b>her cell phone</b> .                 | Carol has my cell phone, and I have <b>hers</b> .                       |
| Your room is on the first floor, and <b>our room</b> is on the fifth floor. | Your room is on the first floor, and <b>ours</b> is on the fifth floor. |
| Our class got to have a special party, but <b>your class</b> did not.       | Our class got to have a special party, but <b>yours</b> did not.        |
| Jenny likes her class, and Karl and Jim like <b>their class</b> , too.      | Jenny likes her class, and Karl and Jim like <b>theirs</b> , too.       |

## Quantifiers

Quantifiers give more information about the number, or quantity, of a noun. They usually go in front of a noun.

| QUANTIFIER                           | EXAMPLE   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>With Count Nouns</b>              |   |
| one, two, three (all numbers)        | <b>Several</b> students went to the school office.<br><b>Many</b> people wanted to leave the city.<br>Ellie put <b>a few</b> coins in the parking meter.                      |
| a few                                |   |
| few                                  |   |
| many                                 |   |
| another                              |   |
| several                              |   |
| a pair of                            |   |
| a couple of                          |   |
| <b>With Non-count Nouns</b>          |   |
| a little                             | There is only <b>a little</b> milk left in the refrigerator.<br>We get too <b>much</b> homework every night.  |
| little                               |   |
| much                                 |   |
| <b>With Count or Non-count Nouns</b> |   |
| some                                 | Mrs. Jones has <b>a lot of</b> friends.<br>They got into <b>a lot of</b> trouble.<br>I do not have <b>any</b> plans for this weekend.<br>Adam does not have <b>any</b> money. |
| any                                  |   |
| a lot of                             |   |
| a lot of                             |   |

## ORDER OF ADJECTIVES

In general, there are seven categories of adjectives. When you use more than one adjective to describe a noun, use the following order.

- size                      small, large, huge
- opinion                  beautiful, nice, ugly
- shape                     round, square, oval
- condition                broken, damaged, burned
- age                        old, young, new
- color                      red, white, green
- origin                     French, American, Korean

- ✓ He has an enormous brown dog.
- ✗ He has a brown enormous dog.

You can also use more than one adjective from the same category. Put a comma in between these adjectives, or use *and*. Use *and* when the adjectives follow a linking verb.

- She is a shy, quiet girl.
- She is a shy and quiet girl.
- She is shy and quiet.

## PREPOSITIONS

### At, On, and In

Prepositions indicate time, location, and direction. Prepositions are always the first word in a prepositional phrase, which is a preposition + noun.

Three common prepositions in English are *at*, *on*, and *in*.

### Using At

**Location:** Use *at* for specific locations.

- Angela works **at** the First National Bank.
- I always do my homework **at** my desk.
- Joel met Jillian **at** the corner of Polk Street and Florida Avenue.

**Time:** Use *at* for specific times.

My grammar class meets **at** 9:00 a.m. every day.  
The lunch meeting begins **at** noon.  
Cate does not like to walk alone **at** night.

**Direction:** Use *at* for motion toward a goal.

My brother threw a ball **at** me.  
The robber pointed his gun **at** the policewoman.

## Using On

**Location:** Use *on* when there is contact between two objects.

The picture is **on** the wall.  
He put his books **on** the kitchen table.  
Erin lives **on** Bayshore Boulevard.

**Time:** Use *on* with specific days or dates.

Our soccer game is **on** Saturday.  
Your dentist appointment is **on** October 14.  
I was born **on** June 22, 1988.

## Using In

**Location:** Use *in* when something is inside another thing.

The books are **in** the big box.  
I left my jacket **in** your car.  
Barbara lives **in** Istanbul.

**Time:** Use *in* for a specific period of time, a specific year, or a future time.

I am going to graduate from college **in** three years.  
My best friend got married **in** 2006.  
Mr. Johnson always drinks four cups of coffee **in** the morning.  
We will meet you **in** ten minutes.

## Other Prepositions

Here are more common prepositions and prepositional phrases of location. In the chart on the next page, the preposition or prepositional phrase shows the location of the ball in relation to the box.

| PREPOSITION   | EXAMPLE   |
|---|---|
| under              | Pedro keeps his shoes <b>under</b> his bed.                           |
| above/over         | Sheila held the umbrella <b>over</b> her head.                        |
| between            | The milk is <b>between</b> the eggs and the butter.                   |
| in front of        | Mark was standing in <b>front of</b> the restaurant.                  |
| in back of/behind  | My shirt fell <b>behind</b> my dresser.                               |
| across...from      | There is a supermarket <b>across</b> the street <b>from</b> my house. |
| next to/beside     | The mailman left the package <b>next to</b> the door.                 |

# CONNECTORS

## Connectors in Compound Sentences

Connectors in compound sentences are called coordinating conjunctions. They are used to connect two independent clauses. A comma usually appears before a connector that separates two independent clauses in a compound sentence.

| COORDINATING CONJUNCTION | PURPOSE                     | EXAMPLE  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| and                      | to add information          | Miki works full time, <b>and</b> she is a student.                       |
| but                      | to show contrast            | The exam was hard, <b>but</b> everyone passed.                           |
| so                       | to show a result            | It was raining, <b>so</b> we decided to stay home last night.            |
| or                       | to give a choice            | We can cook, <b>or</b> we can order pizza.                               |
| yet*                     | to show contrast/concession | There was a hurricane warning, <b>yet</b> many people went to the beach. |
| nor**                    | to add negative information | Roberto does not like opera, <b>nor</b> does he enjoy hip-hop.           |
| for†                     | to show reason              | He ate a sandwich, <b>for</b> he was hungry.                             |

\*Yet is similar to *but*; however, it usually shows a stronger or unexpected contrast.

\*\*Question word order is used in the clause that follows *nor*.

†The conjunction *for* is not commonly used except in literary writing.

Many writers remember these connectors in compound sentences (or coordinating conjunctions) with the acronym *FANBOYS*: *F* = *for*, *A* = *and*, *N* = *nor*, *B* = *but*, *O* = *or*, *Y* = *yet*, and *S* = *so*.



## Step 3

Now read the second draft of this paragraph. How is it the same as the first draft? How is it different? Did the writer fix all the errors?

### My Saddest Day

The night before I came for the U.S. was my saddest day. That night my family gave me a big party. All my family and friends were come to it. We sang, danced, and ate many food. We stayed up all night. We talked about my new life. When everyone left, we cried and said good-bye. They kissed and hugged me. I think I will not see them ever again. Finally, I went to bed at 4:00 in the morning. However, I could not sleep because I was so sad. I was sad in the United States for six months. Now I feel better, but that was my saddest day.

## USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Try these useful words and phrases as you write your sentences and paragraphs. They can make your writing sound more academic, natural, and fluent.

| STATING AN OPINION   |  |
|--|--|
| I believe/think/feel (that)...   | <b>I believe that</b> New York City should ban large sugary drinks.  |
| In my opinion/view,...   | <b>In my opinion,</b> art classes are important.   |
| ...should (not) be allowed (...)   | Bringing your own snacks to a movie theater <b>should be allowed.</b>  |
| ...must/should/ought to...   | Researchers <b>must</b> stop unethical animal testing.   |
| I agree/disagree (that)...   | <b>I agree that</b> daylight saving time is not necessary anymore.   |
| I agree that... However,...  | <b>I agree that</b> eating healthily is important. <b>However,</b> the government should not make food choices for us.   |
| ...is the most/least...<br>...is the best/worst...<br>...is a/an...book/movie/article. | Thailand <b>is the most</b> interesting country in the world.<br>Thailand <b>is the best</b> place to go on vacation.<br><i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i> by J.K. Rowling <b>is an</b> entertaining <b>book.</b> |
| There are many benefits/advantages to...   | <b>There are many benefits to</b> swimming every day.  |
| There are many drawbacks/disadvantages to...   | <b>There are many drawbacks to</b> eating most of your meals at a restaurant.  |

| GIVING AND ADDING EXAMPLES AND SUPPORT                         |   |
|--|---|
| For example/instance,...                                       | My instructor gives us so much homework. <b>For example,</b> yesterday he gave us five pages of grammar work.                       |
| According to...,...  | <b>According to</b> a recent poll, 85 percent of high school students felt they had too much homework.                              |
| One example (of...) is...                                      | There are several different types of runners. <b>One example is</b> a marathon runner.  |
| Another example (of...) is...<br>...is another example (of...) | <b>Another example of</b> a type of runner <b>is</b> a sprinter.<br>A sprinter <b>is another example.</b>                           |
| ..., such as...  | There are many places to visit in New York City, <b>such as</b> the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, and Central Park. |

| LISTING  |   |
|--|---|
| First/Second/Third, ...<br>Next, ...<br>Last/Lastly/Finally, ...   | <b>Lastly,</b> you should visit my country because of its amazing mountains.  |
| One reason to...is...<br>One type of...is...   | <b>One reason to</b> visit my country <b>is</b> the wonderful weather.<br><b>One type of</b> runner <b>is</b> a long-distance runner.       |
| Another reason to...is...<br>Another type of...is...<br>...is another reason to...<br>...is another type of... | <b>Another reason to</b> visit my country <b>is</b> the delicious food.<br>The delicious food <b>is another reason to</b> visit my country. |

| DESCRIBING A PROCESS                                    |   |
|---|---|
| First/Second/Next/Finally, ...<br>Then...               | <b>First,</b> you cut the fish and vegetables into small pieces.<br><b>Next,</b> you add the lime juice. <b>Then</b> you add in the seasonings. <b>Finally,</b> mix everything together well. |
| The first/second/next/last thing you (need to) do is... | <b>The first thing you need to do is</b> wash your hands.   |
| Before/After you..., you (need to)...                   | <b>Before you</b> cut up the vegetables, <b>you need to</b> wash them. <b>After you</b> cut up the vegetables, <b>you</b> add them to the salad.  |
| After that, you (need to)...                            | <b>After that, you need to</b> mix the ingredients.   |
| The first/next/final step is...                         | <b>The last step is</b> adding your favorite salad dressing.  |

| TOPIC SENTENCES FOR PARAGRAPHS WITH LISTING ORDER                                   |  |
|---|--|
| There are many/several/some...  | <b>There are many</b> good places to visit in my country.<br><b>There are several</b> different types of runners.  |
| ...must/should/need(s) to follow a few/a couple of/three (simple/specific) steps... | A tourist <b>must follow four steps</b> to get a visa to visit my country.<br>To take a good picture with your phone, you <b>need to follow a few simple steps</b> . |
| ...for many/several/three reasons.  | Art is an important subject to study <b>for several reasons</b> .  |

| CONCLUDING SENTENCES                         |  |
|--|--|
| In conclusion,...                            | <b>In conclusion</b> , I believe that my parents are the best in the world.              |
| For these reasons, I think/believe (that)... | <b>For these reasons, I think that</b> schools need to offer art classes every semester. |
| It is clear that...                          | <b>It is clear that</b> Guatemala is the best tourist destination in South America.      |
| If you follow these steps,...                | <b>If you follow these steps</b> , you will not need to call an expert.                  |

| SHOWING CAUSE AND EFFECT  |  |
|---|--|
| Because..., ...<br>...because...<br>Because of.....<br>...because of... | <b>Because</b> I broke my leg, I could not move.<br>I could not move <b>because</b> I broke my leg.<br><b>Because of</b> my broken leg, I could not move.<br>I could not move <b>because of</b> my broken leg. |
| ..., so...  | My sister did not know what to do, <b>so</b> she asked my mother for advice.   |

| TELLING A STORY   |   |
|---|---|
| I will never forget the day/month/year/time...              | <b>I will never forget the day</b> I left my country.       |
| I can still/will always remember the day/month/year/time... | <b>I can still remember the day</b> I started my first job. |
| ...was the best/worst day/month/year of my life.            | My sixteenth birthday <b>was the best day of my life</b> .  |

| DESCRIBING                           |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| ...tastes/looks/smells/feels like... | My ID card <b>looks like</b> a credit card. |
| ...is known/famous for its...        | France <b>is famous for its</b> cheese.     |

## KEEPING A VOCABULARY JOURNAL

Vocabulary is very important to learning English. The best way for you to really improve your vocabulary is to do more than study from your teacher or this book. You should also keep a vocabulary journal.

A vocabulary journal is a notebook in which you write down all the new words and phrases that you do not know but you think are important. When you find a new word, write it in your notebook. However, writing words in the notebook is not enough. You also need to review the words many times.

The most important thing about learning vocabulary is the number of times you think about the word, listen to it, read it, speak it, or write it. You can practice any way you want.

There are many ways to organize a vocabulary journal, and you should choose a way that you like. It is important to remember this is your journal, and it should be useful for you. Here is one way to keep a vocabulary journal. You write four pieces of information about each new word, but you can write as little or as much as you want.

1. Write the English word first.
2. Write a translation in your first language.
3. Write a simple definition or synonym in English.
4. Write a phrase or sentence with the word. Use a blank (\_\_\_\_) instead of writing the word.

With these four kinds of information, you can practice the new vocabulary four ways.

Leave a lot of white space between the words and the information you write. Each page of your notebook should have only five to eight words. As you learn new information about the word, you can write that information in the white space.

Here are two examples:

From a Spanish speaker's vocabulary journal:

**dozen**                      12 things  
**docena**                      a \_\_\_\_\_ eggs

From an Arabic speaker's vocabulary journal:

**hot**                              not cold  
**hot**                              The sun is very \_\_\_\_\_.

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## TEST TAKING TIPS

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Here are some useful tips for taking timed writing tests.

### Before Writing

- Before you begin writing, make sure that you understand the assignment. Underline key words in the writing prompt. Look back at the key words as you write to be sure you are answering the question correctly and staying on topic.
- Take five minutes to plan before you start writing. First, list out all the ideas you have about the topic. Then think about which ideas have the best supporting examples or ideas. Use this information to choose your main idea(s). Circle the supporting information you want to include. Cross out other information.
- Write on the assigned topic. Do not write more than is requested. If the assignment asks for a 150-word response, be sure that your writing response comes close to that. Students do not get extra points for writing more than what is required.

### While Writing

- Be sure that you have a strong topic sentence. Remember that your topic sentence guides your paragraph. If the topic sentence is not clear, the reader will have difficulty following your supporting ideas.
- It is important for your writing to look like a paragraph. Be sure to indent the first sentence. Write the rest of the sentences from margin to margin. Leave an appropriate amount of space after your periods. These small details make your paragraph easier to read and understand.
- Organize your ideas before you write. Review the list you have created. Place a number next to each idea, from most important to least important. In this way, if you do not have enough time to complete your writing, you will be sure that the most relevant information will be included in your paragraph.
- Once you pick a side (agree or disagree), include only the ideas that support that side. Sometimes you may have ideas for both sides. If this happens, choose the side that is easier for you to write about. If you do not have an opinion, choose the side you can write about best, even if you do not believe in it. You receive points for your writing skill, not your true personal beliefs.

### Word Choice

- Avoid using words such as *always*, *never*, *all*, and *none*. You cannot give enough proof for these words. Instead, use words such as *probably*, *often*, *most*, *many*, *almost never*, and *almost none*.
- Avoid using general or vague vocabulary. Words such as *nice*, *good*, and *very* can often be changed to more specific terms, such as *friendly*, *fabulous*, and *incredibly*. Be more specific in your word choice.
- Avoid slang and informal language in academic writing.

### Development

- Avoid information that is too general. When possible, give specific examples. Good writers want to show that they have thought about the subject and provide interesting and specific information in their writing.

### After Writing/Proofreading

- Leave time to review your writing. Proofread your paragraph and check for subject-verb agreement, correct use of commas and end punctuation, and for clear ideas that all relate to the topic sentence.
- Check for informal language like contractions or slang. These do not belong in academic writing.

# PEER EDITING FORMS

## Peer Editing Form 1

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do the sentences answer the questions?  Yes  No

If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do all the sentences

- a. have a subject and a verb?  Yes  No
- b. begin with a capital letter?  Yes  No
- c. end with a period?  Yes  No

If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Check all that apply: The writer correctly used

- the verb *be*
- there is/there are*
- prepositional phrases of place
- capitalization with proper nouns

4. Is there any place where the information is unclear?  Yes  No

If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is there any place where you want more information?  Yes  No

If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

## Peer Editing Form 2

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does the paragraph have a title?  Yes  No

2. Does the paragraph have an indented first line?  Yes  No

3. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence?  Yes  No

If yes, write it here: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does the paragraph have a concluding sentence?  Yes  No

If yes, write it here. Underline information connected to the topic sentence.

5. Is there any place you want more information?  Yes  No

If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Does the paragraph use at least two vocabulary words/phrases from the unit?  Yes  No

List them here: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Does the paragraph have any mistakes with

- a. grammar?  Yes  No
- b. capitalization?  Yes  No
- c. punctuation?  Yes  No

If yes, briefly explain here: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What do you like best about this paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_