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GENERAL LANGUAGE COURSE

WRITING
AND
PRESENTING

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WRITING AND PRESENTING
for
a range of purposes and audiences
using conventions and formats
appropriate to diverse contexts.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The content and style of what you write will depend on your target audience. A personal message to a close friend will bear no resemblance to a technical paper you plan to present to fellow engineers. Writers for a magazine aimed at men will write differently from those who are writing exclusively for women. Get two magazines, one of each type, and analyse the conversational content and writing style of each.

It is the same when writers target those who customarily use slang, instant messaging, and the new vocabulary that is emerging in the information age. A writer must not only give consideration to vocabulary, but to content as well as its appropriate level. Writers will need to know just where to pitch their writing to keep the target audience interested.

Sometimes the target audience may be made up of people of different interests. The writer, in such circumstances, will have to walk the white line and use content and vocabulary that will straddle generational as well as gender differences.

Boys in a class could begin to write for their male counterparts and girls could do the same for their fellow female students. Later they could start to write for those who are interested in topics such as: cell phone technology, MXit, sports, skin care, music, hobbies, the environment, risky behaviour, movies, human rights, social issues and other topical matters.

Well written articles could be published on the internet or in the local media. When the activities in the classroom begin to find an expression beyond the school boundary, learners will see the value of researching and writing well. Every school ought to consider setting up web logs to encourage learners to publish what they write for a target audience that is predetermined..

NARRATING

The impulse to share a story is a basic human instinct. People who undergo any strange, unusual, sad, or triumphant experience, generally feel compelled to talk about it to their friends, family and acquaintances. Some tell it as it happened, others embellish it. The story is told either to entertain or to reveal some lessons to be learnt from it. Consider the following extract written by a professional psychologist recalling an experience where his professional training was inadequate for the situation that unfolded in his office:

Jennie stood at the door, a dark little thing. Her black eyes gleamed as she peered at me through the oily strands. ‘Sit in this chair, Jennie,’ I said casually. My request wasn’t quite a command. It didn’t work with Jenny. She still stood at the door, the toe of one slipped foot on the arch of the other, her little legs twisted at an odd angle. Her look was neither defiant nor bashful. Nor was it courage covering fear. I was the nearest source of danger. I should be watched. It was simply that, no more. I found, to my surprise, that I did not like her. Oddly, I felt she knew it. And even worse, I felt that, knowing it, she was not hurt. But at least she did call for respect. I went to the point.

‘They tell me, Jennie that you throw things and set things on fire.’ If I expected either a burst of tears or defiance, I was mistaken. I didn’t have time to observe her reaction. It was as if a sudden hurricane and earthquake had hit the room. A disk tray full of papers whizzed by my head; my pen stand crashed through the window, and I got a shower of paper clips in the chest. By the time I had wiped the ashes and tobacco from my ashtray out of my eyes, Jennie was gone.

Adapted from **What Thin Partitions** by Clifton & Apostolides, p 318. **Bumper Books of Stories**, Cathay Books, London, 1983.

The story is carried forward by an accumulation of carefully selected details. At the same time we suspect that there is a story within the story which is told without words. The seasoned psychologist had not been prepared by his studies, or his experience, for Jennie's wildcat tantrums.

A number of questions can be asked about a narrative.

What is the situation that is developing? What is the narrator revealing about himself or herself? Is the information being presented in a chronological order? Are you being made to identify with the narrator? If so, how? How reliable is the narrator? Why? How effective is the climax? Was it anticipated or did it come as a surprise? To whom did come as a surprise? What is the conclusion?

What generalisation can you make from having read the story?

1. Look again at the extract on the previous page and answer the questions above.
2. The psychologist would have met Jennie again. Create a credible follow up scene. Edit the story and make copies for a few friends. Ask them for their comments. Rewrite it if necessary to improve the content and dialogue.
3. After that, compare how others in the class projected the outcome of the second encounter. What observations arose from these comparisons? Comment on them.
4. Were you ever left gasping as a result of an ordinary encounter spinning out of control? If so, describe it. If not, conjure up a scene where your expertise was called into question by the unexpected reaction of someone else. Describe it.
5. Write a brief autobiography of the most successful person in your family. In developing the story focus on a momentous turning point that altered everything for the better for this relative. Show that a person's fortune depends on luck and character.

IMAGINATIVE WRITING

Oliver Wendell Holmes was an American polymath who was highly regarded by the society of his time. After having listened to the customary eulogies, at the time of his retirement, he responded as follows:

My part is only to sit in silence. But I may mention the thought that comes to me as a listener. The riders in a race do not stop short, when they reach the goal. there is a little finishing canter before coming to a standstill. There is time to hear the kind voices of friends, and to say to one's self - - The work is done, but just as one says that, the answer comes, the race is over, but the work is never done, while the power to work remains.

Last Speech: Oliver Wendell Holmes

The reference to horses in a race is imaginative as it is telling.

Every day, unfortunately, we witness scenes and events all around us, but we seldom relate the things we see to our lives.

Every day we simply allow the birds that had come into view, as well as our thoughts of the moment, to fly away without leaving any lasting impression on us. If we saw them again we wouldn't know; and if we encountered the same thought again we wouldn't have made much more of it.

Wendell Holmes, on the other hand, was able to call to mind a scene from the race course and use it to great effect. That is the power of imaginative expression. A few words imaginatively spoken or set down on paper can tell an elaborate tale worthy of retelling again and again.

So before you hit the delete button to clear your memory of the things you see and witness every day, archive them for easy retrieval when you wish to explain something. Then also, from time to time, move unallocated items to the relevant file and store them in a planned way for future use. This is called defragging.

If that exercise is good for your computer why should it be any different for your own mind and memory? You need to order your thoughts and use what you have seen or experienced to make interesting observations.

If you have never done it before, now is the time to change that!

Once again you are reminded to carry your little notebook with you. Become alert and observant for there is so much to learn in and out of the classroom.

There is so much, therefore, that needs to be recorded in your book: insights, novel use of words, ideas, quotations, new similes and metaphors, vocabulary, thoughts, startling imagery, facts and anecdotes.

If you keep a diary you will be able to draw on the bits and pieces that get recorded in your book. When you make a speech or write an essay you will have unique material to work with.

The habit that you start early in life will stay with you and wherever you go people will be appreciative of how insightful and observant you are, and how vibrant your vocabulary is. Your clothes only protect and adorn you; it's your mind that really reveals your deeper beauty.

Yet another way of stimulating the imagination is to use virtual reality. Active Worlds is an online site (www.activeworlds.com) where individuals can visit and build virtual worlds. You could, for instance, build your own 3D virtual reality home and then inhabit it with characters who interact with one another. The University of Illinois has a programme called NICE that allows one to develop a virtual garden where weather and time can be controlled.

Don't just suck on air when there are so many things going on around you. Let the natural and virtual stimuli arouse your imagination. While the world is what it is, for you it is how you conceive it.

INFORMATIONAL WRITING

As technology advances we are usually forced to upgrade our equipment, or software, or even migrate from one system to another. We have to abandon old practices in favour of new ones.

At times we have to learn things that are entirely new to us. Then again from habit or for personal growth we continuously ask for information about people, words, books, occasions, processes and unfolding events.

Our huge appetite for information means that we have to know where to access that information as well as how to supply it.

Both tasks require research skills. The writer, however, will need to have the necessary qualification, experience and expertise to supply information suitable for use by others.

Books, brochures, the internet, journals and newspapers all carry information of one kind or another. Some of them look back at what happened and others describe the current situation. If they carry information that has been correctly gathered, verified and supported, people will use that information.

In the real world certain people write for a living. They have to research issues expertly and assess solutions that are viable for problems. They have to define terms and examine relationships such as cause and effect. Smoking, for example, is known to damage the lungs. The **effect** - that is the damaged lungs - can be traced to the **cause** -smoking. They also have to describe processes and evaluate outcomes.

1. Research and write an article on any one of the following: a sports personality, a television programme, the use and abuse of drugs, the use of computers in education, the spiralling cost of living, the future of petrol as a fuel.
2. Write about what you could do with a personal computer at home.

3. Write a proposal to obtain finance for a project on organic gardening on a small plot of ground made available to you by your local municipality. Explain what your project will entail and who will buy your produce at the decidedly higher prices.

4. Write an introduction for use on your website. Check with other popular sites to ascertain whether you have included all of the details presented on the other sites.

5. In developing a point, defence, or argument you will need to stack the details so that the facts begin to speak for themselves. John Sutherland on 23 July 2008 wrote for guardian.co.uk as follows:

What we are witnessing this year is the beginning of the greatest act of recovered memory in the history of our species. The next decade will be the age of the unimaginably vast archive. More particularly, the dynamic and usable archive. ...

Coming down from the metaphorical heights, the Google Library Project is principally what I'm thinking about.

6. Do you also consider the Google Library Project to be an epochal turning point in human history? Argue your case in detail and give a considered judgment on it.

CONCLUSION

You will need to gather and assemble facts, figures and details.

The terms you use will have to be clearly defined and analysed.

Examples will have to be selected for comparison and contrast.

Events and effects will have to be explained in terms of causes.

The details will have to be developed to the point where the conclusion is clear and obvious.

CREATIVE WRITING

There are many genres: epic, tragedy, comedy, novel and non fiction. To compose any of these a writer can use either poetry or prose. Creative writing, in the business place, is extensively used to motivate people or to improve the image of a company. In the private sphere, ordinary people are subjected in greater or lesser measure to injustice, hostility, discrimination, propaganda, prejudice, inequality, illness, loss, pain and hardships.

The challenges that each one faces may or may not be relieved through friendship, faith, courage, determination, love and endurance. Creative writing allows for deeply felt issues to be brought to the surface. Creative writers can alter the course of history.

Writing about pain and loss will nurture an understanding of emotional issues and heal a wounded soul. People need to make sense of the things that afflict them, to keep them in control. We need to understand, by the same measure, that even the darkest night gives way to day; and perhaps to bright sunlight. Things change and change yet again.

Creative writing is a means by which one can look deeply into one's soul and try to make sense of life's opportunities and challenges. It also affords one a rare chance to disclose, in an open or disguised manner, one's innermost feelings to the world at large.

Composing stories of one's thoughts and feelings will contribute to both personal and professional growth. The best way to celebrate life is to recreate the joys and sorrows of life.

Characterization

Get a tape recorder to tape a friend's thoughts, wishes, hopes, recollections, fears, passions and anxieties. From the recordings select and note down the words and phrases that are unmistakably characteristic of your friend. Once you have a moderate collection in place you will be ready to create a

character based on your friend to assume an independent life in a setting of your choosing. The words and the mannerisms should reveal the true person underlying the character. Your circle of friends will be the best judges of this.

Place a small stumbling block in the path of your character and then let the character come to life in dealing with that problem. It is what the character will say, observe, do and ignore that will be of importance to the reader.

Put your character into a situation of great stress or serious conflict with another person and then reveal in a plausible way how your character deals with the problem.

Dialogue

If you know your character very well you will unmistakably know what that character will say in a given situation. Imagine you are with some friends, and you encounter another group of people with whom you are engaging happily and jovially. A third party comes along and a situation suddenly develops. It becomes volatile and strained. Suddenly everyone is affected by the chain reaction set off by the newcomer. A statement is made which is followed up by a reaction, threat, revelation, denial or any other heated response. One thing leads to another and the whole issue of relationships, comes into play. Emotions run high and jeopardy increases as more players enter the fray. Someone will have to step in, on the side of the victim, to cut the tormentor down to size. It is through dialogue that the relationships between and among people will become evident.

Every dialogue says something important about a relationship. Look at the following:

You must be thrilled. When is your flight leaving?
Weren't you supposed to be on the trip?
That was the plan. Until she drove over my toes.
What do you mean?
Why don't you ask her?

That was an accident. We all saw that. She couldn't have known that you were lying down on the side of the road.

So now it is my fault. Everything is my fault. She's just an angel.

I understand that you're irritated and agitated. But for heaven's sake just be rational. Where is anger going to get you?

1. Read Act 4 of Bernard Shaw's, **Pygmalion**. Act out the scene in which you play both the characters.
2. Rewrite Act 3 Scene 1 of Shakespeare's **Romeo and Juliet** in simple modern prose. Modify it in any way that you choose.

Plot

Here's a plot for you to create your first story. Use no more than five hundred words to spin the yarn:

Boy meets girl or girl meets boy: where, when, how? Towering passion is kindled. Trouble looms large almost instantly. Menace will have to be fathomed, removed or side-stepped. All the main characters will have to be assessed to determine the 'us' and 'them' divide. The conflict deepens considerably as new issues develop and misunderstanding multiplies. The hero or heroine encounters added problems which are either medical or legal. How is the character responding? Describe the physical appearance, stance, expression, mood and body language. Add deception to heighten the tension. Add surprise and some twist to the story.

Allow for some headway while the arch opponent unexpectedly faces a crisis too. With trouble in the opposite camp, the table turns, but only just. At the very moment when hope was dawning, a work related problem occurs for the hero or heroine. Everyone on both sides is in a dire situation. A regrouping will have to occur and new strategies will be needed. How will the hero or heroine extricate himself / herself? Will it be 'fight' or 'flight'? Conclude.

Description

The purpose of any description is to create a picture in words. While adjectives can be powerful they have to be used sparingly. In good writing it is the well chosen nouns and verbs which are most effective in creating vivid pictures as in:

They had marched more than thirty kilometres since dawn, **along the white, hot road** where occasional thickets of trees threw a moment of shade, then out into the glare again. **On either hand**, the valley, wide and shallow, glittered with heat; dark green patches of rye, pale young corn, fallow and meadow and black pine woods spread in a dull, hot diagram under a glistening sky.

But **right in front** of the mountains ranged across, pale blue and very still, snow gleaming gently out of the deep atmosphere. And **towards the mountains**, on and on, the regiment marched between the rye fields and the meadows, between the scraggy fruit trees set regularly on either side the high road. The burnished, dark green rye threw off a suffocating heat, the mountains drew gradually nearer and more distinct.

D.H. Lawrence: **The Prussian Officer**

At times gestures and facial expression will also do as well as any formal description. Consider the following:

I think that we can make it to Cape Town by this evening. It's only another four hundred kilometres.

They laughed. They snorted.

The radiator will need replenishing but we'll make it.

They opened their eyes wide, very wide.

What do you say?

They pursed their lips. They shook their heads.

Similes:

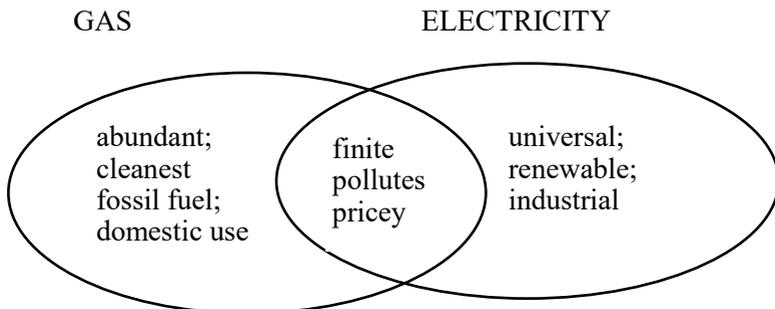
The use of newly coined similes can also be both descriptive and effective. For example: Every day central Johannesburg is looking more and more like Lego Land. Our hopes melted like a Cadbury bar on a hot dashboard. As fast as a Pentium. As useful as Google. As affordable as Skype. As engrossing as MXit. As jovial as Archbishop Tutu. As forgiving as Madiba. As confined as battery hens. As unfortunate as battery hens.

Metaphors

Newly coined metaphors can help to make your writing equally vivid. For example:

I am twenty cents short in my preparation. His future is being extinguished in the ash tray. It's Madiba's time to occupy the rocking chair. The structure of my house is South African, the interior is Chinese. My mother is my Alsatian.

Comparison and Contrast.



Write a paragraph in which you assess the use of gas and electricity for domestic consumption. Make comparisons.

Write another paragraph in which you favour one fuel over another. Make out a strong case for your point of view.

Scene-Setting

In telling a story, begin by setting the scene. This will involve describing the surroundings as well as the interaction between and among the characters. Focus also on things like movement, light, weather and sound. Capture all key details, as well as the moment by moment changes in the background, to enable the reader to visualise the location where the events are unfolding.

Every story is a series of scenes. Each scene moves the story forward and while every scene is closely related to the central theme, it will at the same time explore different emotions which result from an interplay of hope and fear, doubt and certainty, clarity and confusion, anger and forgiveness.

The modification of sounds or movements, the alteration in the light and the change in a scene will bring new issues into focus and thus move the story forward. Here are some exercises for you:

1. Arrange for ten photographs to be taken, at intervals of five minutes, of a wedding in progress, or school coming out, or picnickers unpacking, or a family preparing for dinner, or commuters waiting for a bus or train.

Allow the central character or characters to feature in each photograph. Use the photograph to set the scene. Capture the sights and sounds while dwelling on the actions and interactions of the main characters.

2. Look out of a selected school window at a pre-arranged scene being played out in the parking area. Capture details of the sounds, sights, movements and actions.

Write up your description, edit, and compare your work with that of your fellow classmates. How accurate was your description? How adequate was your vocabulary.

At this stage view slides with audio inputs of the scene to look for details that you overlooked.

TRANSACTIONAL WRITING

In offices around the world, those who work for themselves, or a company, or government have to engage in transactional writing on a regular basis. Learners too have to produce book reviews while scientists have to write research reports and bureaucrats have to formulate proposals and policies.

Everyday people are having to write letters, contracts, memoranda, reports, notices, dissertations, documents and monographs for some purpose or requirement.

The importance of transactional writing cannot be overstated. Every learner who wishes to do well academically and professionally will need to master the art of transactional writing.

Good transactional writing has to be correct, clear, specific and detailed. Extended transactional writing will contain definitions, statistics, assumptions, facts, analysis, synthesis, review, predictions, summary and a conclusion.

Out there is a jungle where only the fittest and ablest will survive and prosper. Every learner has to master the art of transactional writing. For those who do, big opportunities for success will abound.

As report writing is an important part of the genre of transactional writing, let us concentrate on it for now.

Title Page: Include details relating to title, author and date.

Introduction: Encompass aims, objectives, terms of reference, scope, methodology, arrangement and layout.

Findings: A report writer must remember that it is actual information and not an argument that has to be presented. One is therefore encouraged to use numbered headings and subheadings to allow for easy referencing. The numbering of pages is equally important. Tables, graphs and diagrams contribute to a better understanding of statistics. Photographs should also be included.

One picture, the adage holds, is worth a thousand words. Indeed!

In writing a report it is preferable to use the past tense. The passive voice is also widely used but not with universal approval. It is a matter that you will have to consider carefully.

On the other hand, there is no dispute about the primary evidence having to constitute the bulk of the report. Secondary evidence can be used in support of the main argument if it is current, relevant and correctly acknowledged.

A report will generally assess one or more of the following issues:

accidents, communication problems, corruption, fraud, crises, conflicts, discipline, education, economics, governance, health, housing, welfare, planning issues, social issues, scientific breakthroughs, substance abuse, crime, and violence. These are the common topics but not the only topics.

The school can easily provide authentic issues for research and reporting with topics such as: school absenteeism, discipline, use of the library and laboratory, rights of children, technology, reading habits of male and female students, involvement in sports, camera surveillance, school ground violence and bullying, school girl-pregnancies, substance abuse and the new curriculum.

Educators, parents and learners can work on a common topic in order to provide 'sector' specific perspectives. Learners must acquire skills and competencies which will meet work place requirements. It follows then that learners should be assigned a real task with real issues to benefit themselves in multiple ways.

Benefits will also accrue to learners if they are exposed to reports written by experts on topics such as: discipline, improving the reading efficiency among learners, study habits of successful learners, MXit, cell phones, smoking, drugs, school based sports, the internet, HIV, and last but not least, the environment. The growing gap between learners and educators in respect of the use of technology should also be given attention. The study of reports and the making of reports should surely become an integral part of a learner's education. The curriculum demands it and common sense approves of it.

Conclusion:

The conclusion has to be drawn solely from the detailed analysis and interpretation of the evidence laid out in the report. The focus, as such, will have to fall exclusively on the key points of the finding. These, moreover, will have to be fully consistent with what the research revealed. The conclusion, in addition, has to satisfy the demand that it is highly logical, fair to all parties and evenly balanced.

Recommendations:

The recommendations should highlight any action that needs to be taken and by whom and in what time period. Furthermore, the recommendations should be both practical and practicable, imaginative but also rational at the same time.

Here for example are some of the bare recommendations made by the panel on education of the American Geological Institute, 1998:

1. Focus on learning *with* technology, not *about* technology.
2. Emphasize content and pedagogy, and not just hardware.
3. Give special attention to professional development.
4. Initiate a major program (USA sp.) of experimental research.

Bibliography:

Here are some examples of how material is cited:

Lynch, Julianne (ed.). **Gender and IT: Challenges for Computing and Information Technology**. Sydney: Australian Curriculum Studies Association, 2008.

When best practice makes perfect. ITNOW 2008 50:17; doi:10.1093/itnow/bwn076 [online]. Available at URL: <<http://www.itnow.oxfordjournals.org>. (Find out more about 'doi')

WRITING A SEVEN PARAGRAPH ESSAY

When you write an essay you should be writing it for yourself as much as for your reader. It's not until you set pen to paper, or start typing on the keyboard, that you get to know how much you know about yourself or about anything. An idea really only emerges at the point where you start to express it.

As you sit down to write you will certainly allow something that you read, heard or saw to get you going. The mind is a great reservoir where words from friends, siblings, parents, elders, teachers, writers, comedians, singers, actors, and strangers are stored. Some words make an indelible impression on the mind and are never forgotten.

If you are in the habit of carrying a little note book with you, the daily collection of jottings will soon grow into a sizeable personal collection of words, quotations, jokes and anecdotes. In the process of editing your book you will rearrange material and remove whatever is trite or useless.

When it is time to write you will refer to your notebook and revel in using the gems that lie within its covers. Other people's ideas, thoughts and phrases will, in due course, become synthesised with your own. Since we the inheritors of the accumulating knowledge of the world, we should eagerly absorb that knowledge on a day by day basis.

This is how you should approach writing. You should see it as a way of expressing yourself and through such expression finding a little of who you are. It does not matter whether you are writing about Hamlet or Okonkwo or cricket or violence. What is important is that through writing you can reveal something about yourself, your feelings and your deepest thoughts. That is what really matters.

Words and phrases without any structure will not keep a reader interested and what if that reader is your examiner? A structure that is well thought out will allow the reader to progress smoothly from the beginning to the end. A simple way of structuring a seven paragraph essay is to write down the first seven letters of the alphabet. Next to each write the word beginning with that letter, for example: ‘analysis’, ‘background’ and so forth.

A	analysis	pros	cons	good	bad
B	background	history	milieu	setting	locale
C	characteristics	trait	quality	feature	attribute
D	dynamics	forces at work		underlying forces	
E	evolution	advances	growth	progress	headway
F	forecast	predict	project	guess	foretell
G	generalisation	tie up	wrap up	conclude	finalise

Each item is explained below. Thereafter a sample is offered, in italics, to show how the topic can be developed by the learner, paragraph by paragraph. Each paragraph follows from the explanation preceding it. These paragraphs require completion.

Topic: Write an essay on present day school violence.

Analysis

The questions to be asked are: What is the relevance of the topic in today's society? Is there a moral value that is attached to the subject? Does it suggest a context that is historical, philosophical, sociological, topical or psychological? Has anything happened in recent times to propel the topic to the fore? Do you remember anyone sharing any experiences, jokes or stories related to this topic? What was their overwhelming attitude to it? Have you yourself experienced it or have you been giving it any thought?

What did your research on the topic reveal? Is there a strong view on the topic within the community? What value do you personally attach to it? The analysis should lead to the pros and the cons of the topic being evaluated and a position being taken. You should now be ready to write the first paragraph.

Behaviour disorders, bullying, unresolved aggression, abuse of drugs, race differences and other social factors lead to outbreaks of violence in schools.

There are millions of incidents of school violence all over the world and it is a grave concern that the violence is causing learners serious bodily harm. Some learners are even killed at school. While learners are generally the victims of the violence, there are times when educators too suffer harm. I know from my own experience at school that ...

Background

What circumstances, events, experiments, tragedies or research led to the topic becoming important, contentious or interesting? Did location, culture, natural disaster or anything else contribute to its becoming a significant topic? Are there any historical events or aspects of personal background that relate to the topic? In what context should the topic be addressed?

The violence that we are witnessing in schools is not a new phenomenon. Many children in schools all over the world are relentlessly bullied and harried until something within them snaps and they then turn on their tormentors with such weapons as they can lay their hands on.

Very few schools ever seriously consider the destructive impact of bullying. Where or when a problem is not recognised it is obvious that incidents will be routinely swept under the carpet. This leaves the bullies unchecked and unrepentant. Most bullies pick on a fellow learner's size, colour or failure.

Those who are bullied and even beaten at times have generally nowhere to hide and no one to protect them. Some take their own lives out of sheer hopelessness and despair while others will one day wreak vengeance on those who taunted and degraded them. School violence is waiting to happen where learners relentlessly pick on their fellow learners. Our school is fortunate in that ...

Characteristics

What are the characteristics, for instance, of poverty. These would be: lack of education, unemployment, lack of services, lack of skill, abuse of alcohol, and so forth. Detailing the traits, features, qualities, attributes, points of someone or something will help to define the characteristics of the subject. Which words in the following list characterise school violence?

annoyance	antagonism	brutality	bullying
coarseness	crassness	cruelty	dejection
depression	despair	harassment	fragility
humiliation	indifference	insensitivity	intimidation

School violence can take many different forms. Usually sticks, rods and knives are used. Where the bullied have been grossly humiliated in front of their teachers, who did nothing to protect them, the victims returned to school with guns and lethal weapons to settle the score.

School violence is not only about the victims turning the table on their tormentors. School violence, at times, is about learners ganging together to mob other learners for a variety of reasons. Not infrequently an educator, who loses control of a class, becomes a perpetrator of violence in the school. In all instances a learner is pushed to the point where anger or frustration must express itself in an act of physical violence. What I am observing here is not theoretical ...

Dynamics

The word 'dynamics' refers to the social, intellectual, or moral forces and issues that cause or precipitate something to happen or to change or to erupt. It is common knowledge that individuals are reactive and will respond to media reports, incitement, ill treatment or provocation. When personal circumstances combine with other factors some dramatic or significant action is triggered.

Any action that is thus triggered off will, upon investigation, show a discernible cause and effect relationship. In other words, little of what occurs is purely gratuitous. Normally every action will be shown to be a reaction to something else. An essay should thus probe the cause and effect relationship in order to reveal to the reader the impact of these dynamics.

Aggrandisement, careerism, corruption, greed, jealousy, racism, manipulation, nepotism, and violence underlie much of the outbreaks of violence that occur in society. While the identification of the characteristics of a problem, event, occasion, thing, or person will help one to understand and monitor them, it is the dynamics which will eventually cause something to happen. For the dough to become bread it will have to go into the oven. The heat that is then applied will either bake it or burn it!

*What are the dynamics that govern school violence? William Golding's **Lord of the Flies** allows us to understand that there is no inherent innocence in the world and that children, like adults, will prey on those who are weak and submissive if allowed to. Those who are preyed upon, look to resolve these issues by themselves without any outside help. They strive against all odds to achieve a better estimation of themselves. In some cultures, to complicate matters even more, a display of weakness is frowned upon. Thus oppression on the school grounds will therefore have to be answered with resistance. Television also contributes significantly to glorifying violence and particularly the use of weapons. My own experience reveals that . . .*

Evolution

Thus far we have given consideration to analysing the topic, providing some background, examining the critical characteristics and explaining the dynamics that were involved in school violence.

The next step will be to evaluate all of the facts that were adduced up to this point. An essay is meant to weigh and balance the facts. This is done so that objectivity prevails. At this stage it is also important to take a view of what still needs to be said to let the discussion come full circle.

School violence in the past manifested itself in fisticuffs on the school ground or in alleyways. Then followed the sticks and knives. More latterly it has taken a sinister form with live ammunition being used. Where will it end? This is a moot question. If school violence is not properly addressed, victims will hit back with even more destructive weapons and many more people will be seriously hurt or killed. I believe that

Forecast

At this point the essay should outline the lessons that were learnt. In effect that means having to make certain changes from the benefit of hindsight.

Although it's not possible to see the future it is not impossible to read it. As a society we are moving ahead at breakneck speed and yet, paradoxically, we are lagging behind in some ways.

We eat better than we have ever eaten in the history of the world, but our foods are less nutritious than in the past. We have more medicines than ever before but the bugs too are becoming deadlier. The dynamics that operate in society dictate that while some things will improve, other things will deteriorate. In many respects we are evolving in a way that poses a serious challenge to all of us.

Incidents such as those that occurred at Columbine on April 20 1999 will of necessity force educators to look seriously into the wide scale existence of school violence.

Educators will need to be trained in understanding the underlying dynamics of such violence so that they can implement suitable strategies for dealing with the bullying, taunting and ostracising of learners in their schools. This will be in their own interest as well as in the interest of their charges. As I see it there is

Generalisation & Conclusion

Finally the essay must be concluded by succinctly and lucidly summarising the key arguments. It must also link back to the introduction and allow the end parts, of the circle of arguments, to come together.

It is sad that educators waited until the tragedy at Columbine to begin looking at school violence. Violence is so widespread in our society that something has to be done to break that cycle, and the school is indeed the best place for that to happen. My hope is that what happened at Columbine will not be allowed to recur and that the memory of that tragic day will be kept alive so that educators will constantly address the issue. School violence has always existed. It has always wrecked young lives. In the times in which we live, violence has escalated. It is fuelled by many more factors and the consequences have been dramatic as they have been tragic. School violence, as I have shown thus far, is escalating and government must for that reason make more resources available to deal with the problem. More than that, government must place school violence at the top of the agenda. Anything less than that will be inadequate, and we may then witness our own version of what happened at Columbine. The time to act is now.

POINTS ON ESSAY WRITING

It is very useful to be able to use an alphabetical planning system, as suggested in the preceding pages, to structure an essay.

It is, however, only a tool. The tool must **not** be used so rigidly as to detract from the virtues of spontaneity and variety.

At times all seven levels of the structure can be covered in an essay. At other times the thorough analysis of a word or quotation could make up the whole essay.

Every essay inherently weighs and balances information, ideas, views and opinions. The internal debate, in a reflective and analytical essay, must continue until it is possible to summarise and conclude. This is what an essay is about.

The preparation of a plan is a habit every individual should form. Effective listening, reading, writing and speaking depend on a plan. Mind mapping is always very important. Look at the section on antonyms in this book to learn more about mind mapping.

There is considerable truth in the wisdom that good planning is three quarters of undertaking any job. Good planning allows the mind to have clarity about the path to be taken and the things to be done. Everything thereafter can flow smoothly and evenly.

In planning an essay let the **central objective** be clearly outlined. Determine whether the purpose of the essay is analysis, contemplation, contestation, criticism, description, explanation or reflection. Once the 'why' question is settled the 'who' and the 'what' questions can be asked and answered.

Personal insights have great value provided that they come from deep thinking and careful observation. These invest an essay with immediacy and relevancy and they do not have to come at the end of a paragraph. The use of the personal pronoun in an essay is permissible if subjectivity is permitted. In essays requiring strict objectivity and impartiality, this will not be the case.

WRITING A TEN PARAGRAPH NARRATIVE

There are ten keywords listed in the first column below. Each word in the list rhymes with a numeral: 'bun', for example, with 'one' and 'shoe' with 'two'. A learner who is planning to write a narrative can begin by sequentially numbering ten rows and then listing the prompt words indicated below.

Thereafter, with the help of a thesaurus, a few words can be jotted down, next to each prompt, in keeping with the given topic. The words ought to be categorised according to opposite values and images as in the example below:

	HAPPY	SAD
1. BUN	tasty, satisfying	desire for food, hunger
2. SHOE	successful, healthy	struggling, ailing
3. TREE	growing tall	stunted, withering
4. DOOR	access, opportunity	lack of opportunity
5. HIVE	honey	stinging attack
6. STICKS	hockey and games	spear, spike, batons
7. HEAVEN	haven, recreation	hell
8. GATE	fence, property	prison
9. WINE	celebration	drunkenness
10. HEN	golden eggs	sterility

The next step would be to make an outline of the introduction, body and conclusion. An arresting sentence that requires some explaining or justifying should be used at the beginning to arouse interest. Here are four sentences that were used to introduce different stories in the January 2006 issue of the **Reader's Digest**:

1. My mother will probably always refer to it as the time I almost died.
2. Any number of architects, builders, manufacturers and scientists can tell you what the house of tomorrow will be like.
3. If we can put a man on the moon, why can't we build a flying car?
4. Terry Wolfisch Cole may seem like an ordinary 40-year-old mum and Girl Scout troop leader, but her small-town Connecticut neighbours know the truth: She's one of the "Pod People".

The first paragraph must be finished in such a way that it summarises the main points of the paragraph while allowing for a smooth transition to the first sentence of the next paragraph. There must always be a smooth and logical transition to the next paragraph.

In each paragraph of the body, use two to three examples in support of the idea that is being developed. In a narrative it is generally very useful to tell the story in the past tense as in the example below from Ernest Hemingway's **For Whom the Bell Tolls**: (NB some words and phrases have been omitted)

He **lay** there and **watched** the road. A squirrel **chattered** from a pine tree. Jordan **watched** his tail jerk in excitement. Then the squirrel **crossed** to another tree. He **looked** back at Jordan and then **pulled** himself around the trunk. Jordan **looked** down through the pines to the sentry box again. He **smelled** the pines and he **heard** the stream. Then he **heard** the clustered thudding of the bombs. Jordan **lifted** the submachine gun from where he lay.

The concluding paragraph must either link back to the introductory paragraph to complete the circle or it can be a surprise ending with a twist in it. Collect some effective endings.

WRITING AN EMAIL

Good email etiquette involves your having to use the following:

Friendly formatting

- Set formatting to wrap text after about 70 characters.
- Aim to deliver your message inside 250 words.
- Use capital letters and punctuation in the normal way.
- Use plain text and easy to read fonts in place of HTML.
- Use paragraph formatting to achieve an attractive layout.
- Go easy on the use of colour.

Suitable salutation

- Address the recipient / s appropriately – be formal where the situation requires that.
- Keep cultural and religious considerations firmly in mind.
- Create a mailing group if mail has to be sent regularly to more than four people. Determine how to address them.
- Check that titles are correctly assigned to people and that their names are accurately spelt.

Leading Line

Indicate the purpose of your mail –

- response
- request
- reminder
- relay

Style

- Use simple well written sentences. These are the best.
- Use the fewest number of words; and the simplest.
- Use emoticons (smiley face etc.) with great caution lest you unintentionally offend someone.

Tone

- Suit the tone to the individual's cultural, social, religious and political affiliation.
- Be positive in approach and positive in response.
- For light emphasis write a word or phrase in italics.
- For heavy emphasis use capital letters but do so sparingly lest you offend the recipient.

Content

- Check your facts for accuracy, and if you are sending the email from a business enterprise ensure that you fully observe the rules and policies of the company.
- Check that all aspects of the request was covered in a friendly and helpful manner.

Conclusion

- Take into account the closeness of the relationship as well as the recipient's age, standing and status in ending the mail.
- Ensure that the subject is clearly stated in the subject line. It is at this point that the mail is either accepted or rejected. It is always advisable to match the subject line to an incoming mail to get ready acceptance.
- Indicate the level of urgency.
- Check the document for spelling and grammar?
- Check that the names are correctly spelt and that the right titles are right?
- Ensure gender sensitivity.
- Check whether attachments are acceptable to the recipient? If they are, ensure that the attachments bear logical and easy titles and that the files are not too big.

ACTIVE & PASSIVE VOICE

The passive voice indicates that the apparent **subject** of a verb in a sentence is the person or thing **undergoing**, not performing, **the action** of the verb. The passive is formed with the **verb to be**: is, are, was, were + **the past participle of a transitive verb**. For example: is considered as; was viewed as, is regarded as, etc..

Almost every reader, given the choice, will be happier to interact with the text through the **agent** of an action rather than through what happens or occurs to that agent or subject. The reader will certainly appreciate knowing **who** or **what** is doing **what** and to **whom** and **why** and not the other way around. When the prose is in the active voice, the reader has the benefit of considering both the concept and the personal viewpoint of the writer at the same time.

There is no harm in leaving out the agent or the subject if it carries no importance or significance as in the sentence:

Smoking **is considered** dangerous.

When talking about countries, oceans, mountains and cities writers also prefer the passive form:

South Africa **is regarded** as ..., The Amazon **is seen** as...

Where the **agent** is relegated to the back and the **concepts** and **ideas** are drawn to the front and given prominence, the reading will require greater concentration than before. There is another problem. The reader has no clear idea who is speaking or doing something. The focus is on an issue, not an agent. We know very well that the two are mutually interdependent. The agent should be revealed therefore. Another problem with the extended use of the passive voice is the monotony that creeps into the prose.

Below is a paragraph by David Brown, written in the passive voice. Contrast this with the amended version that follows:

Original Passive Voice Text

Converting international interest in biodiversity conservation into a positive development strategy *has to be* a major challenge for governments and the donor community. While defensive strategies in line with the ‘fines and fences’ approach *are now being widely rejected*, attempts to provide positive incentives through alternative income generating strategies *have not proven very effective*. The way forward *is increasingly seen to lie* in the consolidation of existing livelihoods through the integration of biological and socio-economic information supported by efforts to increase local management capacity.

David Brown: **Participatory Biodiversity Conservation in Natural Resources Perspective**, July 1998, No 33.

Re-written as an Active Voice Text

I believe that it is a major challenge for governments and the donor community to convert international interests in biodiversity conservation into a positive development strategy. While more and more people are rejecting the defensive ‘fines and fences’ approach, the alternative strategies of generating income, as I see it, have not proved very effective either. It is therefore increasingly clear to me that the way forward is to consolidate existing livelihoods of the people in the area through integrating biological and socio-economic information on the one hand and to giving support to all of the efforts that are aimed at increasing the capacity of managers on the other.

Which of the two versions do you prefer? Why?

Use of the passive voice:

The passive voice is used when:

1. One does not know the identity of the agent of an action:
 - The dogs **had been let out** I know not by whom.
 - Our computer **was being repaired** at the shop.
 - All I know is that I **am being cheated** by someone.
2. The identity of the agent is unimportant:
 - She **had been instructed** to be in court the next day.
 - We **had been warned** not to leave the hotel at night.
 - I **was being questioned** for not having paid my rent.
3. The identity of the agent is obvious:
 - Daily **we are being reminded** of our duty to the poor.
 - We **are regularly being forced** to pay more for petrol.
 - Every winter their houses **were being flooded**.
4. The identity of the agent has already been made known:
 - The municipality announced that rates **will be increased** annually in keeping with the inflation rate.
 - The police confirmed that five drug smugglers had been apprehended at the Johannesburg airport.
5. The identity of the agent is that of people at large:
 - Electricity **can be bought** at major supermarkets.
 - Application forms **were being received** by the bank.

EXERCISE

Convert the following into active voice:

Part 1

1. A recommendation was made by **the Director General** for smoking to be banned in all offices.
2. The ball was hit through the covers for four by **Hashim Amla**.
3. The building of the stadium was supported by **Helen Zille**.
4. The plane was safely brought down by **the pilot**.
5. The burglars were arrested by **the police**.
6. A great opportunistic try was scored by **Ricky January**.
7. Five hundred special guests were invited by **Nelson Mandela** to celebrate his 90th birthday.
8. Printing of this book was paid for by **business people** mindful of their social responsibility.
9. The first heart transplant was performed by **Christiaan Barnard**.
10. The use of passive resistance was perfected by **Mahatma Gandhi**.

Part 2

1. The phrase ‘rainbow nation’ was coined by **Desmond Tutu**.
2. Xhosa is spoken by the acclaimed actress **Charlize Theron**.
3. How to overcome one’s disability was clearly demonstrated at the Olympic games by **Natalie du Toit**.
4. In 1995 the Rugby World Cup was lifted by **Francois Pienaar**.
5. The defence was greatly strengthened by **Lucas Hadebe**.
6. **Cry the Beloved Country** was written by **Alon Paton**.
7. *Nkosi Sikele iAfrika* was composed by **Enoch Sontonga**.
8. Dark chocolates are being recommended by **many doctors**.
9. Many orchards were damaged by **the severe storm**.
10. Apartheid in South Africa was finally ended by **the people**.

PRESENTATION OF A DOCUMENT

If an essay is being typed, use a Times New Roman font in size 12 with one and a half spacing between the lines. Number each page and cite references in footnotes if you are not using the MLA guidelines. Copy a page of a journal to learn how this is to be done. Finally, allow a margin of at least 25 mm on all sides for insertion of comments and for aesthetic reasons as well.

Using an author's surname, for an in-text citation, should suffice: **'The process of change goes on continually in any language which is actually in use', (Barber 1964:1) and it therefore happens that some words acquire a 'favourable implications' while others take on 'unfavourable ones'**. Fuller details of the reference should appear in the bibliography.

The matter of style should be given serious attention. Some essays can be subjective allowing for a slightly cynical tone to be used. They can even be emotion laden, comical and humorous. Other essays have to be precise, factual and objective. In the latter instance, the use of the first person singular pronoun is permitted provided that it is suitably circumscribed: **I shall argue / show / demonstrate that Achebe used irony very cleverly to reveal how tribal societies were undone both by external forces as well as by failures and limitations that were inherent within such societies.**

Alternatively, begin a sentence thus: **Scientists claim that 'climatic change is poised to wreak untold environmental tragedies'**. In this way Gore's viewpoint is introduced and his actual words are simultaneously cited.

A major requirement of style is the use of fresh imagery and the novel use of language. Sentence variety, accurate punctuation and logical progression are equally important requirements. If you are an avid reader you will be able to meet all of these requirements.

Take note of how sources are quoted in the following article:-

Journalism and cultural literacy: an exploration towards a model for training journalism students

George Claassen

4.2 Filling the general knowledge void

Various studies in America have confirmed the trend of a growing cultural illiteracy, a phenomenon also very much part of South Africa. Hirsch refuses to lay the blame for this state only at the door of television, charging that a great deal of accumulated evidence exists that 'faulty policy in the schools is the chief cause of deficient literacy' (1987: 20). His argument is substantiated by Wahlberg and Shanahan (1983: 4--9) whose study of the factors influencing educational results has established that the curricula of schools are the most controllable influences on children's knowledge of literate culture.

Hirsch concedes that television watching 'does reduce reading and often encroaches on homework. Much of it is admittedly the intellectual equivalent of junk food. But in some respects, such as its use of standard written English, television watching is acculturative' (Hirsch 1987: 20).

In a comprehensive report for the American National Institute of Education, Anderson also found this apparent dichotomy in the influence of television on the school achievement of children (1985: 27).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hirsch, E D Jr 1987. Cultural literacy -- What every American needs to know. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Wahlberg, H J & Shanahan, T 1983. High school effects on individual students. Educational Researcher 12, August--September: 4--9.

PUNCTUATION

American English requires a full stop after abbreviations such as: Dr., Mr., Mrs. When quoting, American writers, likewise, will begin with a double quotation mark (“”). The single quotation mark is used for a quotation inside a quotation.

Another difference is in the placement of punctuation marks such as commas and full stops in a quotation. In the USA the comma and the full stop are placed inside the quotation marks as in:

Yeats wrote that “the centre cannot hold.” This is not very logical. Computer programmers also have difficulty with the American practice.

Fortunately there are no other major differences.

1. The Comma

1.1 Use a comma after introductory words like:

still, furthermore, meanwhile, anyway, ultimately, however.

When ‘however’ is used to mean ‘nevertheless’, use it elsewhere than at the beginning of a sentence:

With the continued use of tobacco, however, the body creates additional nicotine receptors.

or with phrases such as:

On 16 July 2008, Mandela ...

In Cape Town, the visitors ...

At age twelve, the young girl ...

Shortly after meeting her professor, the student ...

To improve his batting, Prince ...

Having made his point, he ...

Vain and caustic, he ...

Sensing that something was wrong, they ...

Among other things, she ...

1.2 Use a comma to separate independent clauses when they are joined by any one of the following coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or, yet and so (fanboys):

She had to be taken to hospital, **for** she was gravely ill.
A chill wind blew in our face, **and** the rain drenched our clothes.
What he did was not fair, **nor** by any means was it ethical.
She was supposed to buy the car, **but** the loan was not approved.
On a sunny day one can swim in the ocean, **or** laze on the beach.
Life is very precious, **yet** we seem not to care for it. .
We could not go out in the rain, **so** we decided to go back to bed.
The days were not cold, nor were they lacking in sunshine.
She baked the cake, but her sister did the icing.

Do not, however, use a comma between compound elements:
bread **and** butter, tea **or** coffee, bright **but** wintry

1.3 In complex sentences the comma is used after an introductory dependent (or subordinate) clause:

After the lecture, questions will be taken.
Before leaving, I tidied up my office.
When driving, never speak on the phone.
With his bat in the bag, he left home to start his cricket career.
Under the weight of the load, both the axles snapped.

1.4 Use the comma:

after prepositional phrases

For South Africa, ...
According to de Klerk, ...
Beyond the ridge, ...

after response words

‘There’, she said. ‘No,’ I said. ‘Good,’ he said.
‘Hello,’ I called. ‘Oh’, said the man.
‘What,’ I asked, ‘are you doing there?’

after participial, infinitive and prepositional phrases	Relying on his memory, he dialled her number. To let a child smoke, is to consent to his lifelong and cruel enslavement For promises to be met, action has to follow the undertaking.
between parallel sentences	The quicker you finish the work, the quicker you will be paid. If we protect our democracy, our democracy will protect us.
between place names	Dundee, South Africa, must be distinguished from Dundee, Scotland.
to separate two adverbs	They returned home quietly, tiredly, and unexpectedly.
to separate coordinate adjectives	the flat, level, grassy plains... the calm, cool, deep, blue ocean ... the cold, wet, windy, dull morning ...
to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses used in a series	Our economy is divided into five main sectors, namely, agriculture, commerce, industry, construction and transport.
to separate contrasting coordinate elements	The elephants were just curious , not aggressive . The resources of the earth are vast , not infinite .
to separate an interjection within a sentence	“Yes, man, but do not talk so loudly.” “Look, brother, who are those people?”
to separate an explanatory word or phrase in a sentence	English, as you very well know, is the most important language of the internet.

to set off a phrase at the end of a sentence	“His fiancée is with him, I know.”
as a substitute for coordinate conjunctions	Johannesburg is a vibrant, prosperous city. South Africa is a multi-racial, democratic country.
when a verb is omitted	We handed in our assignments on time, they didn't.
to separate two adjectives where the first adjective ends in <i>-ly</i>	She was a lovely , beautiful girl. He was such a friendly , contented cat. They were a lonely , miserable couple. It was a stately , old house.

Adverbs usually end with an *-ly*.

There are many **adjectives**, however, that also have a similar ending: costly, daily, deadly, early, elderly, fatherly, friendly, leisurely, likely, lively, lonely, lovely, monthly, scholarly, timely, ugly, unlikely, weekly, yearly

1.5 Use commas where ‘and’ or ‘but’ can be inserted between coordinate adjectives.

When a writer uses cumulative adjectives where ‘and’ or ‘but’ cannot be inserted between them, omit commas. In such instances the following order will usually obtain: marker, quality, type, source, class:

marker:	a, an, the, few, many, several
quality:	beautiful, cheap, delicate, expensive, golden
type:	size, shape, colour, age, appearance
source:	African, Chinese, European, Indian, Japanese
class:	animal, mineral, plant, synthetic

Examples:

several sparkling big diamonds
two healthy young lions
an expensive Japanese digital camera

1.6 A comma is not required if the compound sentence is short and the actions are related, as in:

Mum pampers me and spoils me.
We walked up the hill and across the valley.

2. Use capital letters for:

special time words	Monday, November, Easter, Eid, etc..
government related words	Parliament, Civil Service, Department, The Constitution of RSA.
family members referred to in speech and writing	Mum, Uncle Joe, Aunt Thandi, Dad
names, titles, qualifications	Union Building, PhD, Bloemfontein, Sony, Bible, Concorde, the Milky Way, Venus, Renaissance, Order of the Star of Africa, Parliament, Drakensberg Mountains, Indian Ocean, the President, the Speaker, Chancellor, Professor, Long Walk to Freedom, The Equator, BSc, PhD, BA, MA, DLitt et Phil, Grade 12, LLB,
Adjectives derived from proper nouns	Kenyan coffee, a Madiba shirt, a Shakespearean play

3. Use lower case for:

internet words	blog, internet, web, net, website
words such as the following in a title:	a, an, and, the; prepositions; and other conjunctions as in: the Sunday Times. The rule is reversed when emphasis is needed e.g.: Arguments For and Against GMOs.

4. Do not use capital letters for the following

government entities the cabinet, a bill, the government, minister, political party, army, navy, air force, general election

5. Use the hyphen:

in words like: e-mail, e-commerce, e-government

where three or more words are taken as a whole, as in: long-drawn-out, mother-in-law, co-workers, post-and-rail fence

within words showing a time period: post-audit, post-mortem, pre-season, post-apartheid, post-structuralism, pre-war (The following words do not take a hyphen: postmodernism, postcolonialism)

when joining a prefix to a proper name anti-Communism, anti-Semitic

when an adjective is joined with the past participle as in: short-sighted, long-awaited, small-minded, heavy-handed, light-headed

when two-word numbers are used as in: thirty-seven; forty-four, ninety-nine

when compound qualifiers are formed as in: eight-hour day, seven-day week, left-handed compliment, right-handed coordinates

when compounds qualify another noun as in: herb-garden management, credit-card purchase, cost-benefit analysis

when two or more words serve as a single adjective as in: cost-effective solution, six-year old boy, full-time nurse, high-risk behaviour, long-awaited holiday, third-year student, white-collar workers, wind-proof garment, father-of-five.

Some words have become fused and no longer need the hyphen.

Examples:

childbirth, childcare, courseware, coursework, dotcom, fieldstrip, fieldwork, healthcare, helpline, homepage, internet, microanalysis, microbus, microchip, offline, online, webcam, webpage, website, workbench, workbook, etc.. Some words have become fused and no longer need the hyphen.

5. Use the apostrophe to show:

the possessive case with special plural nouns: women's preferences, oxen's loads, men's lounges
Note however: Mother's Day, Father's Day.

the possessive case with normal plural nouns: the two boys' bicycles, the six girls' watches; five days' hike, ten rands' worth, the companies' representatives, the children's sandwiches, five weeks' holiday, three months' tour, houses' windows, solicitors' cars, the people's grievances, the dishes' prices, four years' study.

the possessive case with proper names ending in '-s': Xerxes' army, Archimedes' Principle, Moses' teachings, Jesus' followers.

possessive case with abbreviations BP's balance-sheet

qualifications Honour's Degree, Master's Degree

contractions it's (it is), can't, isn't, wasn't, six o'clock, don't, I'm, he'll, who's, shouldn't, shan't, didn't, couldn't, wouldn't, mustn't, aren't.

Note that the possessive form does not take an apostrophe: its, hers, his, ours, yours, theirs.

Note however: one must protect **one's rights**, one must honour **one's word**, one must look after **one's job**.

We looked at each **other's faces**.

compound nouns: Director-General's report,
mother-in-law's visit
mothers-in-law's visit (plural)
the headmaster's speech
the women-doctor's seminar

the possessive case where two persons are involved: Shakespeare and Johnson's contribution ... your and your wife's passports

there are no commas with abbreviations: CDs, PCs, 80s, SMSs, NGOs, ATMs, PCs, MPs

6. There is no apostrophe for:

plural collective nouns, Teachers Association, Students titles and category of items: Union, Taxi Drivers Federation, The Hundred Years War, clothes pegs, Accounts Department, sports cars.

7. Use the semi Colon

when either the co-coordinating conjunction 'and' or 'but' is omitted:

The spectators wanted the cricket to continue; the players did not.
Everyone wanted joblessness to be tackled; no one didn't.
The waves battered the shore; they were staggering to behold.

when transitional expressions are used:

Computers give instant access to information; **moreover**, they're not that expensive either.
The range of dairy products is increasing; **for example**, there is now drinking yoghurt and ready-to-eat custard.

to supplement the commas:

Among the guests were Naledi Pandor, Minister of Education; Helen Zille, Mayor of Cape Town; and Prof Pityana, Rector of UNISA.

to separate parallel clauses

He promised that he would take us to the Kruger National Park; fly us to Mocambique; accommodate us at the Polana Serena Hotel; and then return us home after two weeks for just five thousand rands.

set off longer statements, not single words or short phrases. Discrete sentences will be followed by full stops.

- thirty percent of students fall asleep in class;
- thirty-one percent of all drivers fall asleep at the wheel at least once in their lifetime;
- forty nine percent of adults suffer from insomnia.

8. Use the colon in place of ‘that is’, or ‘these are’

before an explanatory second independent clause:	The Kruger Park is as vast as Wales: it covers two million hectares. Most berries are very nutritious: they are rich in antioxidants.
after ‘namely’, for example:	Visitors to the Kruger National Park have high expectations of seeing the Big Five, namely: lion, elephant, rhino, buffalo and leopard.
after a complete statement to introduce related ideas:	Cigarette use has been found to cause at least three dreadful diseases: cancer, emphysema and atherosclerosis.
when reflecting time:	15:45; 6:30 p.m.

9. The quotation marks “...” or ‘...’ are used to indicate:

direct speech:	“You,” she said, and laughed that booming laugh. “You lack variety in your cursing.” (US English prefers the double quotation marks)
a quote:	The wall slogan read, ‘Today is the first day of the rest of your life’.
an intended irony:	Every Zimbabwean today is a ‘billionaire’.
a special word or phrase:	Get me the parcel marked ‘POISON’. The so-called ‘maverick three’ were barred from the club. This passport is endorsed ‘only Southern African countries’.

a part of a book, a short poem, or an essay:	Pound's enchantment with China dominates 'The River Song'. The physical aspect of his experience is well shown in Orwell's essay "Shooting an Elephant".
incomplete sentences	They asked us to 'join them for dinner'.
complete sentence	They said: 'Please come and have dinner with us tonight.'
quotation within a quotation	He cautioned us: 'The President reminded us "to be punctual" and we should not forget that.'

10. The ellipsis marks are used to

show that words were omitted in a quotation at that point	According to Sadat, "Only when he has ceased to need things can a man ... be his own master ...".
Note: Use four dots when what is being omitted comes at the end of a sentence. The fourth dot is a full stop.	His passion appeared to him to flame up and envelop her in blue fiery tongues from head to foot and over head, while her soul appeared in the centre like a big white rose (from Joseph Conrad's <i>The Warrior's Soul</i>)

11. Use the dash (—) to

set off an explanation or to make an emphatic point:	'Moreover, a rich society owes its productivity and income at least in part, to large-scale organization—to the corporation'. John Kenneth Galbraith
achieve dramatic effect:	'He is not a figure in the landscape—he (man) is a shaper of the landscape'. Jacob Bronowski

show pages range: 750-810

replace commas in an appositive phrase where commas already exist: The novels—*The Sun Also Rises, The Old Man and The Sea and To Have and Not Have*—reveal Hemingway’s passion for adventure.

take the place of a colon: We live on a large farm in southern Tuscany—twelve miles from the station.

12. Use square brackets to

insert your words inside a quotation ‘Guides [foreign tour guides] cannot master the subtleties of the American joke’.

13 Use italics for:

emphasis The National Curriculum Statement urges learners to ‘explore and evaluate key features of texts to explain how they contribute to meaning (*these features should never be dealt with in isolation*).

foreign words Anyone who knows the phrase *terra firma* ought to have no difficulty spelling ‘Mediterranean’.

titles of books, newspapers, etc. Coetzee published *Age of Iron* in 1990 and *Disgrace* in 1999.

14. Use figures to show

11 and above 13 sheep, 316 tickets

reference to cash R25 million; R27.60,

decimal fractions 3.7 million. (but three million)

a person’s age 21st birthday, 24-year-old student

dates 15 August 2008, 21st century

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

Pattern 1: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Noun

The judge upheld the decision.

The media exposed the corruption.

The detectives examined the clues.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

accept, admit, admonish, antagonise, ate, back, bank, bear, beat, bend, bind, blow, bomb, book, boss, burn, call, cure, challenge, champion, countenance, defend, don, draw, dread, dried, drop, earn, encounter, evade, examine, exposed, face, facilitate, fail, fan, favour, fear, feed, feel, file, film, flatten, flew, form, free, gain, give, got, grow, hang, hear, heat, help, hide, hold, hurt, hunt, join, keep, kick, kill, know, lay, lend, lift, lose, love, make, mark, miss, mix, need, obey, open, own, pack, park, plan, play, provide, requisition, ride, sail, set, seek, see, sell, sing, spin, test, tie, uphold, use, vindicate, want, wear, won, yoke

Pattern 2: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Noun + 'to' Infinitive + Complement

We requested the family **to give** grandma a holiday in Seychelles.

The Parks Board asked all hikers **to come** with warm clothes.

Dad allowed my friends **to play** football on the lawn.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

advise, allow, ask, beg, call, counsel, desire, expect, forbid, help, invite, need, notify, order, permit, recommend, remind, request, require, summon, teach, urge, want, warn.

Pattern 3: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Gerund + Phrase

The manager **considered** opening early the next morning.

The journalists **enjoyed** chasing the story that was leaked.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

consider, contemplate, enjoy, hesitate, love, oppose, prefer, relish

Pattern 4: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Adverbial

There the animals **stood** afraid to move back or forward.

The miners were **found** huddled in a corner.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

delay, halted, hesitate, paused, rest, stand, wait.

Pattern 5: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Noun + Adverbial etc..

She saw him **very clearly now**.

She heard him whistling a tune **near the edge of the pond**.

He wrestled the lion **with his bare hands**.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

bank, bring, burn, call, carry, employ, engage, fear, follow, help, keep, lose, mark, meet, mind, need, pack, play, read, ride, risk, roll, seek, sell, send, take, tell, tend, test, throw, treat, wrestle

Pattern 5: Subject + Verb + Object + Verb + Indirect Object

We built a yacht **for ourselves** to sail the Atlantic Ocean. .

Their neighbours helped **them** move into their new house.

The Council required **all owners** to fence their properties.

Landlords believe **most tenants** to be destructive.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

build, buy, cook, draw, find, get, give, hand, keep, knit, lend, make, read, require, save, send, show, sold, sew, tell, warn.

Pattern 6: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Subject Complement

The subject complement is a noun or adjective that comes after a linking verb. The subject is completed by the complement to the verb. The subject complement is normally a noun or an adjective.

They **smelt** the crushed heather under their feet.

They **tasted** the freshly picked strawberries.

We **heard** the doves cooing contentedly.

Tigers **look** fearsome at the best of times.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

feel, hear, know, look, note, observe, perceive, recognise, see, smell, taste, understand, view.

Pattern 7: Pronoun or Noun + Verb + Noun + that

The horseman was following the tracks **that** led to the cave.

Storeowners lower prices on goods **that** do not sell.

Dad took us for a drive in the car **that** he had just bought.

Verbs that lend themselves to the above pattern:

bank, bring, burn, call, carry, employ, engage, fear, follow, help, keep, lose, mark, meet, mind, need, pack, play, read, ride, risk, roll, seek, sell, send, take, tell, tend, test, throw, treat, wind, wear.

HOW TO BEGIN SENTENCES

Complete each of the following sentences:

After dinner the party began ...

After that the players ...

He lay flat on the carpet ...

It would have been fatal for us to have ...

Meantime the patient was ...

Meanwhile we scoured the country for ...

Next day we learnt that ...

Next morning the two ...

No-one could make any sense of ...

Nothing more had happened after ...

Perhaps we should never have ...

Some of the students had ...

The first of their great dangers was ...

The first task facing our team was ...

The real difficulty lay in ...

The tall trees, the long grass and the lake presented ...

The three days that we spent together ...

The water started to rise ...

They were now among ...

We were confronted with a situation that ...

When dusk fell the travelers were ...

When the dawn came ...

When we had gone some distance ...

NEGATIVE SENTENCES

Make negative sentences similar to these:

I can stay awake no longer.

I can't stay awake any longer.

I can barely keep my eyes open.

I can hardly keep my eyes open.

I can scarcely keep my eyes open.

We could never have befriended such an ill mannered person.

This isn't my solution.

This solution isn't mine.

I didn't suggest this solution.

I never suggested this as a solution.

These are not my proposals to the board.

Why hasn't the taxi come yet?

Hasn't the taxi come yet?

Will they never yield to scientific knowledge and evidence?

There was nothing to eat.

There was scarcely anything to eat.

There wasn't anything to eat.

There wasn't but one crumb to eat.

There was nothing to do at the camp.

There was scarcely anything to do at the camp.

There was just about nothing to do at the camp.

Double negatives like 'there wasn't nothing to eat' should be avoided because two negatives, as you know from mathematics, constitute a positive.

COMPOUND SENTENCES

Compound sentences are created by joining two independent clauses of equal importance with the help of the following co-coordinating conjunctions:

for, and, nor, but, or, yet and so.

(The mnemonic ‘fanboys’, suggested in *Wikipedia*, will help you to remember these coordinating conjunctions.) Compound sentences can at times be long, unwieldy and difficult to read. Hemingway shows that it doesn’t have to be that way. Look at the following examples from his novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*:

He had heard these people talk many times **and** he thought what they often said was beautiful.

When you have been concentrating so hard on something you can’t stop **and** your brain gets to racing like a flywheel with the weight gone.

He did not want to wake her **but** he could not leave her alone now.

He was not afraid of dying **but** he was angry at being trapped on this hill.

I did not want it to be this way **but** this seems to be the way it is.

The pines were still in the night **for** there was no wind now.

We are very serious **so** we can make very strong jokes.

The most intelligent thing is not to talk about tomorrow **nor** what happened today.

But I do not believe anything is that short **nor** that it could ever be so simple.

I am all woman and all ugly **yet** many men have loved me **and** I have loved many men.

Yet whoever was above had been very careful not to leave any trail.

COMPLEX SENTENCES

A **complex sentence** consists of an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses connected to it through either a **subordinate conjunction** or a **relative pronoun**. When the dependent clause comes at the beginning of a sentence, a comma is usually inserted to separate the two clauses.

Noun Clauses

Noun clauses that express a comment on a situation or a supposed or real fact are introduced by the conjunction **‘that’**.

The word ‘that’ does not have any function beyond being an identifier and is therefore often omitted. The words **‘whether’**, **‘what’**, **‘who’** and **‘if’** are also used to introduce noun clauses. These words cannot be omitted.

It is important to note that noun clauses are often reduced to infinitives. She told me **that I should buy some coffee**. This can be converted to: She told me **to buy some coffee**.

For Whom the Bell Tolls provides these examples:

That which must pass, will pass.

Now they *knew* **that nothing could ever happen**.

I didn’t *know* **what I was doing when I took him there**.

He was *wondering* **if she would come to him soon**.

He didn’t *know* **whether the guests were really coming**.

It is not foolish to *know* **what is cowardly**.

I don’t *think* **he is going to take this much more**, Robert Jordan thought to himself. (that is omitted)

He *knew* **they could possibly see the horses in the corral**.

“Every one *needs* **to talk to some one**,“ the woman said.

Relative Clauses

The relative clause, which is a dependent clause, has been traditionally called the **adjective clause**. The function of a relative clause is to **qualify** a noun or pronoun.

It is generally introduced by one of the relative pronouns: **that, which, when** or **who**.

Although ‘that’ and ‘which’ are used interchangeably, many writers use ‘that’ to introduce a restrictive clause to identify the noun clearly: The museum has displayed the ball that Pele autographed.

The relative clause is **defining** when it is not enclosed within commas.

A non-defining relative clause, however, is placed in parenthesis because the information is not of central importance: The lawyer, who is my neighbour, will soon be retiring.

A relative clause can also be reduced as in the following example:

The flights (that were) arranged for the players, were cancelled.

For Whom the Bell Tolls provides these examples:

Here is a stagnation **that is repugnant**.

He sat by himself with a cup of wine **that he replenished by dipping into the big bowl**.

Robert Jordan breathed deeply of the clear night air of the mountains **that smelled of the pines and of the dews**.

Jordan handed the glasses to Anselmo **who lay flat beside him**.

For him it was a dark passage **which led to nowhere**.

“Give him some of that wine **which Sordo brought**,” Pilar said.

At the top of the ridge was the government position **where he knew he would be challenged**.

Adverbial Clauses

While the adverbial clause, which is a dependent clause, functions like an adverb, it in fact qualifies the main clause as a whole.

The introductory conjunction will often indicate the way in which the modification occurs:

time, manner, place, reason, purpose, concession, contrast, or condition.

For Whom the Bell Tolls provides the following examples:

If they know we are here they will find us.

She'd be beautiful if they hadn't cropped her hair.

We can cut the horses loose, if it is necessary.

Then when she could not really go forward, he carried her.

While he had sketched, Anselmo had been watching the roads.

Maria had come up the trail while they were talking.

I loved you when I saw you today.

Ever since Pablo came into the cave he felt increasingly better.

“I do not ask any promise because what will happen, will happen.”

I am deeply ashamed because I let you down.

I would make them work each day as I have worked.

He walked through the pines feeling his way from tree to tree.

Maria looked at him with tears streaming down her eyes.

She sat beside him, her hands clasped around her ankles.

How I could have deceived myself about it I do not know.

She will take care of her as well as anyone can.

DIRECT & INDIRECT SPEECH

Note the change from direct to indirect speech:

Direct Speech

simple present

He said, 'I eat three fruits a day.'

simple past

She said, 'I saw the river breaking its bank.'

present progressive

They said, 'We are going to the concert now.'

past progressive

He said, 'I was reading a book last night.'

future (will)

She said, 'I will go to renew my passport tomorrow.'

future (going to)

They said, 'We are going to play soccer this evening.'

auxiliary + verb name

He asked, 'Do you know the way to the airport?'

He enquired, 'Where do you go to play cricket?'

Indirect Speech

simple past

He said (that) he ate three fruits each day.

past perfect

She reported (that) the river had broken its bank.

past progressive

They said (that) they were going to the concert then.

perfect progressive

He said (that) he had been reading a book that night.

would + verb name

She said (that) she would go to renew her passport the following day.

present progressive

They said (that) they were going to play soccer that evening.

simple past

He asked me if I knew the way to the airport.

He enquired from me where I went to play cricket.

DIRECT & INDIRECT SPEECH

Note the change in reporting a question:

Direct Speech -
He enquired,

‘how are you?’

‘where are you going?’

‘why are you leaving?’

‘when are you leaving?’

‘whom are you going
with?’

‘whom are you inviting?’

‘are you leaving?’

‘did you see her?’

‘have you seen her?’

‘will you be seeing her?’

‘may I leave now?’

‘can this house be built in
a month?’

‘shall we leave now?’

Indirect Speech - He enquired

.. how I was / how we were

... where I was going / we were going

... why I was leaving

... when I was leaving

... whom I was going with

... whom I had invited

... whether I will be leaving

... whether I had seen her

... whether I had seen her

... whether I may be seeing her

... whether I will be seeing her

She enquired whether she was per-
mitted to leave then.

He wanted to ascertain whether that
house could be built within a period
of a month.

She suggested politely that they
ought to leave then

NOTE: sometimes a question is not a question but a command. This is especially so if the question being asked is by someone in authority.

VOCABULARY FOR INDIRECT SPEECH

Use the following verbs to report someone's speech or statement:

accepted	added	admitted	admonished
advised	announced	cautioned	conceded
declared	denied	doubted	enquired
explained	insinuated	insisted	instructed
mentioned	ordered	promised	proposed
reminded	replied	said	speculated
suggested	told them	warned	wondered

DIRECT SPEECH

last evening, month, night,
week, year

yesterday

tomorrow

next evening, month, night,
week, year

this

that

these

INDIRECT SPEECH

the evening before, month
before, night before, or
the previous evening, previous
night, or previous year, etc.

the day before
the previous day

the next day
the following day
on the day following

the evening after, month after,
night after, week after, etc. or
on the following evening, the
following week, etc.

that

that

those

CONSTRUCTING A PARAGRAPH

Each paragraph must explore just one idea, opinion or fact. The topic sentence must make the purpose of the paragraph clear. The middle part of the paragraph will help to expand or substantiate the initial idea or thought. The conclusion must reinforce the original point while preparing the reader for a transition to the next idea in the paragraph to follow.

Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence that sets the stage clearly for what will follow. It must be short, direct, and arresting. Any one of the following phrases can help you to launch your topic:

There is evidence that..., Before ..., A few months ago ..., As for the view that..., I have known for a long time that..., It is risky to assume that ..., The starting point should surely be ... Many people believe that ..., A quick survey of the newspapers will show that ..., Let me begin by asking what is the significance of ..., Like most people I too hold the view that ..., In considering this topic I want to focus on ..., One does not have to be a rocket scientist to know that ..., Why or how these problems arose is a question that..., History teaches us that....

The next sentence could begin with a phrase like:

Even though we are aware of the magnitude of the problem we are unwilling to ..., Since this is an issue that we have to confront we would be wise to ..., If we are true to ourselves we shall try to ..., Most of us want to ..., The truth, of course, is that no one wants to..., The problem, therefore, is to discover a way to ..., In spite of the fact that agreement is lacking, we have to ..., Very soon we will have to ..., With the exception of ..., Unlike some people, I want to ..., For example, ... For instance ... etc..

Check that each paragraph is properly structured and smoothly linked with the paragraph that follows.

In concluding a paragraph do two things:

first, recapitulate the main points already canvassed;

second, create a bridge for the paragraph to follow. This will allow the reader to progress smoothly from one idea to the next.

All of this presupposes that you gave attention, in the first place, to mapping out the ideas you wanted to explore in your writing. Anyone who sets pen to paper will benefit immeasurably by getting the perspective of friends and family members on a topic. Information that is obtained first-hand will liven the writing.

Supplementary information can be easily had from browsing the internet or looking at whatever is readily available in print. If you make the effort to harvest interesting ideas to share with others, they in turn will respond with eagerness to your writing.

Your neighbourhood is the most interesting place in the world even if it lacks everything that other people have elsewhere. Observe what goes on in your locality with a magnifying glass and you will have much to think about and a great deal to share. When you write about the things you really know you can create interest because you will be sharing something that is deeply felt and real.

In developing your ideas pay attention to the tenses you use. If there is no shift in the time frame, maintain the same verb tense. In particular use the perfect infinitive, present participle and past participle with care as they refer to actions earlier than that suggested by the verb: To *have anticipated* the problem is an astonishing thing. *Seeing* the opportunities they took them eagerly. *Excited* by last year's sales, the company is expanding its product range this year.

CONCORD

Everyone **is required** to be present.

Somebody or someone **has left** the taps open.

Nobody **has claimed** the prize.

Some of the money **has been spent**.

Some **are** still **unhappy** about the expenditure.

None of the money **was available** to us.

None of us **were present** to see the induction.

Everyone **has gone** home.

The lion as well as the tiger **is** very **powerful**.

The lion and the tiger **are** big cats.

Either water or juice **is sufficient** for me.

Either she or they **are expected** to provide the capital.

Neither of the banks **is** open.

Neither of them **were convicted** in the court.

Neither book **was suitable**.

Are either of these books **suitable** for you?

A large percentage of the stock **was destroyed**.

The herd **follows** the leader.

Neither pen nor pencil **was available**.

Fifty Rands **is** very little money.

My trousers **is burnt**.

The committee **is meeting** at present.

Salmon **die** after their first spawning.

The sheep **were** gathered and driven home.

The deer **are grazing**.

The furniture **was** brought into the rooms.

The English are very fond of ball games.

The birds have flown.

Our winters are wet, our summers are dry.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the world to a standstill.

TAUTOLOGY, WORDINESS AND REDUNDANCY

The needless repetition of a word or phrase in the same sentence or paragraph, ought to be avoided. Examples would be: the car reversed back; this was a modern innovation, the forward advance in science ..., the backward regression in ..., a wealthy tycoon, an astonishing marvel, an impoverished beggar, a tall giant, an anonymous stranger, regular routine, etc..

Another problem is that words like ‘very’, ‘really’, ‘truly’ and ‘extremely’ are overused and so lose their impact. A thesaurus will enable you to find a stand-alone word to express the intensity you desire. In the examples below *very* can be done away with:

Typical use of ‘very’.

Replace with:

It was a **very** hot day

It was a scorching day

We walked **very** fast

We walked briskly

I was **very** tired

I was fatigued

They were **very** angry.

They were outraged

She was **very** happy.

She was ecstatic

Note also that when you use the word ‘unique’, you are referring to something that has no like or equal. Anything which is one of a kind should be just *unique*, not very unique. When you use a word it must be because you intended it to mean something specific.

The sheer vastness of English vocabulary makes it possible to choose the most appropriate word from the range that is available. The word *run*, for example, has the following synonyms: sprint, jog, lope, scuttle, scamper, dart, dash, scurry, rush, hurry. When the right word is chosen redundancy is eliminated and the writing is improved. When you are done with your writing, check for redundancy.

EDITING

1. Check Spelling

By default, MS Word uses United States English to check spelling. Thus words that end in **-re** finish with **-er** and those that end with **-our** have the 'u' omitted. Americans also prefer to use **-yze** in place of **-yse** and to omit the 'e' in words that have 'ae' or 'oe' at the beginning.

Verbs that end in a vowel take a single 'l' and the ending **-ense** is preferred for nouns as well as for verbs. Nouns have 'ue' omitted so that *catalog* and *dialog* are standard in the USA.

The words below are spelt correctly. Do not therefore make any corrections if an alternative spelling is suggested by the computer.

Become familiar with the following words so that you do not experience any anxiety about the correctness of your spelling.

ageing	aeroplane	aesthetics	aluminium
amortise	anaemia	analogue	analyse
any longer	any more	appal	archaeology
armour	artefact	behaviour	blonde
burette	calibre	cancelled	candour
capitalise	carburettor	catalogue	centre
cheque	chilli	cigarette	clamour
colour	connection	convenor	cosy
counsellor	curb	demagogue	demeanour
dependant (N)	dependent (A)	defence	dialogue
diarrhoea	dietician	disc (optical)	dishevelled
doughnut	draught (air)	emphasise	endeavour

enquiry	enrol	ensure	equalling
eyrie	favour	favourite	fibre
flavour	focused	foetus	for ever
fulfil	fulfilment	furor	galvanise
gauge	generalise	glamour	grey
gynaecology	haemorrhage	harbour	hiccough
honour	humour	inquiry	insure (policy)
instalment	jewellery	kerb (Noun)	kilometre
knitted	labelled	labour	lasagne
leapt	licence (N)	license (Verb)	likeable
litre	lustre	manoeuvre	marvellous
meagre	mediaeval	memorise	metre (length)
modelled	monologue	mould	moustache
neighbour	nett (money)	ochre	odour
offence	omelette	organise	orientate
orthopaedic	paediatrics	paralyse	parlour
practice (N)	practise (V)	pretence	prise (open)
programme	program (IT)	propelling	pyjamas
quarrelling	rancour	rigour	rumour
saleable	saviour	savour	sceptical
sizeable	skilful	speciality	specialise
storey (floor)	sulphur	theatre	titbit
towards	travelling	tumour	tyre
valour	vapour	vice (tool)	vigour
wedded	wilful	woollen	yoghurt

2. Check that Problem Words were Correctly Used:

amid, among, while	Do not make them into amidst, amongst, whilst
benefit	benefited
between	Between you and me. (Grammatically right) Between you and I. (Widely used)
black, white	black people (not blacks), white people (not whites)
can I, may I	Use 'can I' where rules and law have to be taken into account. Can I take my own popcorn into the cinema? Can we vote if we are under eighteen years of age? Use 'May I' when you ask someone to grant something. May I borrow your dictionary for tonight? May I see you this evening?
compare or contrast	You must compare apples with apples. I contrasted my experience with hers but compared them with that of my sister.
compare to (liken), compare with (make a comparison)	The outside of my house can be compared to his. Both are exactly the same. Today we shall compare the poetry of Wordsworth with that of Keats.
dangling participles	A present participle is a verb ending in -ing. Borrowing a book, the librarian was delighted. Driving over the speed limit, the traffic officer pulled me up. Flying over the sea, the land disappeared. While dreaming , the dog wandered away. Filming the zebras the lion let out a mighty roar.

each, everybody, everyone, everything, and somebody

The verb must follow the number of the subject. If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular, and vice versa. Words like ‘each’, ‘everybody’, ‘everyone’, ‘everything’, and ‘somebody’ refer to an individual or to a single entity and will therefore take a singular verb.

dependant (noun), dependent (adjective)

My mother is my dependant.
Students are dependent on their bursaries to meet their expenses.

disinterested, uninterested.

He was uninterested in history and never read it. She was interested in history but disinterested in taking sides.

due to, owing to

Modifies a **noun**. His **resignation** was due to ill health. Modifies a **verb**. He **resigned** owing to (or because of) ill health.

each other (two), one another (more)

My brother and I supported each other.
Members of the soccer team should play for one another.

enquiry, inquiry

I make an **inquiry** at the desk about accommodation at the hotel. The government will hold an **enquiry** on rising food prices.

firstly or first

First (or first of all) there is the question of money. Second, we need to get permission. Third we need some advice. Last of all we need the time. (firstly, secondly etc. are also allowed)

hand out (verb) handout (noun)	Hand out the notes. Study the <i>handout</i> that was given to you.
imply (speaker), infer (reader)	The Professor implied that the tax rates were too high. The students <i>inferred</i> that an alternative revenue source was needed.
it's, its	Means 'it is' as in: It's a joke. 'Its', however, is the possessive form. The dog had the ball in its mouth.
judgement, judgment	Prefer judgment.
none the less	three words
she or her	I am not as rich as she . ('as' is a conjunction) I am not as rich as her . (Widely used. The word 'as' is regarded as a preposition now.)
should, would	Use 'should' to express a probability or condition. You should check that all the details in the visa are correct. We should be landing in the next hour or so. Take this medicine and you should be fine in a few days. Use 'would' to express a habitual action. In Cape Town ,any families would spend a Sunday in summer lazing on the beach.
their, they're	'Their' is the possessive form. The speaker answered all their questions patiently. 'They're' means they are. 'I know that they're watching us through binoculars'.

- who or whom? Whom do you wish to see?
Who do you suppose will buy this house?
Who is the subject of a verb, **Whom** is the object of a verb or preposition.
- (Ask the question in the following form: Are you looking for **he / him**? If the answer is **him**, use **whom** to ask the question.
- ‘you and I’ or ‘you and me’ You and I should form a company together. I know that you and I will be in the team. My son and I will be going fishing tomorrow. Between **you** and **me** the coach has both of us in the team. Let **dad** and **me** fetch you from the airport. The invitation was for my **daughter** and **me**.
- your, you’re ‘Your’ is the possessive form. This is your book. ‘You’re’ means you are. I believe **you’re** moving to Durban?

Use of tenses

- With the modals **can**, **will** and **have** use the present and perfect tenses together where necessary.
- With **could**, **would**, and **have** use the past and past perfect tenses together where necessary. (Avoid the conditional tense if you can)
- With a current mental activity about past events use the present tense for the thought and the past tense for the recollection: I *recollect* that he *wrote* interesting stories which everyone *loved*. The author *describes* the many people he *met* on his journey. I **value** the friends who **stood** by me through thick and thin.

When you refer to anything that is a given fact use the simple present tense: A ripe mango **is** attractive as it **is** tasty. The heron **feeds** close to the bank but **may** wade out into the shallow water. The earth **rotates** much faster than the moon **moves** in its orbit.

When you refer to habitual action use the simple present tense: Those who **wake** early and **exercise** regularly **accomplish** most during the day.

When you refer to past events use the simple past or past continuous tense: . The dogs **barked** and **whined**. The bees **left** their hives in a panic. The rats and weasels **deserted** the city. The hens **stopped laying** their eggs. Then the earthquake **struck** and **devastated** the city. People were **scrambling** in every direction, the injured were **moaning** from under the debris, and there were those who were **screaming** and **wailing**.

To ensure that your verbs are in sequence use the past tense throughout except where a general truth or a future happening is expressed. When this is the case, the past tense in the main clause can be followed by the present tense or the future tense in the subordinate clause depending on the timeline.

was, were Use 'was' for something that happened in the past.

When you speak of something that is only hypothetical say: 'If I **were** to get a job I could pay for my tuition'. If people **were** to observe the rules of the road strictly, fewer accidents will occur.

CHECKLIST FOR EDITING

1. Spelling
2. Repetition, redundancy, ambiguity, slang, verbosity
3. Nouns and pronouns: concord (sing. verb with sing. noun)
4. Verbs: sequence of tenses and concord.
5. Cohesion: use of conjunctions, pronouns, adverbs.
6. Voice: prefer active voice to the passive voice.
7. Vocabulary: aptness and variety of vocabulary, judicious use of adjectives and adverbs, malapropism, wrong word
8. Punctuation: commas, apostrophe, quotation marks, etc.
9. Sentences: construction, length, variety, run on sentences, fragments, dangling participles
10. Paragraph: topic sentence, introduction, progression, ending, transition
11. Structure: flow chart, logic, length, economy
12. Style, register, content, appropriateness, context
13. Sensitivity: social, cultural, environmental, ethical, gender issues, human rights issues.
14. Proofreading
15. Final product: font, layout, graphics, presentation

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