Success Center
Directed Learning Activity

EMLS 100
Writing Assignment 1B

EMLS100.2

Directed Learning Activity — Writing Assignment 1B

Description: You are now ready to write the rough draft, to revise and edit and then to write the final draft. In this part of your assignment, you will be working through a variety of steps that will help you focus on revising to improve the paragraph and on editing to correct the grammar errors. This is an essential part of the writing process.

STEP ONE: Writing the Rough Draft

Take the information from the outline in Part A and write your rough draft. Follow the directions below.

1. Use lined 8½ X 11" paper
2. Write the first draft in pencil.
3. It must be 125-150 words.
4. Skip lines.
5. Add a title.
6. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar.

STEP TWO: Defining Terms

In the next step of the process, you will be working to improve your paragraph and correct errors. This is called *revising* and *editing*. Let's define these terms.

REVISION

Revision is the process of making your paragraph better. It might mean reorganizing your ideas to make them clearer, adding transitions, taking out things that don't belong, exchanging words for ones that are more accurate or vivid, or adding more details or examples.

Revision does not mean "recopying" what you've already written. Revision means making changes to the paragraph so that every word and sentence makes sense to the reader. Many students tend to rush through revising; they're anxious to get done with the assignment. But a good writer will always revise.

Below is a checklist that will help you with revising your writing.

REVISION CHECKLIST

1. Does your paragraph focus on the topic?
2. Is there a clearly stated topic sentence with a controlling idea?

3. Do all the supporting ideas connect to the main idea?

4. Is there a conclusion?

5. Will a reader be able to follow the paragraph?

6. Are the ideas in a logical order?

7. Are there transitional words and phrases that guide the reader clearly from one thought to another?

8. Do all the facts, examples, and reasons support the main idea?

9. Are there any unnecessary words and phrases that should be taken out?

EDITING

Editing is different from revision. Revision focuses on improving the content of the essay, but editing deals with correcting errors of punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar.

Below is a checklist that will help you with editing your writing.

EDITING CHECKLIST

1. Is the paragraph indented?

2. Are all the words spelled correctly?

3. Are all the sentences complete with a period at the end?

4. Is there agreement between subjects and verbs?

5. Are pronoun references clear?

6. Are the verb tenses correct and consistent?

7. Have commas been used correctly? Are there any comma spices and run-ons?

8. Have words been capitalized correctly?

9. Are there any sentences that could be combined to provide sentence variety?

Before you revise and edit your paragraph, try these techniques:

1. Set your essay aside for a while. Come back to it later. You will notice ways to make your essay better, and you'll see more errors to correct.

2. Read the essay aloud to yourself. Often you can hear errors that you may not catch while reading silently.

STEP THREE: Revising Your Paragraph

Complete the instructions below. You must show your work on your rough draft.

1. Does your paragraph have a controlling idea? The controlling idea tells the reader what you are saying about the topic. For example, *"Some apples are red"* is not a good topic sentence because it does not have a controlling idea. The main idea is *apples*, but there is nothing more that can be written about them. A good topic sentence might be *"Apples have many healthful benefits."* It has the controlling idea "benefits." You would then go on to write about all the health benefits of apples. So look at your paragraph and make sure it has a controlling idea. If it doesn't, you need to change the topic sentence to include one. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea of your topic sentence. See example below:

Apples have many healthful benefits.

2. Read through your paragraph and look carefully at the details and examples. Make sure that each one is clearly connected to a supporting point. Are the details in a logical order so that the reader can easily understand them. If you are not sure about this, talk to a tutor or your teacher.

3. Does your paragraph have a conclusion? The conclusion tells the reader that your paragraph is finished. It should not include any new information. There are several ways to write a conclusion. Your teacher will be discussing these in class. One common method, however, is to restate the topic sentence in different words. Look at the examples below:

Topic Sentence: *Dogs make great pets.*
Conclusion: *Everyone should get a dog because they are so wonderful.*

Topic Sentence: *Christmas is my favorite time of the year.*
Conclusion: *For these reasons, I always look forward to Christmas every year.*

Make sure that your paragraph has a conclusion. If it doesn't, add one now. You can use the method described above. Underline your conclusion.

STEP FOUR: Editing Your Paragraph

Rewrite the paragraph on another piece of paper, but this time separate the sentences and number them. This will make it easier to look for errors. Look at the example below:

Pollution in my City

1. There are many types of pollution in my city.

2. One type of pollution is in the air.

3. There are many cars in my area, and they produce a lot of exhaust, which makes the air dirty.

4. Another type of pollution is trash.

5.

6.

After you have separated your sentences, follow the instructions below:

1. SPELLING: Go through each sentence and make sure every word is spelled correctly. If you are in doubt about any words, look them up. If you make a correction, cross off the misspelled word and write the correctly spelled word above it.

2. SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT: Again, read through each sentence and draw a single line under every subject and a double line under every verb. Make sure that the verbs agree with the subjects. See examples below:

The teacher passed back the tests yesterday. Everyone needs a cell phone.

STEP FIVE: Writing the Final Draft

After you have finished revising and editing, it is time to write the final draft. Follow the instructions below:

1. Rewrite or type your paragraph on a clean piece of paper.
2. Use pen.
3. If you are writing it by hand, make sure you use 8 ½ x 11" paper.
4. Double space
5. Make sure to indent and include a title.

NOTE: A title is NOT your topic sentence. A title is a short phrase that tells the reader the general idea of the paragraph. For example, for my paragraph on dogs, I might use "The Best Pet" or "Dogs" as a title. Capitalize the first word, last word and all major words. Do not capitalize articles, short prepositions and conjunctions.

When you have finished the final draft, take it to a tutor. The tutor will go over it with you and make further corrections. Have the tutor sign off that you completed this part.

STEP SIX: Rewriting the Final Draft

After the tutor has helped you to further revise and edit the paragraph, rewrite it on another piece of paper. Turn in the second draft to the tutor and have the tutor initial and sign the back page again. If your first final draft doesn't need much revision or correction, you may not have to do this step.

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PRINT STUDENT NAME **STUDENT #**

Tutor Feedback:

STEP 1

_____The student wrote a rough draft of 125-150 words.

STEP 3

_____The student circled the topic and underlined the controlling idea.

_____The student included details and examples that clearly connected to supporting ideas and were logically arranged.

_____The student ended the paragraph with a conclusion.

STEP 4

_____The student separated the sentences and numbered them. The student then corrected spelling errors and underlined the subjects and verbs for each sentence. If you find a lot of errors in these two areas, have the student work on this more. Don't just correct them for the student. You can also direct the student to *Understanding and Using English Grammar* by Betty Azar if you think s/he needs more help in this area.

_____The student underlined each subject and verb.

STEP 5

_____The student wrote the final draft following the instructions. **At this point, read through the student's paragraph and (together with the student) make corrections and revisions as needed.** Then print and sign below. Have the student rewrite the paragraph one more time. If the student has only a couple of errors, she doesn't need to rewrite it again.

PRINT INSTRUCTOR/TUTOR NAME **DATE**

INSTRUCTOR/TUTOR SIGNATURE