

Tutorial Letter 501/3/2020

**Academic Language and Literacy in
English**

ENG1503

Semesters 1 and 2

Department of English Studies

This tutorial letter contains important information
about your module.

BARCODE

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INTRODUCTION TO THE MODULE

The purpose of the module is to develop your abilities of critical reading and critical writing which are essential academic skills, and to improve your Academic English competence. The module will help you to develop your ability to read and write academic genres, such as argumentative essay writing, research-based essays, research articles, lectures, and using appropriate academic conventions, such as citation.

As a university student, you will be exposed to a variety of texts which may contain unfamiliar terminology or complex concepts. However, as you develop your academic skills, reading academic material will become easier. Good reading skills also leads to good writing. In Unit 1, you will be exposed to the interconnectedness between reading, writing and digital literacies.

Throughout the Tutorial Letter, we present English for Academic Purposes as a major component of what is widely referred to as Academic Literacies. Academic Literacies refers to a variety of skills, such as reading, thinking, doing, speaking, listening, and writing in specific academic contexts. The new module is therefore named, Academic Language and Literacy in English.

We encourage you to read this Tutorial Letter in conjunction with all the other Tutorial Letters that are prescribed for the module in 2020.

1 LEARNING UNIT 1: Integrating Reading and Writing

1.1 Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this learning unit students will be able to:

- Decode a variety of academic texts to which they have been exposed.
- Display insight into various academic reading and writing strategies.
- Display knowledge of various digital reading and writing strategies.

1.2 Introduction

In order to develop academic writing skills you need to be familiar with the discourses of your discipline. Different areas of study have different discourses (types of writing structures and language use, e.g engineers write differently from social scientists). When reading and writing academic texts, important aspects like *purpose*, *audience* and *structure* have an impact on how you decode a particular text. As a student you will encounter various types of texts within your discipline as well as outside of your discipline.

In this module, we encourage you to practice reading-to-learn, meaningful learning, and transformative learning. This requires participating in all the activities that are in this Tutorial Letter, including the activities that are in the prescribed and recommended books. In order to do this, you must create or keep a **student exercise** book, diary, journal or electronic diary.

1.3 Learning Activity 1: Decoding a variety of academic texts

In order to achieve the second outcome, you will need many opportunities to gain knowledge and practice in the following:

- Skimming and scanning texts for relevant information
- Using context clues to infer meaning of unknown words
- Identifying the argument, purpose and target audience of the text
- Identify and understanding the genre of a text
- Distinguishing main ideas from supporting information
- Understanding the writer's use of research to support argument
- Understanding how information from various academic texts is synthesized to create a cohesive, coherent and unified composition



Student Exercise 1: Writing conventions

Find three journal articles from a typical research journal in your field and familiarize yourself with writing [conventions](#) in your field of study. To access three journals, visit the following link: <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/search/basic?sid=396e8be9-0e46-4039-9e0f-beebd314b805%40sdc-v-sessmgr05&vid=0&sdb=edspub&tid=3000EP>.

Then after the link select your subject area and after you have done so, select “journal” under “Resource type” in the bottom left part of the screen.



Student Exercise 2: Text types

Text types: Here is a list of text types and some information about them. Match the text types and information in order to establish valid pairs.

TEXT TYPE	INFORMATION
Textbooks	These could be 80,000 words long for PhD students.
Shorter student texts: essays	These describe changes or developments, e.g. within a company or social group.
Longer student texts: dissertations and theses	These are written for readers who have expert knowledge of a topic.
Research articles	These show the importance of a piece of research.
Case studies	Access these to find out about writing in your discipline.
Reports	This is a good place to start your research.

1.4 Learning Activity 2: Purpose of Academic Reading

Reading across genres, from books and magazines to newspapers and blogs, is something students should be encouraged to do in their free time because it can be both educational and fun. At UNISA, however, we generally expect students to read sources that have particular value in the context of a course. Why is academic reading beneficial?

- **Information comes from reputable sources:** Web sites and blogs can be a source of insight and information, but not all are useful as academic resources. They may be written by people or companies whose main purpose is to share an opinion or sell you something. Academic sources such as textbooks and scholarly journal articles, on the other hand, are usually written by experts in the field and have to pass stringent [peer review](#) requirements in order to get published.
- **Learn how to form arguments:** In most universities except for creating writing, when lecturers ask you to write an essay, they expect it to be argumentative in style. This means that the goal of the paper is to research a topic and develop an argument about it using evidence and facts to support your position. Since many of our university reading assignments (especially journal articles) are written in a similar style, you'll gain experience studying their strategies and learning to emulate them.

- **Exposure to different viewpoints:** One purpose of assigned academic readings is to give students exposure to different viewpoints and ideas. For example, in an ethics class, you might be asked to read a series of articles written by medical professionals and religious leaders who are [pro-life or pro-choice](#) and consider the validity of their arguments. Such experience can help you wrestle with ideas and beliefs in new ways and develop a better understanding of how others' views differ from your own.

1.5 Learning Activity 3: Reading Strategies for Academic Texts

In unit 2 you will learn more about academic reading. Effective reading requires more engagement than just reading the words on the page. In order to learn and retain what you read, it's a good idea to do things like circling key words, writing notes, and reflecting. Actively reading academic texts can be challenging for students who are used to reading for entertainment alone, but practicing the following steps will get you up to speed:

- **Preview:** You can gain insight from an academic text before you even begin the reading assignment. For example, if you are assigned a nonfiction book, read the title, the back of the book, and table of contents. Scanning this information can give you an initial idea of what you'll be reading and some useful context for thinking about it. You can also start to make connections between the new reading and knowledge you already have, which is another strategy for retaining information.
- **Read:** While you read an academic text, you should have a pen or pencil in hand. Circle or highlight key concepts. Write questions or comments in the margins or in a notebook. This will help you remember what you are reading and also build a personal connection with the subject matter.
- **Summarize:** After you read an academic text, it's worth taking the time to write a short summary—even if your instructor doesn't require it. The exercise of jotting down a few sentences or a short paragraph capturing the main ideas of the reading is enormously beneficial: it not only helps you understand and absorb what you read but gives you ready study and review materials for exams and other writing assignments.
- **Review:** It always helps to revisit what you've read for a quick refresher. It may not be practical to thoroughly reread assignments from start to finish, but before class discussions or tests, it's a good idea to skim through them to identify the main points, reread any notes at the ends of chapters, and review any summaries you've written.



Student Exercise 3

Read Texts A, B and C below and answer the following questions for each text in your student exercise book:

- Which discipline, do you think, it was written for?
- What do you think the text is about?
- Highlight any words and [linguistic features](#) you think are noteworthy.

- **TEXT A**

Click [here](#) to access the text. The title of the text is 'What we teach must be relevant.'

- **TEXT B**

Click [here](#) to access the text. The title of the text is 'Lesson 28: Choices, Consequences (Genesis 13: 5 – 18).'

- **TEXT C**

Click [here](#) to access the text. The title is 'Education improves decision-making ability, study finds.'

1.6 Learning Activity 4: Reading and Writing Strategies

Imagine if you could not read or write; would you survive in academia? The answer is No. It would be like living in water yet you cannot swim. Reading and writing are two of the most important skills for academic success.

The question is how do we read and write academic texts? This section of the unit introduces you to the strategies of reading and writing different academic texts. The section begins with reading and later discusses writing strategies.

We can fill up pages if we were to list all the type of texts you will be expected to read in your academic journey. However, we can name a few. Academic texts can be conveniently classified into categories such as:

1. informational texts which include
 - explanations
 - laboratory and filed reports
 - articles
 - instructions
 - case study
 - abstracts
- 2 graphical texts, which include:
 - maps,
 - diagrams,
 - charts,
 - tables,
 - graphs
 - timetables etc... and
3. literary texts, such as:
 - stories,
 - novels,
 - descriptions,
 - biographies
 - and poems.

The first question to think about is: If all the texts we have listed above are regarded as academic texts, why then do they have different names? Why is a case study referred to as such, and an abstract, called an abstract? The answer is simple, texts are different in structure and in purpose

In order to read a text, you must first have an idea of:

- Its structure – how it is laid out
- Its purpose – why or for what reason it has been written.

Let’s examine one familiar type of text: the Newspaper.

You can instantly recognize text A and text B above as newspaper articles, typically found in the news section of the paper.



Student Exercise 4

List 5 features which define/ distinguish these two texts as newspaper articles.

You may have mentioned features such as headings, subheadings, indexes, graphics, italicized or bolded words or lines, columns, pictures etc. these form just some of the feature that constitute the structure of a newspaper.



Student Exercise 5

All Texts have structure. In a short paragraph describe the structure of the newspaper article. Now do the same with an academic text that you have encountered on one of the subjects you study.

- What is the name of the text?
- How is the information in the text organized? (are there charts, tables, etc)?
- Which of the following features were used in your chosen text?
- Where were they used?
- Why do you think the feature was used?

1.7 E-tutor Task 1

Here is an organizer you can use. The first three entries under “FEATURE” are just examples.

FEATURE	WHERE WAS IT USED	WHY WAS IT USED
Headings		
Bolded words		
Graphs		

This might seem a mundane exercise, but it is essential as a beginner exercise for understanding the structure of a text and most importantly what purpose the feature serves and where it appears.

1.8 Learning Activity 5: Digital Reading and Writing Strategies

The higher educational landscape in the 21st century is continuously changing due to the rapid introduction and advancement of digital technologies for teaching and learning purposes. Open distance institutions of learning conduct their teaching and learning mostly on digital platforms. Before we get into the 'know-how' and the nuances of digital reading and writing strategies, firstly, we should give you a broad and a brief definition of digital literacy in context. Digital literacy involves the ability to use the technological tools available to you for teaching and learning in a particular institution, course or a subject. Consult (Blikstad-Balas, 2015; Osterman, 2013; Belshaw, 2012) to discover more about digital literacy.

1.9 Learning Activity 6: Digital Reading Strategies

Reading is a precursor to writing but it is a challenging and a daunting task for one to engage in especially when one does not know how to execute it. Reading in the 21st century is mostly done on digital platforms as alluded to above – this means that it is consistently moving away from the old paper-based reading. It can be done through digital platforms, either online (reading texts on the internet) or offline (reading texts not on internet e.g. pdf or Microsoft Office texts). *Figure 1* below is an example of how to read a digital text offline.

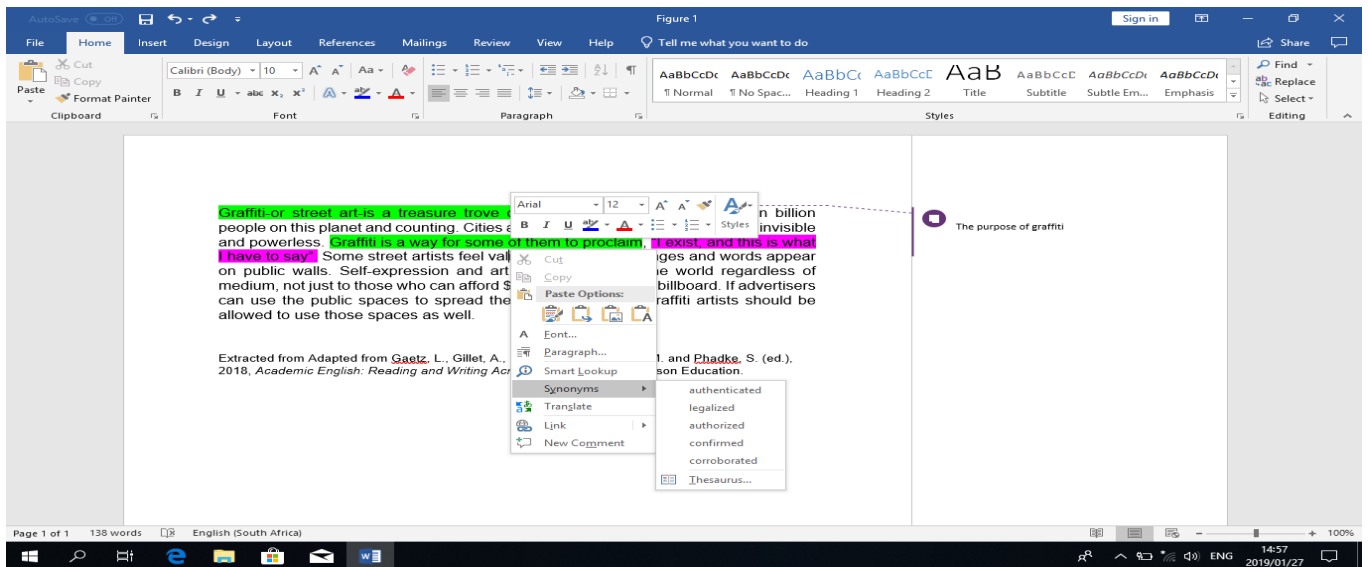


Figure 1.1: Digital Reading

Figure 1 above is an illustration of how to use Microsoft Word to read a given text. The text is highlighted in different colours to show the main ideas of the text or what the text is about. The different colours represent different ideas. It shows the reader is using Microsoft Word to check for the synonyms of words that he or she is unsure/unfamiliar with for further clarity. It also shows the notes that the reader is making while reading the given text. Digital reading enables the readers to store either read or non-read texts on their digital devices. These texts can also be accessed anytime and anywhere as long as the readers have digital devices to access them. The reader may choose to share the text shown on figure 1 to other recipients for reading purposes and to connect with one another's line of thinking and reading. Because digital texts can be constantly worked with they do not deteriorate or lose quality as can happen with a written text. This means that such texts can be used for longer periods of time thereby saving money and print resources.



Student Exercise 6

Identify any text of your choice in your prescribed textbook, apply your own digital reading strategies on it, share it with a fellow student or on the e-tutor's site for this module, and ask for comments. Use figure 1 above as an example. You should also use your own digital reading strategies. A screenshot should be taken and uploaded on the e-tutor's site and ask for comments from the e-tutor and fellow students.

1.10 Learning Activity 7: Digital Writing Strategies

Digital writing enables you to write and share what you have written with your fellow students or your lecturers for comments by sending the written text to and from each other repeatedly. The comments can be done in track changes and the suggested ideas can either be accepted or rejected by the original writer. By so doing, you will be engaged in writing as a process until such text is ready to be submitted as a final product. Digital writing can be performed on different digital platforms such as a learning management system (LMS) of a university (myUnisa in our case) or on any digital text (online or offline). *Figure 2* below shows a process of digital writing.

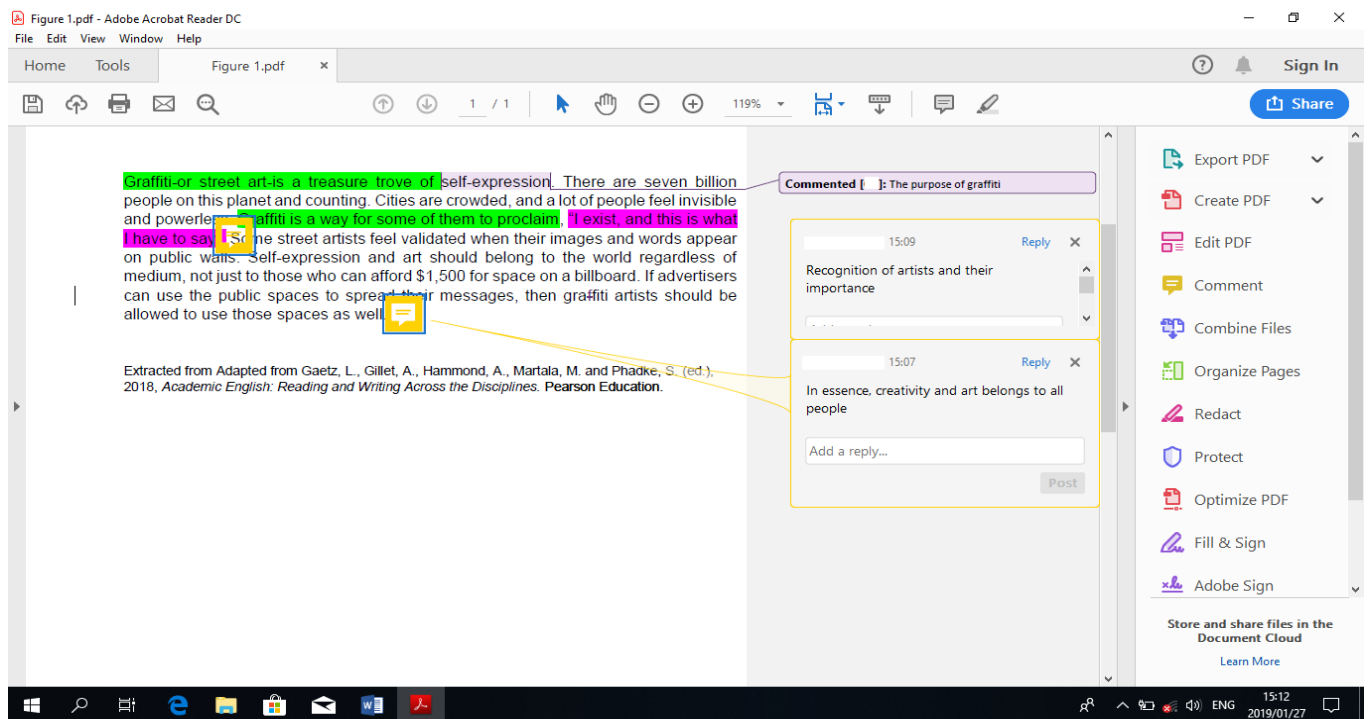


Figure 1.2: Digital Writing

Figure 1.2 above shows how the reader annotated the given text to generate ideas about what the given text is about and the ideas can be used during the writing process.

The purpose of reading for students is to write either for formative or summative assessment. Reading paves the way for writing in that it equips the writer with the knowledge and ideas that they can write about in relation to a given topic. *Figure 3* below shows the other strategies that the writer uses in his or her application of the digital writing strategies during the writing process. It shows how the writer uses Microsoft Word spell-check to correct spelling and highlight the important parts of the text.

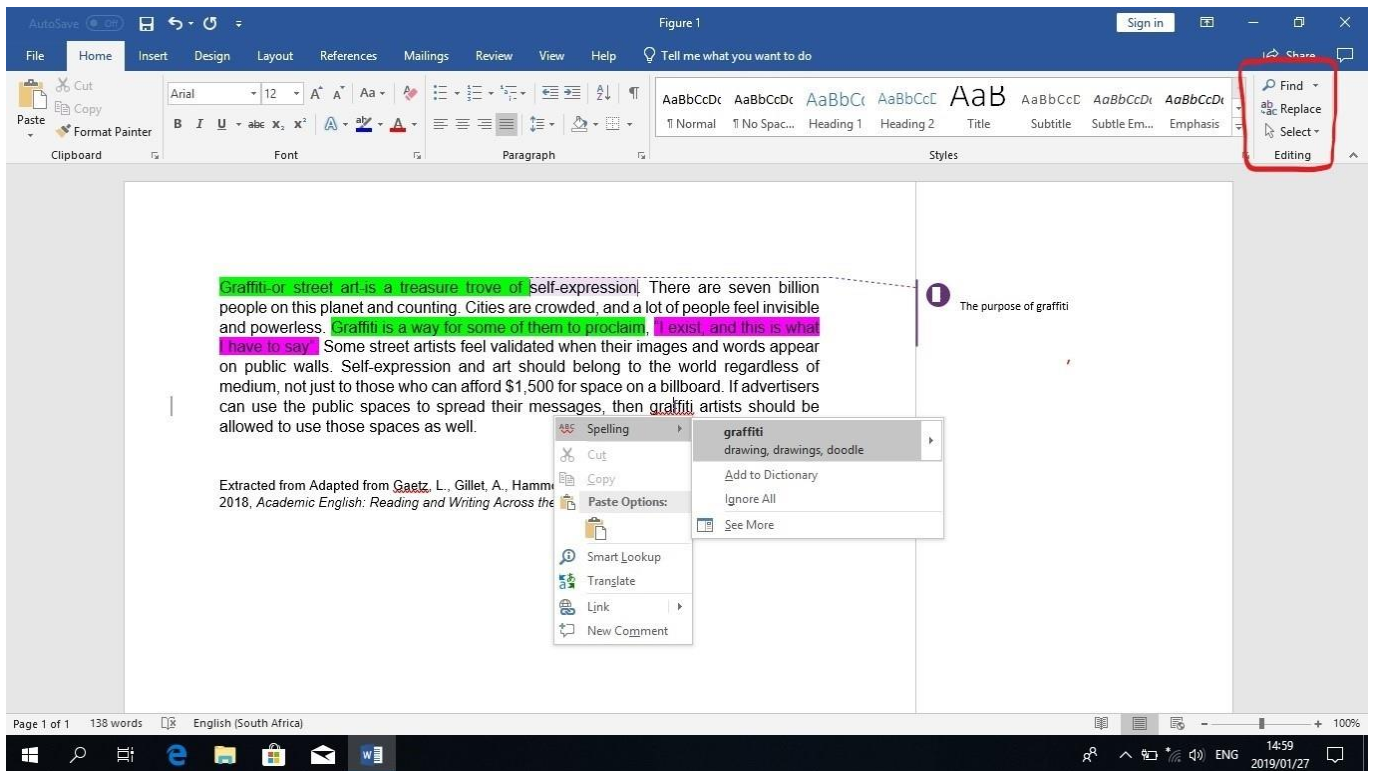


Figure 1.3: Digital Writing Process

There are various digital tools that you may use as a student during the writing process such as Grammarly and NoRedInk. You can use these tools for revising and editing your written tasks. However, these online tools for writing lack human intelligence/instinct/ability for detecting cohesion and coherence in one's writing, hence your lecturers and tutors are available to assist you.

One of the main objectives of this module is to expose you to different essay types such as *expository*, *discursive* and *argumentative* essays. In order to master or gain knowledge of how to write the aforementioned essays, we introduce you to the genre-staged approach which entails the process of writing each section (introduction, body/supporting paragraphs and conclusion) for a particular period of time and then gradually moving on to the other sections once the instructors or co-contributors are satisfied that you have mastered the said skills. You may follow similar examples as shown on figures 2 and 3 but you can also follow your own digital writing practices to write the said sections.



Student Exercise 7

- Use the digital tools as demonstrated above (Adobe Reader and Microsoft Word) during your writing process and focus on only writing an introduction of any topic of your choice and share it with a fellow student or on e-tutor's site for this module and ask for comments.
- You may choose any social media platform or any digital platform to share the written task for comments and suggestions. You should move on to the other sections of the essay once you feel you have mastered the aforementioned skills.
- You may send what you have been sharing and writing with your fellow student to any lecturer or e-tutor for ENG1503.

1.11 References

Belshaw, D., 2012. *What is' digital literacy'? A Pragmatic investigation* (Doctoral dissertation, Durham University).

Osterman, M.D., 2013. Digital literacy: Definition, theoretical framework, and competencies.

Blikstad-Balas, M., 2015. Digital literacy in upper secondary school—what do students use their laptops for during teacher instruction?. *Nordic Journal of Digital Literacy*, 10 (Jubileumsnummer), pp.122-137.

2 Learning Unit 2: Reading and Writing in Academic Contexts – Essay types Part 1

2.1 Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this learning unit students will be able to:

- Describe basic facts about expository writing.
- Successfully complete activities about critical reading strategies.
- Apply principles associated with writing for purpose and audience.
- Answer short questions about writing processes.
- Participate constructively in a discussion about argumentative writing.
- Identify comparison and contrast patterns in essays.
- Describe the proper application of cause and effect writing.

2.2 Introduction

Unit 2 focuses on the reading and writing of various types of essays, including expository or research, argumentative, comparison and contrast, as well as cause and effects. The aim of the unit is to draw your attention to the features of each type of essay writing and on the importance of the specific context, purpose and audience. Each type of writing requires you to adhere to certain formats and rules, and you will be exposed to some of these in this unit.

Generally, once you have learnt how to brainstorm ideas, develop a plan for writing and expand on those initial ideas to produce a fully-fledged essay, you will find it easier and easier to write. Writing develops through writing; so, take time to practice writing a full essay with each section in this material. This unit starts with reading strategies because to write, you need to read effectively, and vice-versa. Remember, practice makes perfect: be hands on and enjoy the unit.

2.3 Learning Activity 1: Expository Essay Writing

In this section, you will be required to read a text and answer a few questions afterwards. However, before you start reading, we would like to discuss a few strategies that you will need to read effectively at university. The most commonly used are skimming and scanning, and the SQ4R strategies.

2.3.1 Reading Strategies

Reasons for reading

Have you ever asked yourself the question “why do people read?” The answer to the question depends perhaps on the reason why you need or want to read in the first place. The following are some of the reasons why people read:



Figure 2.1: Reasons for Reading

Reading difficulties

Ask yourself: “What difficulties have I been encountering while reading for study or research purposes? How have I overcome them?”

Reading at university

- At university you are required to use academic reading (or deep reading), which is more challenging than reading in high school (or surface reading).
- The level, complexity and volume of academic reading required is higher.
- Research has shown that there is a correlation between reading proficiency and academic success. Students who make effort to improve their reading skills fair better than those who do not.
- Good readers tends to be good writers, and vice-versa.
- Reading forms the basis of academic writing.

Important Note: It is important that you develop and improve your skills for reading academically in order to study and learn more effectively.

“A man who chooses not to read is just as ignorant as a man who cannot read.” (Mark Twain)

How do “good” readers read academic texts?

Good readers make use of various reading strategies and reading techniques before reading, during reading, and after reading. Learn the following strategies:

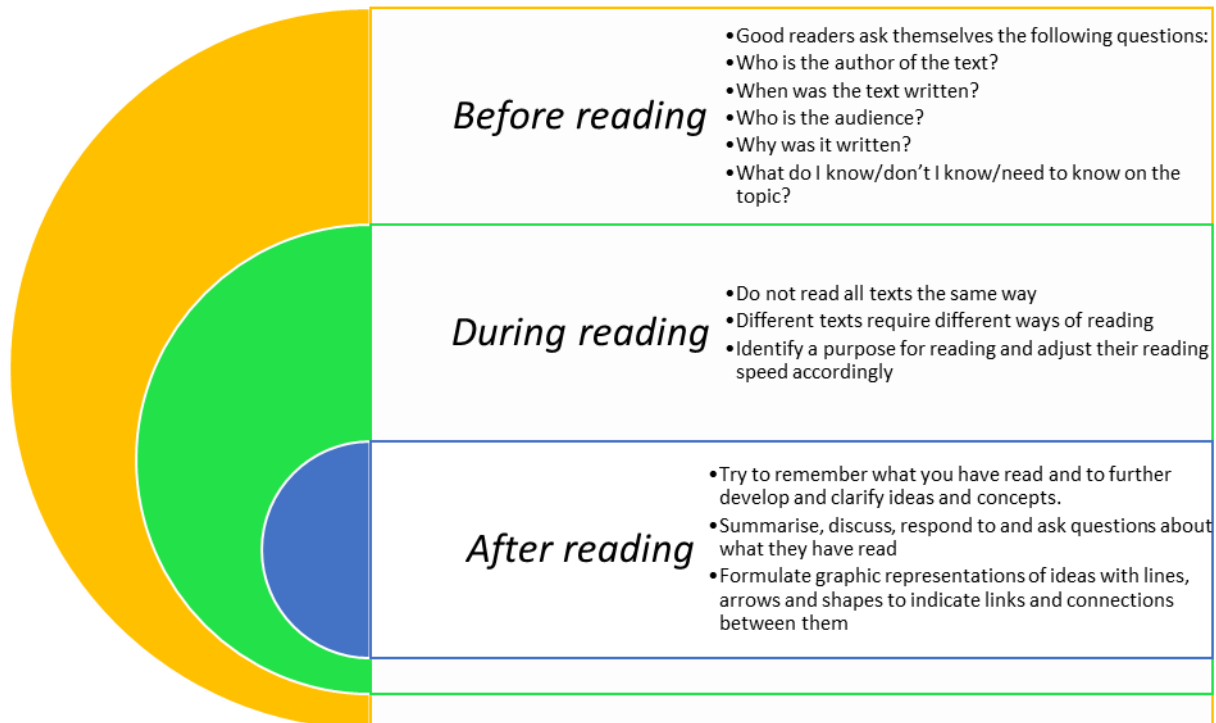


Figure 2.2: Reading strategies

2.3.2 General Reading Techniques

Effective readers employ different reading techniques: *speed-reading, skimming, scanning, and study reading.*

Speed reading

- Reading quickly to get a preliminary understanding of a text or to find background information on a topic
- The more familiar you are with advanced reading texts the more quickly you will be able to access information - reading improves with practice!

Skimming

- To preview or get an overview of a text - reading quickly to gather as much information about a text as possible in the shortest amount of time
- When you skim, you do not read everything
- Read only the following:
 - Title
 - Introduction and/ or first paragraph
 - Headings/ sub-headings
 - First sentence of each paragraph
 - Key words in bold or italics
 - Pictures, diagrams, graphs or charts
 - Conclusion or summary

Scanning

Reading quickly to find specific information in a text

- Names & dates
- Words in a dictionary
- Definitions in glossaries
- Table of contents
- Timetables & directories

Study reading

- Study reading is deep reading
- The purpose of study reading is to understand and remember the details
- Good readers also struggle with difficult texts in order to make them comprehensible
- Good readers read academic texts slowly and re-read often (sometimes two or three times)
- Study reading involves reading interactively and critically

How do we read interactively?

- We relate what we are reading to our own experience and knowledge of the world
- We read actively and have a “conversation” with the text
- We **annotate** the text
- Identify main idea & topic sentence in each paragraph
- Make notes in the margins; paraphrase & summarise key points; ask questions & make comments
- Highlight key words/ concepts in the text

- Highlight unfamiliar words and work out possible meanings from the context; look up words you still do not understand

How do we read critically?

- We read **“against the grain”**
- We do not believe everything we read; we ask questions and challenge the writer’s assumptions
- We analyse arguments
- We weigh an author’s claims against evidence
- We discount arguments based on faulty reasoning
- We distinguish between fact and opinion
- We form our own opinion on the topic

The SQ4R Method

SQ4R stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review. Click on the [SQ4R](#) method to watch a 7 minutes 45 seconds video and answer the questions that follow:

Important Note: SQ4R will help build a framework to help you understand your reading assignments.

Annotation

What is [annotation](#)? It is the process of making notes while reading. These notes can be taken directly in the book or text, on sticky notes, or on another piece of paper or computer. Annotation can help you monitor your progress, focus, and comprehension.

Click on [Annotation](#) to watch a 5 minutes video and answer the questions that follow:



Student Exercise 1

Answer the following questions:

- What is annotation?
- What does annotation help you to do?
- List four things that you do when annotating.



Student Exercise 2

Read the following text, underline the main points being made by the author, circle unfamiliar words, cross(x) the reasons used to support these points, and tick (✓) the ideas that you agree with in the text.

The Happiness Factor

David Brooks

David Brook writes for the *New York Times*, *The Weekly Standard*, *Newsweek*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*. He is also a commentator on *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer. In the following essay, Brooks makes an interesting comparison.

- 1 Two things happened to Sandra Bullock in 2010. First, she won an Academy Award for best actress. Then came the news reports claiming that her husband was an adulterous jerk. So the philosophic question of the day is: would you take that as a deal? Would you exchange a tremendous professional triumph for a severe personal blow? On the one hand, an Academy Award is nothing to sneeze at. Bullock has earned the admiration of her peers in a way very few experience. She'll make more money for years to come. She may even live longer. Research by Donald A. Redelmeier and Sheldon M. Singh has found that, on average, Oscar winners live nearly four years longer than nominees that don't win.
- 2 Nonetheless, if you had to take more than three seconds to think about this question, you are absolutely crazy. Marital happiness is far more important than anything else in determining personal well-being. If you have a successful marriage, it doesn't matter how many professional setbacks you endure, you will be reasonably happy. If you have an unsuccessful marriage, it doesn't matter how many career triumphs you record, you will remain significantly unfulfilled.
- 3 This isn't just sermonising. This is the age of research, so there's data to back this up. Over the past few decades, teams of researchers have been studying happiness. Their work, which seems flimsy at first, has developed an impressive rigor, and one of the key findings is that, just as the old sages predicted, worldly success has shallow roots while interpersonal bonds permeate through and through.
- 4 For example, the relationship between happiness and income is complicated, and after a point, tenuous. It is true that poor nations become happier as they become middle-class nations. But once the basic necessities have been achieved, future income lightly connected to well-being. Growing countries are slightly less happy than countries with slower growth rates, according to Carol Graham of the Brookings Institution and Eduardo Lora. The United States is much richer than it was fifty years ago, but this has produced no measurable increase in overall happiness. On the other hand, it has become a much more unequal country, but this inequality doesn't seem to have reduced national happiness.
- 5 On a personal scale, winning the lottery doesn't seem to produce lasting gains in well-being. People aren't happiest during the years when they are winning the most promotions. Instead, people are happy in their twenties, dip in middle age and then, on average, hit peak happiness just after retirement at age sixty-five. People get slightly happier as they climb the income scale, but this depends on how they experience growth. Does wealth inflame unrealistic expectations? Does it flow from virtuous cycle in which an interesting job produces hard work that in turn leads to more interesting opportunities?
- 6 If the relationship between money and well-being is complicated, the correspondence between personal relationships and happiness is not. The daily activities most associated with happiness are sex, socialising after work, and having dinner with others. The daily activity most injurious to happiness is commuting. According to one study, joining a group that meets even just once a month produces the same happiness gain as doubling your income. According to another, being married produces a psychic gain equivalent to more than \$100,000 a year.
- 7 If you want to find a good place to live, just ask people if they trust their neighbours. Levels of social trust vary enormously, but countries with high social trust have happier people, better

health, more efficient government, more economic growth, and less fear of crime (regardless of whether actual crime rates are increasing or decreasing). The overall impression from this research is that the economic and professional success exist on a surface of life, and that they emerge out of interpersonal relationships, which are much deeper and more important.

- 8 The second impression is that most of us pay attention to the wrong things. Most people vastly overestimate the extent to which more money would improve their lives. Most schools and colleges spend too much time preparing students for careers and not enough preparing them to make social decisions. Most governments release a ton of data on economic trends but not enough on trust and other social conditions. In short, modern societies have developed vast institutions oriented around the things that are easy to count, not around the things that matter the most. They have affinity for material concerns and a primordial fear of moral and social ones.
- 9 This may be changing. There is a rash of compelling book – including *The Hidden Wealth of Nations* by David Halpern and *The Politics of Happiness* by Derek Bok – that argue that public institutions should pay attention to well-being and not just material growth narrowly conceived. Governments keep initiating policies they think will produce prosperity, only to get sacked, time and again, from their spiritual blind side.

Adapted from Gaetz et al. (2018). Academic English : reading and writing across the disciplines. Harlow, England: Pearson

Comprehension and critical thinking questions



Student Exercise 3

In the previous activity, you read and annotated the text. Now referring to the same text, please answer the following questions.

- 1) In paragraph 4, what is the meaning of *tenuous*?

- 2) In your own words, what is the writer's main point?

- 3) According to the essay, what factors are associated with increased levels of happiness?

- 4) In which paragraph does the writer use expert opinion?

5) In paragraph 5, the writer states that people are happy in their twenties and after retirement, but not in their middle ages. Why are people probably less happy in the middle age? Make three guesses.

6) In paragraph 7, the writer mentions social trust but doesn't clearly define it. Infer or guess what social trust is.

7) In paragraph 8, the writer criticises college because they don't prepare students to make social decisions. Think of ways that college could teach students to make moral and social decision.

2.4 E-Tutor Task 2

Students are to engage fellow students on their E-Tutor sites about any of these questions and their responses to them.



Student exercise 4

Compare the two types of writing in the following table. In the table, Palesa is writing about how her assignment presentation went: in the left column, she is writing to her friend and in the right column to her supervisor.

Text A (to a friend)	Text B (to a supervisor)
<p>Hey Sbosh,</p> <p>Things didn't go well. All those eyes staring, yoh!</p> <p>I could just drop the mic and run...</p> <p>It didn't go well, but who cares? I passed the test anyway..</p> <p>See you ya!</p>	<p>Dear Dr Dikeledi,</p> <p>My presentation failed due to fear of the audience and lack of confidence.</p> <p>I hope my test mark will enable me to meet the departmental requirements.</p> <p>I will make an appointment to see you for advice.</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Ms Motabi</p>
<p><i>Describe the language in Text A</i></p>	<p><i>Describe the language in Text B</i></p>

Table 2.1

2.5 Learning Activity 2: Writing for Audience and Purpose

Audience

Text A and Text B show how the tone and vocabulary can be adapted in your writing to suit your audience's profile and interest. While writing to a friend, the tone is more relaxed and can be even be humorous or sarcastic, compared to a more reserved and serious tone used while writing to your supervisor, manager, or business partner. For an audience appropriate writing, considering the following questions:

- Who will read the essay/report? Will my lecturer be my only reader, or will others also read it?
- What does my audience already know about the topic?
- What information will my readers expect?
- Should I use formal or informal language?
- How should I adjust my vocabulary and tone to appeal to my readers?

Important Note: Remember that your lecturer represents the intended audience. However, your writing can be read by other educated readers: they will expect you to use correct grammar and demonstrate what you have learnt and understood about the topic. Do not leave out important information because you assume that your lecturer is an expert in the field. Your ideas should be presented in a clear and organised manner.

Purpose

Your purpose is your reason for writing. Sometimes, you may have more than one purpose. While considering your purpose, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my goal to entertain? Do I want to tell a personal story or anecdote?
- Is my goal to persuade? Do I want to convince readers that my point of view is the correct one?
- Is my goal to inform? Do I want to explain something or present information?

Important Note: Your general purpose is to entertain, persuade or inform. Your specific purpose is your more precise reason for writing. For example, if you are writing about education. You may have the following general and specific purposes:

- General purpose: to inform
- Specific purpose: to explain the impact that education can have on a person's life.



Student Exercise 5

Critically read the following text, answer the questions, and do the exercise that follows.

Hi, I don't think whoever marked my essay even read it. It's like he's playing with people's lives... R u ok with this? Do something to fix this. WhatsApp me: 070 000 1111. Or U can drop me a line: thabs000@unisa.ac.za

Questions:

Who is the email addressed to?

Is the language appropriate?

In the space below, rewrite the email using a more formal and respectful tone.

2.6 Learning Activity 3: Format of an academic expository essay

The text *The Happiness Factor* by David Brooks read previously can be said to be an expository essay. Expository writing often aims to present information or argue for a specific point of view. Although the specific format, content and organisation of expository or research essays may vary according to subject, what they have in common is the purpose as presented in a clear argument to the reader.

In an expository essay, you will be expected to argue your position clearly and support it with evidence. Your own voice should be clear throughout and it should be supported by the voices of other people you have collected through your reading. This means that you will say something using your own ideas and the ideas of the subject and of other people. In other words, you will present the ideas you have learnt in your own way. As in all academic writing, the ideas and people that you refer to need to be made explicit by a system of referencing.

Essays are normally written as a continuous piece of writing without headings and subheadings. Diagrams and tables are not normally used in essays, neither are bullet points or numbered lists. Words and sentences are used to show the structure. The main focus of the essay depends on its purpose, which should be clearly specified in the title, topic or assignment question. To reiterate, the main purpose of an expository essay is to argue a point, to present a position, or defend it with evidence. You should do the following:

- Start by introducing the topic
- Decide what your position is and provide reasons and evidence to support it.
- You will almost certainly need to consider other points of view and evaluate them positively or negatively.
- At this point you may need to give examples and to compare and contrast the different points of view.
- Finish by concluding, making it clear what your position is.

Important Note: Essays do not usually have a heading and subheading, but check with your department.

A typical essay will follow the stages shown in Table 2.2:

<u>Topic</u>	<i>Help to keep the essay focused</i>
<u>Introduction</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Description of the situation/context</i> • <i>Explanation of why it is important</i> • <i>Statement of main point of view</i> • <i>Presentation of organisation of essay</i>
<u>Paragraph 1</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic sentence: statement of main point/reason 1</i> • <i>Explanation of point</i> • <i>Support of point with evidence/examples</i> • <i>Evaluation and closing of point</i>
<u>Paragraph 2</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic sentence: statement of main point/reason 2</i> • <i>Explanation of point</i> • <i>Support of point with evidence/examples</i> • <i>Evaluation and closing of point</i>
<u>Paragraph 3</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic sentence: statement of main point/reason 3</i> • <i>Explanation of point</i> • <i>Support of point with evidence/examples</i> • <i>Evaluation and closing of point</i>
<u>Conclusion</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Summary of main all (three) points</i> • <i>Evaluation of the points</i> • <i>Statement of own point of view</i>
<u>References</u>	<i>Only list the sources used in essay (in full)</i>

Table 2.2



Student Exercise 6

Match the stages in Table 2 with the paragraphs in the text *The Happiness Factor* by David Brooks read earlier. Use the paragraph number and write them next to specific stages in Figure 2.

2.7. Learning Activity 4: The Writing Process

In general, students may approach the writing of assignments in two ways. Some students adopt a ‘product’ approach to writing leaving by starting to work on or write the assignment only a few hours before submission date and time and by submitting the first rough draft they complete. More skilled students create a writing plan and start working on the assignment weeks before submission date by creating a process where drafts are written, revised, edited, and proofread repeatedly. You are encouraged to adopt the latter approach, which is based on a writing process. The writing process includes various stages such as the prewriting strategies, planning, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading stages.



Student Exercise 7

Reflecting on your own writing process. Please describe your usual writing process in ten steps or less. What are the things you do between the time you are given an assignment (say two weeks earlier) and the time of submission?

Steps:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

The writing process refers to processes, routines, strategies for problem-solving, reflective practices, and meta-awareness about writing. Students often have **self-limiting or unrealistic** beliefs about their own writing at university. Consider the following facts about writing.



Student Exercise 8

State whether you agree or disagree with each one of the statements:

	Belief about writing	Agree(√) or Disagree (x)
1	Everyone can write better	
2	You learn to write by writing!	
3	Writing is a tool for thinking	
4	Writing is a social process	
5	Writing is a way of building or creating new ideas	
6	Good grammar does not guarantee good writing	
7	Most effective texts have been substantially revised	
8	Revising one required hard work and persistence	

The stages of the writing process are **planning, prewriting, drafting, reflection, peer-review, revising, editing, and proofreading.**



Figure 2.2: The Writing Process

The writing process is not a linear process. It is rather cyclical with recurring lines, meaning that from any stage in the process, you can redo to the previous stage in case of unsatisfactory elements in a specific writing area. Each stage of the process is explained in the following lines.

2.8 Learning Activity 5: Prewriting Strategies

Prewriting strategies pertain to what you do before beginning to write your first draft, including

- Reading the topic/instruction/question closely to understanding the requirements of the task.
- Thinking about and reflecting on the topic/ instruction/question.
- Recognising your own opinions and/or feelings about the topic.
- Gathering initial data/content/evidence.

The required information can be gathered through **research**. The latter is important for three reasons:

- It allows you to develop ideas.
- It allows you to refine your ideas.
- It allows you to support your ideas.

After gathering the needed information, it should be evaluated for **reliability, appropriateness and relevance**. To **evaluate sources** ask the following questions:

- Where does the evidence come from?
- Who is the source of the information?
- Is the source qualified and competent to address the issue?
- Is the source reliable?
- Is the source biased?
- Is the evidence relevant?
- Is the evidence current?
- Is the evidence representative?

Use a **variety of sources**. Here are some tips:

- Do not rely only on internet sources.
- Do not waste time looking for sources that are not available to you.
- Use Journal articles mostly as they offer much more recent sources in scholarly/scientific information and know about the key journals in your field.

When using **the Internet**, you must be discerning of the online information you use. Although the internet is a useful means of accessing information, it is not regulated and anyone can publish anything online at any time.

Planning

After gathering the preliminary information on the topic, you can now plan for the writing. Planning means creating an overview of or setting in advance the details of the writing to do. Planning is important for you to have

- a clear main claim/purpose/argument/point
- a complete view of the topic
- enough research
- a clear and logical first draft

Planning can be done through

- brainstorming
- freewriting
- outlining
- mindmapping

For example:

- **Mindmapping** allows you to create a visual, diagrammatic representation of the most important ideas to be discussed in an essay.
- Essay Outlining is making a point form, a linear or prose summary of the main ideas.

Drafting

Drafting refers to the act of composing the first draft, by 'filling in' the outline, the mindmap, the brainstormed information into a text, or sorting and reorganising the product of your freewriting into a text. Drafting means:

- Putting your ideas into complete thoughts, such as sentences and paragraphs.
- Organising your ideas in a way that allows the reader to understand your message.
- Focusing on which ideas or topics to include in the piece of writing.
- Composing an introduction to the piece.
- Developing rough paragraphs.
- Completing a "rough draft."

For effective drafting, do the following:

- Begin the process of drafting a piece of writing with an analysis of the prewriting.
- Use your prewriting notes to determine a focus for the piece.
- Narrow narrowing the focus of the topic and perhaps identify a purpose for the piece.
- Focus should be on logical connections between topics.
- Compose the body of a piece of writing by including detail sentences related to the topic sentence, or by organising your writing into paragraphs. Each paragraph should include its own topic sentence.
- Create smooth transitions between paragraphs are important in creating a cohesive piece of writing, no matter the subject.
- Keep referring to your prewriting to remain on track and ensure that the piece of writing maintains its focus.

Your aim should be to complete a full rough draft as early as possible without necessarily focusing on fixing writing, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors. These will be dealt with later. Focus on broad ideas first.

More tips for drafting effectively

Find a quiet time and space to concentrate on writing your draft. If you are writing your essay with the television on, with loud music, with your cell phone ringing, and with three friends talking to you, you might find it difficult to focus your attention on the task of completing a draft of your essay.

- Try to type your essay in MSWord from the beginning. Avoid hand writing an essay before typing it into the computer. MSWord can be useful in identifying spelling errors, easily deleting, and inserting information.
- Start with any part of the essay. You do not have to start with the introduction.
- Do not focus on correcting mistakes. In most cases, you will be the only one to see the first draft of your essay. There will be enough time for revision before any other person can read it. Focus on letting your ideas flow.
- Use an outline or mindmap of your major ideas to maintain a sense of direction and remain organised.
- Focus on broad ideas: the main points, the organisation, and the support and development of ideas.

Reflection

Reflecting means looking back in time carefully or analytically to think about past actions, words, experiences, and images, to elicit any errors or mistakes. It means reliving past actions, thoughts, and experiences, for purposes of self-evaluation and future improvement. When you reflect over your writing, you relive your decisions, thoughts, actions, as you were writing to understand your writing and yourself as a student writer.

Reflection is the first step of revision, which is dealt with later in this manual. When reflecting, ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I addressed the topic?
- Have I kept to the topic throughout?
- Have I included any irrelevant/unnecessary information?
- Have I made the purpose/aim of the essay made clear to the reader?
- Have I left out any important information or are there “holes” in the argument/essay?

Peer Review

Peer review refers to any activity where one student provides feedback to another on their work. The following are some of the benefits of peer review:

- You can develop your analytical skills.
- You improve your revision, editing and proofreading skills.
- You learn how to decide which advice to take as a writer.
- You become more comfortable with various editorial processes, which you may encounter in your academic or professional careers.

It is important to be clear on why you are engaging in peer review and on how the process meets your broader academic writing development goals. As such, your aim should not only be to pass an essay writing assignment, but also to grow as a writer.

Revising

Revising is done by rearranging, adding, or deleting content, and by making the tone, style, and content, to meet the requirements of academic writing. Revising aims to improve the draft by making changes at the level of ideas, structure, coherence and cohesion.

Revision aims to address the **high order of concerns** by asking the following questions:

- Have I addressed the topic?
- Have I kept to the topic throughout?
- Have I included any irrelevant/unnecessary information?
- Have I made the purpose/aim of the essay made clear to the reader?
- Have I left out any important information or are there “holes” in the argument/essay?

Revision seeks to achieve coherence and cohesion.

- Coherence refers to whether or not a piece of writing “makes sense” and to the logic of the writing.
- Cohesion refers to whether or not a piece of writing “flows” and to the ease with which that writing can be read.
- Text unity (coherence and cohesion) is created in three ways:

- repetition of key terms
- substitution of key terms with pronouns or other words
- signposting / linking words/cohesive devices

Tips for effective revising

- Do not submit the first draft you have completed. Revise your draft to make it more acceptable and effective. Even professors submit their writing to editors before submission. Please set time aside for revision and do it.
- Revision, editing, and proofreading, do not mean the same thing. Revision focuses on improving all aspects of the piece of writing, including the argument or main point, structure, support, and evidence. Revision also means rewriting parts of the piece of writing or whole of it. Editing refers to the action of identifying and removing irrelevant materials, inserting missing material, and moving paragraphs or sentences around for logic and clarity. Proofreading focuses on correcting grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.
- The great American writer Ernest Hemingway once said that he rewrote the first part of his novel *A Farewell to Arms* at least 50 times and rewrote the ending of the novel 39 times. Hemingway revised so much not because he was a bad writer but because he was a good writer.

Editing

Once you are satisfied with the content of your document (as a whole and in specific parts), you can then begin editing. Editing involves identifying and removing irrelevant materials, inserting missing material, and moving paragraphs or sentences around for logic and clarity. It focuses on structure or organisation.

To edit effectively:

- Read each paragraph and sentence closely and evaluate its function in the paragraph or the piece of writing.
- See if the sentence can be rewritten differently or more effectively
- Check for connections between paragraphs and sentences to see if they can be improved.
- Assess each paragraph or sentence through questions such as
 - Have I used the correct vocabulary?
 - Is the register appropriate?
 - Can the sentence structure be improved or made clearer or more effective?
 - Have I corrected grammatical errors, such as subject-verb agreement, run-on sentences, wordiness, and incomplete sentences?
 - Have I checked for and corrected spelling and punctuation errors?

Editing aims to address **middle-order concern** by asking the following questions:

- Can any ideas be clarified/expanded upon?
- Could ideas be arranged more logically?
- Does each new idea follow logically from the previous one?
- Are there clear links between paragraphs and sections?
- Is the essay logically organized and appropriately structured?

Proofreading

Proofreading is the final step of the writing process, which check for and corrects grammar, spelling and punctuation errors. These constitute the **lower-order of concerns** to be addressed last.

To proofread effectively:

- Read each sentence aloud visually inspecting the spelling and sentence structure to identify mistakes that your eye can't always see.
- Allow some time between the time you finish the draft and proofreading to return to the piece of writing with a fresh perspective
- Ask a friend or a writing consultant to read over your work to check for errors as an additional strategy
- Do not rely on your computer's spell check to correct all the spelling errors, as it cannot identify errors such as
 - 'We ends this paper by ...' → 'We end ...'
 - 'organize' (American English) → 'organise' (South African English).



Student Exercise 9

Please read the text '*SA school libraries in crisis*' (IOL, 2016) and rewrite paragraphs 1 to 4 of the passage correctly in academic language in the space below. Click [here](#) to access the text.



Student Exercise 10

Referring (remember or remind yourself) to the text 'The Happiness Factor', read previously, write your own three-paragraph essay on one of the following topics. Note that the length of a paragraph can range between five and ten lines. Remember to revise and edit your work paying particular attention to the audience, purpose, context and register.

1. Compare two jobs you have had. What elements in the jobs provided you with the most pleasure?
2. Define personal happiness, and give examples to support your definition.
3. Define social trust. Break the topic down into categories, and list examples for each category. For instance, you could write about trust in the government, trust in the police, and trust in one's neighbours.

2.9 Learning Activity 6: Argumentative Essay writing

Argumentation

People use argument in their daily lives. For instance, at home, you might argue about the distribution of work, providing examples to support your point. At university, students can argue for a better cafeteria or Wi-Fi connectivity. At work, women can argue for equal salaries with men.

Essay topic

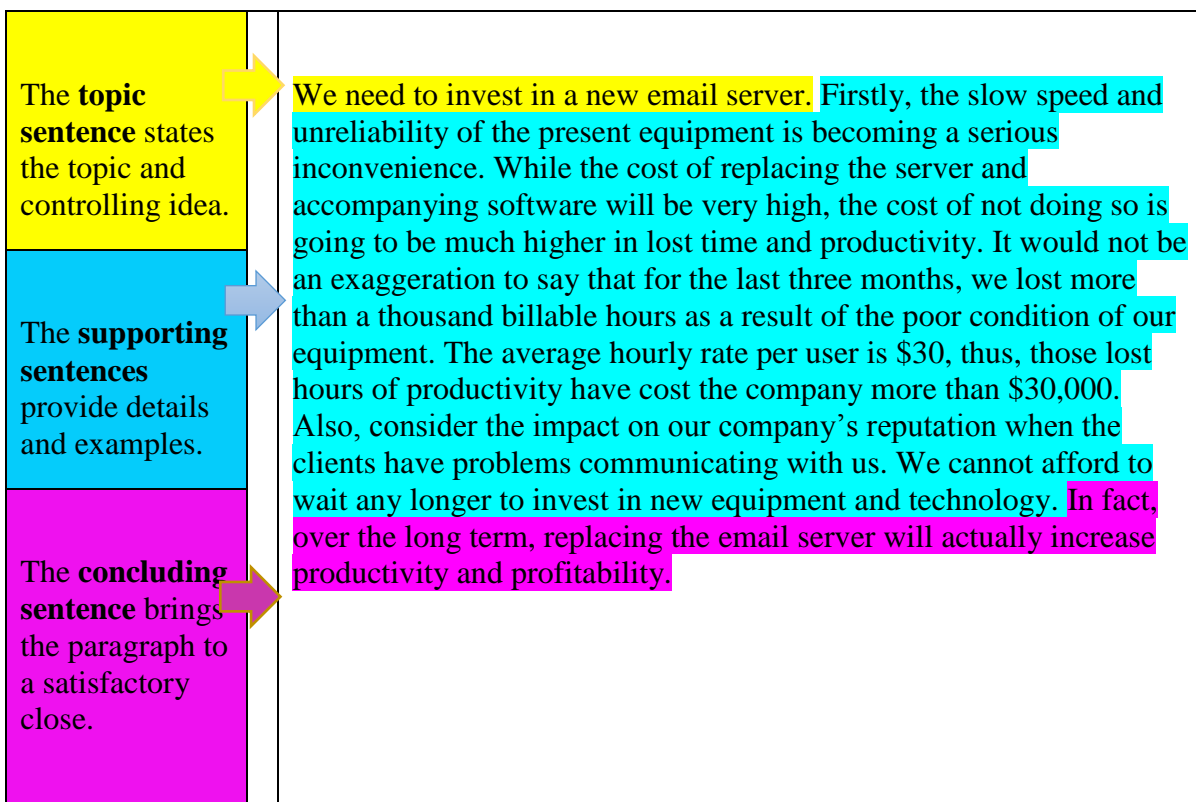
Higher education should be free in South Africa. State whether you agree or disagree with this statement and provide three reasons for your position.

'Higher education should be free in South Africa' is the thesis statement or claim. Each one of the reasons you may provide will constitute a supporting idea or sub-claim. Let us start by defining what an argument is. Argument is taking a position on an issue, and try to prove or defend your position. Using effective argument strategies can help you convince somebody that your point of view is a valid one.

Important Note: Many students feel reluctant to take a stand on an issue. They may feel that it is too personal or impolite to do so. However, in academic writing, it is perfectly acceptable, and even desirable to state an argument in a direct manner and then support it with evidence.

The argumentative essay

Network administrator Bongo Manana uses argument writing in this excerpt from a memo to her director.



Adapted from Gaetz et al. (2018). Academic English : reading and writing across the disciplines. Harlow, England: Pearson

Developing a thesis statement for argument

In a thesis statement of an argumentative essay, state your position on the issue. It should be debatable and should not be simply a fact or a statement of opinion. For example:

Topic

Controlling idea (the writer's position)

Most companies' CEOs in South Africa are overpaid for very substandard work.

Consider the following differences between fact, opinion and argument:

Fact	In South African restaurants, people generally tip for service. (This is a fact. It cannot be debated).
Opinion	I think that tipping for service should be abolished in South African restaurants. (This is a statement of opinion. Nobody can deny that you feel this way. Therefore, do not use phrases such as <i>in my opinion, I think, I believe</i> in your thesis statement).
Argument	Tipping for service should be abolished In South African restaurants. (This is a debatable statement).

Adapted from Gaetz et al. (2018). *Academic English : reading and writing across the disciplines*. Harlow, England: Pearson



Student Exercise 11

Evaluate the following statements. Write F for Fact or O for Opinion.

- In our province, many students drop out of university. _____
- I think that Johannesburg needs more police officers. _____
- Our mayor should resign for three reasons. _____
- The cost of petrol is too high. _____
- I don't think the police, firefighters and nurses should be allowed to strike _____

2.10 Learning Activity 7: Developing supporting sentences or sub-claims

For a strong, logical and reasoned argument, you should support you main points or claims with facts, examples, and statistics. You can also include the following:

- **Quotation of informed sources:** these can be words, ideas, or thoughts from experts in the field.
- **Consider logical consequences:** you can state the long term consequences of a proposed solution. For example, if you oppose any increase in the price of petrol, you might want to argue that it will result in an increase in the price of food and transport and result in more misery for the consumers.
- **Acknowledge opposing viewpoints:** this is also referred to as counter-claim. Anticipating and responding to the views of your opposition can strengthen your position. You can concede that some of the aspects of the opposing views are valid to a point and refute some of the strongest views of their argument.

Making an emotional appeal

Generally, an effective argument may appeal to the reader's reason, but it can also appeal to his/her emotions. However, emotional appeal should be used sparingly. If you use emotionally charged words such as *sell-out, tsotsi*, or if you appeal to base instinct such as fear or prejudice, then you may seriously undermine your argument. Review the following examples of emotional appeal:

Overemotional	Crazy women go to the fertility clinics, have multiple births, and then feed off the state like leeches. The innocent premature infants, facing chronic illness and blindness, can end up needing lifelong medical care.
Reasonable and more neutral	Women visiting fertility clinics may underestimate potential problems. If multiple births ensue, the parents may face financial difficulties. Additionally, premature infants can suffer from a variety of long-term medical problems.

Adapted from Gaetz et al. (2018). *Academic English : reading and writing across the disciplines*. Harlow, England: Pearson

Important Note: While writing your argument, avoid the following mistakes.

- a) **Do not make generalisations:** If you begin a statement with Everyone knows or It is common knowledge, then the reader may mistrust what you say. You cannot possibly know what everyone else knows or does not know. It is better to refer to specific sources.
- *Generalisation:* Children in the suburbs are spoiled brats.
 - *Better:* Parents in the suburb tend to overindulge their children.
- b) Do not make exaggerated claims: Ensure that your arguments are plausible.
- *Exaggerated:* If corporal punishment is reinstated physical abuse will soar in school across the country.
 - *Better:* If corporal punishment is reinstated physical abuse may increase in school across the country.

Format of an argumentative essay

<u>Topic</u>	<i>Can be a thesis statement</i>
<u>Introduction</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Description of the situation/context</i> • <i>Explanation of why it is important</i> • <i>Statement of main point of view</i> • <i>Presentation of organisation of essay</i>
<u>Paragraph 1</u>	<p>Sub-claim 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>statement of main point/reason 1</i> • <i>Explanation of point</i> • <i>Support of point with evidence/examples</i> • <i>Evaluation and closing of point</i>
<u>Paragraph 2</u>	<p>Sub-claim 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>statement of main point/reason 2</i> • <i>Explanation of point</i> • <i>Support of point with evidence/examples</i> • <i>Evaluation and closing of point</i>

<u>Paragraph 3</u>	<i>Counter-Claim (concession and/or refutation):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>statement of opposing view</i> • <i>Explanation of point/ concession</i> • <i>Support of point with evidence/examples</i> • <i>Evaluation, refutation, and closing of point</i>
<u>Conclusion</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Summary of main all sub-claims</i> • <i>Evaluation of the opposing views</i> • <i>Statement of own point of view</i>
<u>References</u>	<i>Only list the sources used in essay (in full)</i>

Table 2.3



Student Exercise 12

Read each of the following thesis statements, and think of two sub-claims and one counter claim for each of them. Use the type of support suggested in the parentheses.

- a) Volunteer work should be mandatory in all high schools (Logical consequence)

- b) Online dating is a great way to meet potential mates. (Acknowledge opposing views)

- c) Children should be spanked. (Emotional appeal)

- d) High school dropout rates are higher for girls. (Logical consequence)



Student Exercise 13

Choose one of the thesis statements with the associated sub-claims and counter claim, and write a short argumentative essay. When you are done, swap essays with another student through any tutor or etutor groups to give each other feedback.



Student Exercise 14

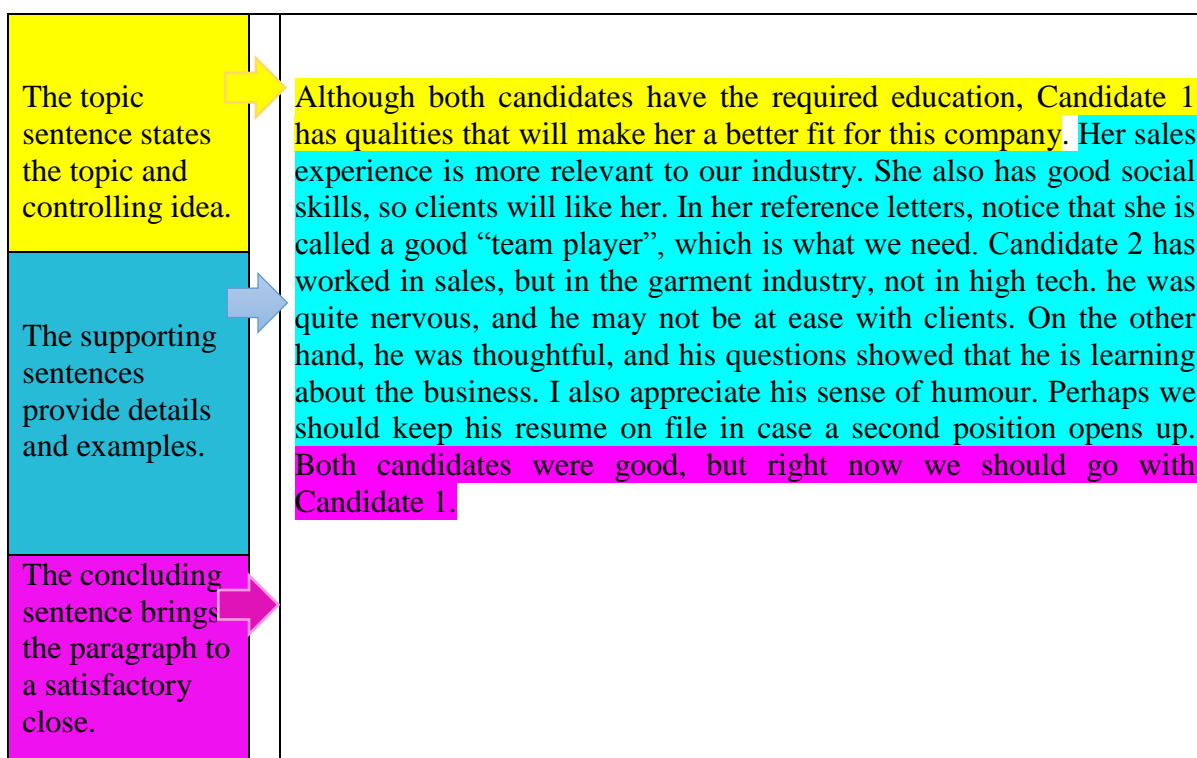
Bearing in mind the text Slum Tourism by Eric Weiner on page 280 of the prescribed book, compare and contrast a slum tourism and regular tourism.

When you want to decide between options, you compare and contrast. You compare to find similarities and contrast to find differences. The exercise of comparing and contrasting can help you make judgements about things. It can also help you better understand familiar things.

People use comparison and contrast in their daily lives. For instance, at home, you might explain to your father or partner why a laptop is more useful than a tablet. At university, students might have to compare and contrast two courses. In workplaces, managers might compare various marketing plans to highlight the advantages and disadvantages.

2.11 Learning Activity 8: The comparison and contrast essay

Ofentse Mabate works in public relations. In the next memo, she compares two job candidates. To respect each person's privacy, she has numbered the candidates.



Adapted from Gaetz et al. (2018). Academic English : reading and writing across the disciplines. Harlow, England: Pearson

Comparison and contrast patterns

Comparison and contrast essays follow two common patterns.

- **Point by point or zig-zag format:** present one point about Topic A and then present the same point about Topic B. Keep following this pattern until you have a few points for each topic. Go back and forth from one side to the other like tennis players hitting a ball back and forth across the net.
- **Topic by topic or block format:** present all your points about one topic, and then present all of your points about the second topic. Offer one side and then the other side, just as opposing lawyers would do in the closing arguments of a court case.



Student Exercise 15

In a short essay, compare and contrast two very different places that you have visited. You can compare two neighbourhoods, two towns, or rural areas with an urban area.

2.12 Learning Activity 9: Cause and Effect

Cause and effect writing explains why an event happened or what the consequences of such an event were. A cause and effect essay can focus on causes, effects, or both. People often analyse causes or effects of something. For example, at home parents might explain why breaking the law is a bad idea. At university, a tutor might explain to students the reasons of having a study schedule. In the workplace, a manager might explain to workers the reasons for downsizing.

The cause and effect essay

While writing a cause and effect essay focus on two tasks:

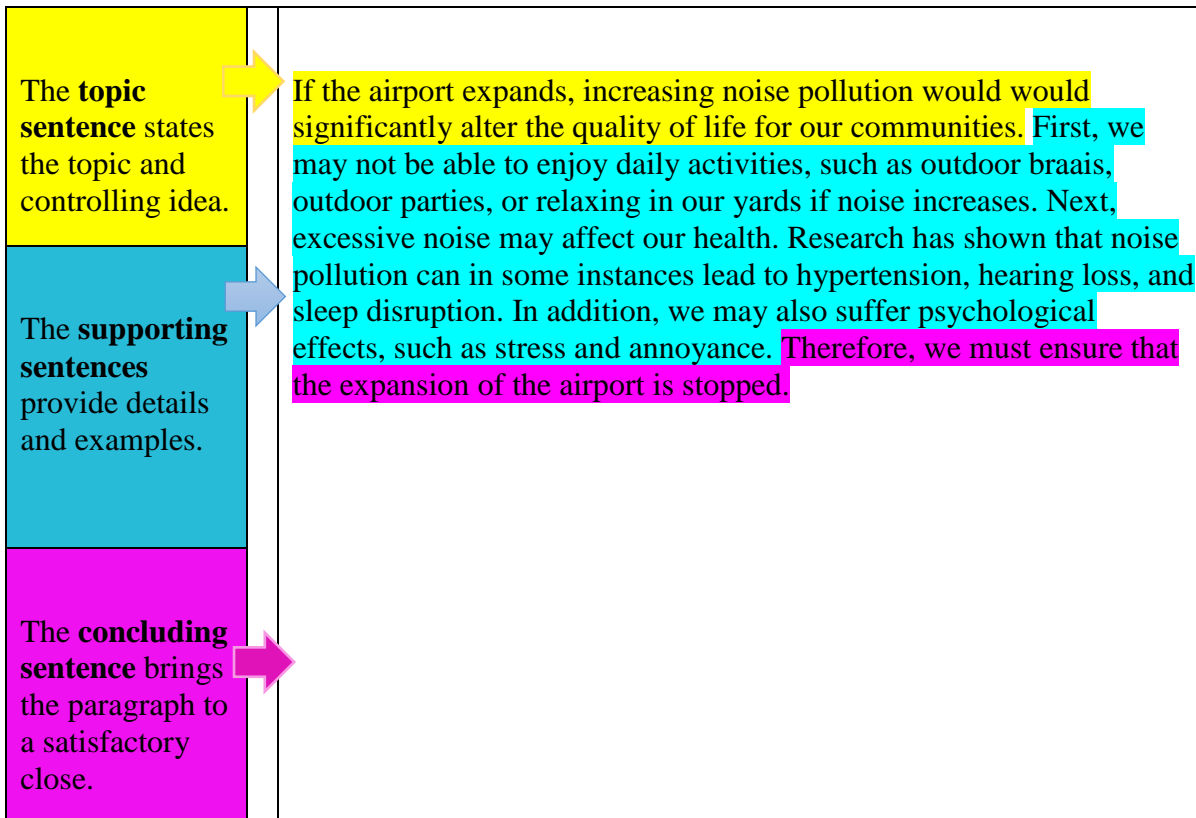
- 1) Indicate whether you are focusing on causes, effects, or both. If you decide to focus both on the causes and effects, ensure that your thesis statement indicates your purpose to the reader.
- 2) Ensure that your causes and effects are valid. You should determine real causes and effects and not simply list things that happened before or after the event. Also, verify that your assumptions are logical.

For example:

Illogical	The air conditioner stopped working because the weather was cold. (This is illogical because cold weather cannot stop an air conditioner from working)
Logical	The air conditioner stopped working because the filters needed replacing and the thermostat needed adjusting.

Example of a cause and effect essay

In a petition to stop the expansion of O.R. Tambo airport, Benoni residents explain the effects of noise pollution on the quality of life of the surrounding communities.



Adapted from Gaetz et al. (2018). Academic English : reading and writing across the disciplines. Harlow, England: Pearson

Example of cause and effect essay plan

Question: What are the causes and effect of workplace hostility?

- Jealousy and competition
- Demanding boss
- Employee burnout

Thesis statement:

A hostile workplace, which can lead to several problems, is often triggered by jealousy, an unpleasant boss, or employee burnout.

Supporting ideas:

Paragraph 1:

A hostile work environment may be caused by employee arrogance or envy.

- Some groups are tight-knit and do not easily accept newcomers.
- Some employees have high opinions of themselves.
- Co-workers may feel jealous of a new employee's expertise.

Paragraph 2:

Another reason for a hostile workplace is a strict boss.

- Some employees may be frightened by a difficult boss.
- Some bosses may overreact if an employee makes a mistake.
- A strict boss generates a lot of stress for employees.

Paragraph 3:

People in stressful workplaces may experience physical and psychological stress.

- Some people may suffer from insomnia.
- Some employees may develop burnout or depression.

With this plan, you can develop complete sentences and use transition words or expressions for your ideas to flow smoothly. The following transitional expressions are useful for showing causes and effects:

To show causes	To show effects
For this reason	Accordingly
The first cause	As a result
The most important cause	Consequently

Important note: Before starting to write the essay, you need to brainstorm as many causes and corresponding effects as possible. Then, develop an essay plan, before starting to expand on the ideas and using linking or transitional words or expressions.



Student Exercise 16

Write a short essay on some of the causes and effects of workplace conflict. Develop a plan and then expand on the ideas. When you are done, swap drafts with a classmate and give each other feedback.

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3 Learning Unit 3: Genre Awareness - Essay types Part 2

3.1 Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this learning unit students will be able to: Describe a variety of reading skills and strategies that are required in academic studies.

- Practice and apply the selected reading skills to chosen texts.
- Apply the reading strategies in their specific disciplines.
- Identify at least two academic genres: Discussion, and Cause and Effect.
- Identify what language is used and how the language is used.
- Recognize the moves and structure of the texts.
- Demonstrate rhetorical awareness of the texts.

3.2 Introduction

We engage with genre on a daily basis. You might be familiar with genre from films such as romantic comedy, horror and thrillers. In most cases we can work out the genre from the style of the film. For example, a horror movie has a distinctive ominous type of music, particular play with lighting, and preference for the use of darker shades of colour. Our knowledge of genre helps us to make choices regarding our preference for entertainment. Genre in writing is something we have less choice over: we are constantly bombarded with different genres of writing in our daily lives. It is highly likely that in the workplace you will be expected to engage with, respond to and write in different genres. It is therefore imperative for any student to develop an understanding of genre. The sections covered in this unit are intended to help you develop a “genre awareness” and in so doing, help improve your confidence when you are tasked to write within various genres. Let us begin by unpacking the notion of “genre awareness”.

3.3 Learning Activity 1: Genre awareness and types of genres

Click on the link below to watch a short video on the relevance of “genre awareness” to your life as a student. The 3 minute video on genre awareness can be found [here](#). There is a 87 seconds video on the different types of genres [here](#). For example, descriptive writing, expository writing, narrative writing, persuasive writing and so on.

Many accomplished writers argue that genre is *the* most important form or shape to consider when tasked with writing. In fact, developing genre awareness is believed to be the key to successful writing. Valerie Francis supports this argument in her blog, stating that:

“the bottom line is this: genre in writing refers to the kind of Story that is being told. It’s about audience expectation. It’s that simple. For a book to be successful, the author, marketer and reader must all have the same understanding of what kind of a Story is being told.”

The point that is highlighted here is that a writer's choice of genre, spells out the writer's intentions, which sets the reader up for certain expectations. Poor choices obviously suggest a lack of success in writing. As a writer, it is your primary responsibility to understand genre and use this knowledge to make effective choices to suit your writing purposes.

3.4 Learning Activity 2: What is genre?

Genre revolves around two important elements: *social purpose* and *structural patterns*. Collerson (1988), in *Writing for Life*, sums up *genre* well:

We can think of genre as a social process, i.e. as a particular set of activities or a way of doing something [...] these activities are carried out for some purpose. This is true of any genre; it is a social process which has a purpose - some goal that people are working towards. It also has a recognisable structure or pattern. Finally, a genre is something that arises within a particular culture; it is a product of the culture.

The point that is highlighted here is that the structure adopted by the writer, spells out certain social intentions, which sets the reader up for different expectations.

Genre is centred around different structural patterns. The way we structure our texts varies according to three important elements:

1. Why we write (the purpose)
2. Who we write for (the intended audience)
3. What we write about (the topic)

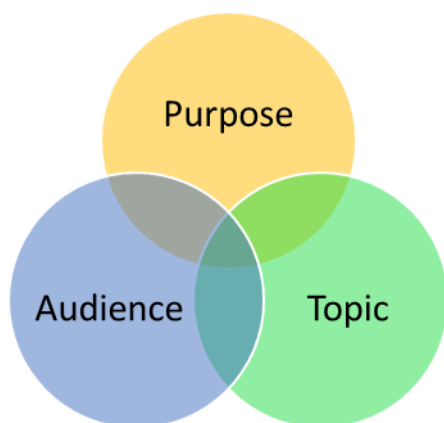


Figure 3.1. 3 elements which underpin writing

In written language, these variations have become predictable patterns, which are known as *genres*. Generally, genres become distinct when their structures are easily recognised. For example, in reading about an undergraduate programme at a distance university such as Unisa, the following two beginning sentences may evoke completely different expectations of the texts:

1. "Once upon a time ..."
2. "The teaching of formal grammar in distance programmes is necessary..."

The first beginning sets the reader up for a form of narrative to follow. The second beginning seems to be setting out an argument.

3.5 E-Tutor Task 1

Identify samples of 3 or 4 different genres of writing. Focus on one of these genres, paying attention to the issues highlighted in the text and the role the writer expects the reader to play. For example, you can focus on a memoir, which is a literary genre. Point out to students that they should be reading thoroughly and particularly following the story line. To show a contrasting genre, expose students to a workplace genre such as a business report. Point out to them that their roles as readers is to obtain very specific information from the text, so that they can skip certain information and skim read. Now expose students to the text openings from the remaining 2 genres you initially selected. Ask students to discuss the expectations that each beginning sets the reader up for.

3.6 Learning Activity 3: Genre: a set of processes

It is quite likely that we may think of the term "genre" as a set of prescribed text structures. Although this understanding may have some relevance, the meaning of genre goes deeper than the mere act of identifying texts. Genre refers to the *processes* that are needed to utilize when producing a text. For example, you might need to explain something, or describe an experience, argue a case or narrate a story.

We may, in addition, confuse the term "genre" with "types" of writing. A type of writing could be a play. Here again, genre goes far deeper than identifying type, extending into the *purposes* of the writing. In fact, it is the purpose of the writing which defines the genre.

Let's look at a simple letter as an example of genre. Think of all the reasons one would need to write a letter:

- **To explain why you could not write a test.**
Typically this type of letter explains in detail, the problem which prevented you from writing the test. It provides factual evidence in the form of dates, times, and even names of people who could verify your situation. It appeals for another opportunity to write the test and thanks the reader in advance.
- **To argue a case for the reimbursement of funds for a product which does not work.**
This type of letter typically provides factual detail in terms of the date the product was purchased, the store or branch at which it was purchased and the price paid for it. It explains the fault of the product, justifying in detail, the need to be reimbursed financially.
- **To apply for a job.**
Typically such a letter responds to an offer of employment from a company. The letter describes the candidate's suitability for the position in terms of their key skills, qualifications and experience. It informs the reader of their availability for an interview, providing further contact information.

- **To thank a sponsor for funds rendered.**

Typically, such a letter is written from a personal standpoint to thank a person and to express gratitude for receipt of such funds. It is written to maintain goodwill and build for the future. It highlights the importance of the contribution to the individual or company.

As we can see, the different social purposes of writing draw on specific genres or patterns of writing.

3.7 E-Tutor Task 2

Find similar examples of academic writing. Prompt students to think of all the social reasons for writing such a piece. Help them to draw relationships between writing purposes, expectations and structure.

3.8 Learning Activity 4: How to recognise “genre”?

In developing your competence as a writer, you should work on building a strong base of linguistic knowledge. The idea is to draw on this core of ideas when making decisions for your own social purposes of writing, as well as when engaging with the writing of others. The following guidelines are useful:

1. How is the text organised?
2. How is the topic developed?
3. What specific grammatical structures are chosen?
4. What kind of vocabulary is used?

How do genres shape our writing?

Let us look next at examples of how texts can be structured so as to set up different expectations on the part of the reader. The first text is a *recount* and the second is an *argument*.

Recount

The purpose of a recount is to tell the reader about a past experience. The emphasis is on what happened. The writer presents a sequence of occurrences, which usually relate to one specific event. The text is then structured using the sequence of time. A recount starts by providing the reader with enough background information to understand the text. The linguistic structure is characterised by the use of verbs such as; It began, after, later, at this time.

Argument

Argument is a genre of writing which persuades the reader to agree with a point of view. The argument begins with a statement clarifying the writer’s position on a topic and provides some background information about the issue. The structure takes the form of a logical sequence of ideas, where points are raised and supported by evidence. The argument ends by summing up the position. Linguistic features include transitions and connecting words which are associated with reason. For example, “in fact”, “but”, “therefore”, “it is this”.

Apart from structure, the language used by the writer is influenced by the writer's choice of genre. There are no set rules for the type of language used typically in different situations, but there are predictable patterns of language which are most likely to be used for each purpose and audience (see Unit 5 for more on this). While personal writing often uses language that expresses emotion, feelings, or opinions, impersonal writing centralises an audience that is distant and unknown. Impersonal writing is characterised by formality and the use of the passive voice.

In the next section, we explore genre more deeply, particularly examining expository writing.

3.9 Learning Activity 4: The genre of expository writing

Did you know that you use expository writing all the time? If you are not sure, have a look at the list below. Have you ever done any of these tasks?

- Explained a process.
- Showed how one event causes other things to happen.
- Divided a topic into categories.
- Explained the meaning of a term or an idea.
- Pointed out-similarities and differences between items.

Most likely you have done some or all of these tasks. Therefore, you have been using expository writing to communicate your ideas. The centrality of expository writing to our daily lives makes it necessary for us to understand it fully. In the discussion which follows, we review the principles underpinning expository writing and apply them in various activities. We start by looking closely at a typical expository writing task.



Student Exercise 1

Expository writing activity

Watch the following video of a speech Nelson Mandela made at the Laureus World Sports Awards 2000 in Monaco.

VIDEO

The 2 minute 44 seconds video is [here](#). In this speech Mandela states, "*Sport can create hope where once there was only despair...*"

Assignment

Using examples from your own experiences, write an essay of about 500 words in which you develop your point of view on the statement above.

Your essay should demonstrate the required conventions regarding structure and layout. This includes forming a thesis statement, clarity of message, taking a clear position and stance, using the appropriate words for the type of essay; cohesion and logical organisation of information, proper paragraphing, correct sentence structure and referencing.

3.10 E-Tutor Task 3

Note the way in which quotations have been used as topics to engage student thinking around expository writing. Identify similar examples of quotes from well-known figures in history, literature, business or politics. A few examples are listed below:

- “Success is most often achieved by those who don’t know that failure is inevitable.” – **Coco Chanel**
- “There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing.” – **Aristotle**
- “Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.” – **T. S. Eliot**
- “Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.” – **Robert Louis Stevenson**

Use the following prompt to engage students in practicing the writing of expository essays.

“....*insert quotation*.....”

Using examples from your own experiences, write an essay of about 500 words in which you develop your point of view on this statement. Your essay should demonstrate the required conventions regarding structure and layout.

3.11 Learning Activity 5: The importance of a thesis driven argument

Although you might be tempted to jump right into organizing your essay, research in this field suggests that a *thesis* should be formed before you attempt to plan and draft your essay (Lester, 2005). Let’s have a closer look at how researchers justify the approach of a *thesis driven strategy*.

Do you know of someone who is weak at telling stories? Do you have difficulty following their train of thought? Do they jump around from point to point? Are they sketchy in some places and unnecessarily detailed on pointless elements? Perhaps they told you the end of the story first, scattering details from the middle to the end? Were you frustrated because the story did not flow very well? It is possible that you were left with many questions.

Just as a personal story can be out of order and confusing, an essay can also fall into the same trap of being a disorganized mess. This is why a thesis statement is needed by writers. It provides a particular focus for an essay and helps to organize the writer’s thoughts and ideas. It signposts the point you want to establish in your essay, signalling the essay’s destination. For these important reasons, a thesis statement should be formed before you attempt to organize your essay (McLean, 2012). However, keep an open mind, because you may need to revise as you develop your essay.

How to develop a Thesis Statement

An interesting way to develop a thesis statement is to focus on a central idea which stems from your chosen topic. You then have to form a particular opinion, and then turn that into a *controlling idea*—this then becomes the main idea upon which you build your thesis.

Students sometimes confuse a thesis statement with the topic itself. A thesis statement is actually your interpretation of the topic. When you are given a topic, ask yourself, “What do I want to say about it?” Asking and then answering this question is a good way to form a thesis that is specific, powerful and self-assured.

Your thesis statement should embody the following characteristics:

- It should be about one sentence long and appear towards the end of your introduction.
- It should be specific and focus on points that you are able to demonstrate in the body.
- It should forecast the content of the essay.
- It should suggest how you will organize your information (McLean, 2012).

The qualities of a strong Thesis Statement

The following is a summary of the qualities of a strong thesis statement as portrayed by McLean (2012):

- **Specificity:** A thesis statement must concentrate on a specific area of a general topic.
- **Precision:** A strong thesis statement must be precise enough to allow for a coherent argument and to remain focused on the topic.
- **Ability to be argued:** A thesis statement must present a relevant and specific argument. A factual statement often is not considered arguable.
- **Ability to be demonstrated:** For any claim you make in your thesis, you must be able to provide reasons and examples for your opinion.
- **Forcefulness:** A thesis statement that is forceful shows readers that you are, in fact, making an argument. The tone is assertive and takes a stance that others might oppose.
- **Confidence:** In addition to using force in your thesis statement, you must also use confidence in your claim. Taking an authoritative stance on the matter persuades your readers to have faith in your argument and open their minds to what you have to say.

Now that you have read about the contents of a good thesis statement, let us look next at what to avoid when creating your own thesis. The following set of guidelines is summarised from (McLean, 2012):

A thesis is weak when:

- it is simply a declaration of your subject or a description of what you will discuss in your essay.
- it makes an unreasonable or outrageous claim or insults the opposing side.
- it contains an obvious fact or something that no one can disagree with or provides a ‘dead end.’
- the statement is too broad.

Examples of Appropriate Thesis Statements

- Exposing children from an early age to the dangers of drug abuse is a sure method of preventing future drug addicts.
- In today's crumbling job market, a high school diploma is not significant enough education to land a stable, and lucrative job.



Student Exercise 2

Read the following thesis statements which are reproduced from McLean (2012). Using the table provided, identify each as weak or strong. For those that are weak, list the reasons why. Then revise the weak statements so that they conform to the requirements of a strong thesis.

Thesis statements	Weak or Strong	Possible revision
1. The subject of this paper is my experience with ferrets as pets.		
2. The government must expand its funding for research on renewable energy resources in order to prepare for the impending end of oil.		
3. In this essay, I will give you lots of reasons why slot machines should not be legalized in Baltimore.		
4. Because many children's toys have potential safety hazards that could lead to injury, it is clear that not all children's toys are safe.		
5. My experience with young children has taught me that I want to be a disciplinary parent because I believe that a child without discipline can		

A thesis statement is written in any of the genres that you have read about in the units.

As shown in Unit 2, on the writing process, writing can be done in stages. To begin, you can start with the prewriting stage. The following guidelines, which are summarised from Lester (2005: 214) are useful in planning and drafting an expository essay.

3.12 Learning Activity 6: Prewriting stage

Guidelines	Suggested detailed activities
Establish your topic and be clear about your purpose—in other words, be clear about why you are writing.	To inform and persuade the audience.
Identify your audience. Knowing your audience will help you determine what details to include.	Gather details that will support your purpose by asking yourself the following about your topic: who, what, when, where, why, and how?
Decide on the best method of organizing your essay.	Summarize why you decided to start your own business and explain what you need in order to get started.

Drafting Stage

Compose a one-sentence thesis statement that clearly expresses your main idea.	Use this statement to guide you through the drafting stage.
Discard any details that do not support your thesis statement.	
Use transitional words and phrases, such as <i>first</i> , <i>however</i> , <i>because</i> , <i>on the other hand</i> , <i>after</i> , <i>finally</i> , <i>most important</i> , <i>next</i> , and <i>since</i> , to show how the ideas in your essay are related and organized.	See Unit 5 for more details on linking devices.

Organizing Your Writing

Your expository writing should reflect a clear organizational pattern, so as not to confuse your reader and to sustain their interest. The discussion below, which is summarised from McLean (2012) provides you with three useful strategies to help you to organize your body paragraphs:

1. Chronological order
2. Order of importance
3. Spatial order

Chronological order

Chronological ordering of ideas is most suitable for expository writing. It involves arranging the events as they happened, or will happen if you are giving instructions. This method requires you to use words such as *first*, *second*, *then*, *after that*, *later*, and *finally*. These transition words guide you and your reader through the paper as you expand your thesis.

Order of Importance

One of the strategic ways to build your essay's strength is to start with the least and move to the most important point. This is not necessarily a hard and fast rule. In the case where your essay contains a thesis that is highly debatable, it is advisable to begin with your most important supporting point. Starting with the most important point can help to captivate your readers and compel them to continue reading in a persuasive piece of writing. The following key transitional words are effective with this method of organization: *most importantly*, *almost as importantly*, *just as importantly*, and *finally*.

Spatial Order

When you use the strategy of spatial order you explain or describe objects as they are arranged around you in your space. In a sense, you create a picture for your reader. The viewpoint you present is from what is around you. Using spatial order does not imply randomness. On the contrary, your view reflects an orderly, logical progression. You need to give your reader clear signals to follow from place to place. The strategic part about this method is your choice of an interesting starting point and being able to guide them in an orderly trajectory.

In Unit 5 there are guidelines on how to write paragraphs. Chapter 3 of the prescribed book has information about organizing your essay.



Student Exercise 4

At some point in your career, you may have to file a complaint with your human resources department. Using chronological order, describe the events that led up to your filing the grievance. Make sure you position the events in the order that they occurred. Use key transition words to logically lay out your ideas. Remember that the more logical your complaint is, the more likely you will be assisted.

3.13. E-Tutor Task 4

Introduce students to the topic of sub-genre and macro-genre. Then go on to illustrate their respective meanings using examples from videos on YouTube.

Start by explaining that sub-genre is a subordinate of genre. An example is that fiction is a genre, but science-fiction is a sub-genre: it challenges what is possible in reality.

Ask students to watch the following 8 minute [video](#) for more clarity.

Explain that macrogenre relates to the merging of two or more basic genres into a more complex one. For example, when a horror story is told/written as a romantic comedy, or a historical documentary is converted into an action movie. Using examples from Youtube explain how the merging of genres might offer interesting creative opportunities.

The following 3 minute 47 second [video](#) is example of macrogenre: a serious story is turned into a parody.

3.14 Learning Activity 7: The genre of discussion

In this section, we introduce you to the genre of *discussion*. We first unpack the concept of discussion and then provide you with a systematic structure to support your writing endeavours.

General questions about discussions

Answer the following questions

- Why would someone write a discussion?
- What type of person do you think writes a discussion?
- Who is it written for?
- Who would read a discussion?
- Why would they read it?
- What would you expect the reader to do after reading it?
- In what situation would someone else need to write a Discussion?

In what situation do you think you might need to write or read one?

Reproduced from Knapp & Callaghan (1989: 15)

In a short paragraph, draw a relationship between the text and its social purpose.

3.15. e-Tutor Task 5

Find similar examples of videos/audios of parliamentary speeches or political debates. Using the framework of questions as a guide, prompt students to draw relationships between each of the texts and their social purposes.

3.16 Learning Activity 8: What is Discussion?

Discussion is a genre of writing which provides the reader with two or more different points of view. It generally concludes with a recommendation based on the evidence. (Knapp & Callaghan, 1989: 8). In most descriptions, the social context is highlighted as the central

premise of the genre of discussion. For example, Knapp & Callaghan (1989:11) describe genre as a “powerful means for decision making and conflict resolution in our society”. The genre of discussion is used extensively in decision-making environments like courts of law, parliament and public meetings. Its use in the corporate world happens mainly through board and staff meetings. It is also used widely in everyday situations, such as in general household decisions. These uses reinforce the social purpose of discussions.

Discussion characteristically happens in both oral and written forms, as well as in both formal and informal ways. Examples of discussion in oral mode are classroom discussions, debates, talk shows, etc. Examples of discussion in the written mode include newspaper articles, essays, feasibility studies, etc. When certain discussions are presented in the oral mode, they are generally written first. For example, parliamentary debates, political statements, media and panel discussions and judicial summaries (Knapp & Callaghan, 1989). An important point made here is that in most societies, the written mode is more powerful than the oral mode. For this reason, we will focus only on the written mode, going forward.

How is the discussion structured? The generic structure used for discussion involves four key stages (Knapp & Callaghan, 1989: 9):

- Stating the Issue: the main idea is stated.
- Supporting Point: the supporting point is presented.
- Contrastive Point: the contradictory idea is presented.
- Recommendation/comment: This text ends with a recommendation/comment on the topic.

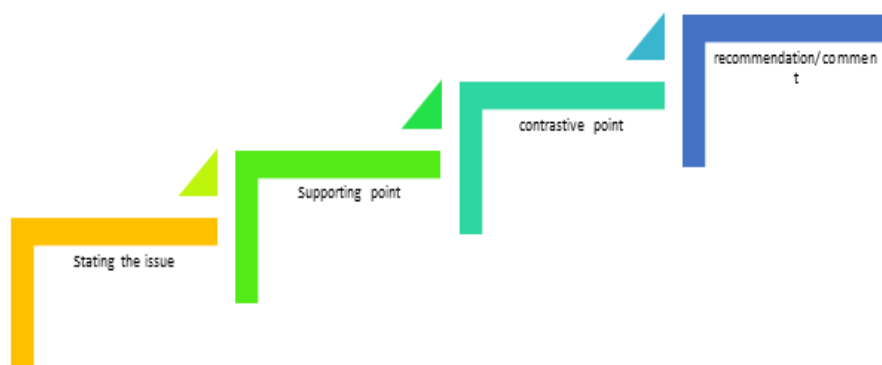


Figure 3.2: Four key stages of discussion (Knapp & Callaghan, 1989: 9).

The discussion is a process in which the writer attempts to show the reader the meeting point between two different ideas. The aim of the writer is to accurately convey the understanding between the two differences. In a social sense, discussion can serve as an effective way to settle down friction and differences in thought and perception. The stages of the Discussion facilitate the logical sequencing of arguments. Sequencing arguments in such a way facilitate easier following. The writer displays a sense of being organised.

Let's practice

The following paragraph which is reproduced from Bailey (2006: 84), discusses the environmental effects of deforestation. Read it carefully and try to identify the polarised viewpoints. The generic structure is presented below.

Lomborg (2001) claims that the danger of extinction of species has been exaggerated. He says that the number of species had been expected to decline dramatically within the next half century, but maintains that this is unlikely: 'Species . . . seem more resilient than expected.' He points out that in the eastern USA, although 98% of the original forests have been cleared, only one forest bird became extinct in the process. Against this, Brooks (2001) feels that Lomborg is ignoring the true rate of forest loss and the related extinction of species: 'The ongoing wave of extinctions, due primarily to deforestation in the moist tropics, has been widely documented.' It seems that Lomborg, as a statistician, is too dependent on optimistic data, and is ignoring the widespread concerns of wildlife experts.

This example of discussion presents the two polarised viewpoints: on the one hand, the exaggerated danger of the extinction of the species and on the other, the real concerns of risks brought about by deforestation. It is a case which needs to be discussed from two points. The generic structure which is used is as follows:

- Stating the Issue: In the first sentence, a claim is made that the danger of extinction of species has been exaggerated.
- Supporting Point: The second and third sentences explain and therefore support Lomborg's (2001) claim.
- Contrastive Point: The fourth sentence shows the balance. It gives the contradictory idea by Brooks (2001), that the true rate of forest loss is being ignored. The sixth sentence and seventh sentences add weight to the contradictory idea by Brooks (2001)
- Recommendation: In this text, the writer offers a comment on Lomborg (2001) and presents an opinion.



Student Exercise 5

Complete the following paragraph, which discusses air pollution, to give a recommendation/comment (Bailey, 2006: 85)

1. According to Lomborg (2001), air quality is improving in rich countries. He gives the example of London, where he claims that the air is cleaner now than it has been since 1585, thanks to decreases in smoke and sulphur dioxide. Brooks (2001), however, argues that Lomborg is 'ignoring the more recent global rise in toxic contaminants, now found at high concentrations even in the remote reaches of the Arctic.'
It appears that
2. Read the following example of discussion. The title of the passage is *advantages and disadvantages of the internet you must be aware of*. Use the table below to illustrate its generic structure.

The text is available on this website: www.buzzle.com/articles/advantages-disadvantages-internet.html

List in the box as many ideas as possible for and against the growth of the Internet. Complete the generic structure below:

Advantages of the growth of the internet	Disadvantages of the growth of the internet

<i>Generic Structure</i>		
Stating the Issue		
Supporting Points		
Contrastive Points		
Recommendation/comment		



Student Exercise 6

Now that you have been introduced to the Discussion genre and its social context through first hand experiences, reinforce your understanding by returning to the questions posed to you after viewing the speech made by Obama. Reflect on your answers.

3.17 Learning Activity 9: The genre of cause and effect writing

In this section, you will broaden your understanding of the genre of cause and effect writing. We first review a few basic principles and then look into ways of incorporating graphic tools into the planning of a cause and effect essay. We additionally look at making inferences and drawing conclusions in a cause and effect essay. Practicing these skills will improve your confidence to write an effective cause and effect essay.

The main principle underpinning a cause and effect essay is that of explaining the causes or the effects of a situation. A cause and effect first presents a reason or motive for a particular event, situation or trend and then explains the results or consequences of that situation. In other

words, as a writer you provide the reasons which create certain results in a situation. The following are examples of cause and effect topics:

- Causes of global warming (multiple factors leading to global warming).
- Effects of eating unhealthy food (the many effects of a situation).
- Causes of substance abuse by the youth

Writing thesis statements



Student Exercise 7

Bearing in mind the ideas you have been introduced to in earlier sections of this unit, write a thesis statement for each of the following cause and effect topics. Remember to make each statement specific, precise, demonstrable, forceful and confident.

Topics

- Texting while driving
- Steroid use among professional athletes
- The legalisation of abortion
- Ongoing racist attitudes in South Africa

3.18 Learning Activity 10: Using Graphic Organizers

A useful strategy to help you to record the cause and effect aspects from a text is to use *Graphic organizers*. This tool will help you to display information visually so that you may easily identify and analyse the critical causes and effects in a sequence of events or a process. For this purpose, two forms of graphic organizer may be used: *The Cause and Effect Column Organizer* and *The Cause and Effect Chain*.

The Cause and Effect Column Organizer

When using this graphic organizer, you need to create two columns which you would label as cause and effect respectively. It is more practical to record your “causes” in the left hand column and the corresponding effects in the opposite right-hand column. This strategy would allow you to easily connect the dots between causes and their related effects. If you are writing up a cause and effect essay for studying purposes, this tool can come in handy to review your material.

The following illustration is an example of how to use a graphic organizer. The passage is: “*College students and the Challenge of credit card debt*” (Gaetz, et al. 2018: 117).

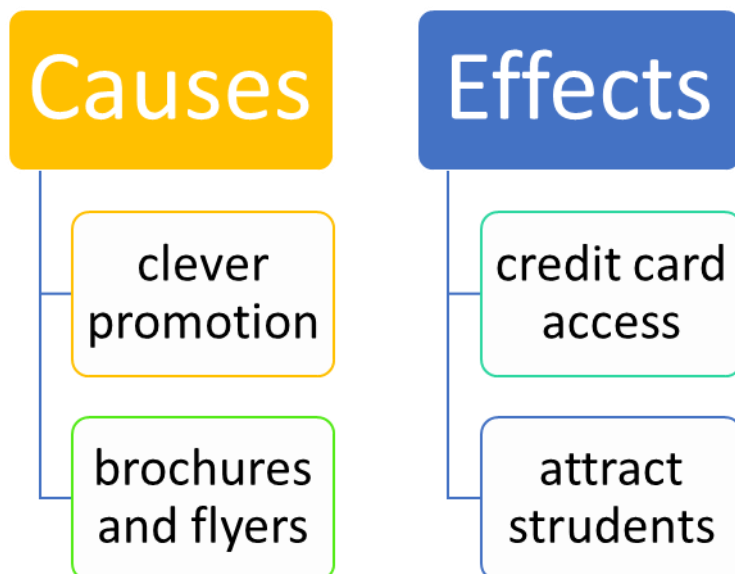


Figure 3.3: The Cause and Effect

The Cause and Effect Chain

When using this graphic organiser, you would need to create a series of sequential boxes which you would join using arrows. You would then record events as they occur chronologically in the boxes. The arrows serve to indicate or display the relationships between each event. When an event occurs, it then becomes simple to trace the subsequent event it causes. This tool may also help you to visually comprehend how effects themselves become causes.



Figure 3.4

Using Graphic Organizers for Complex Events

Graphic organizers are invaluable when dealing with complex relationships of cause and effect. They help you to visually display the complexity of the relationship particularly when an event has multiple causes or effects. You would simply add more arrows and boxes to display the multi-dimensional relationships that exist between diverse events. As you practice and gain more experience you may venture on to more sophisticated approaches, where you can play around with customising your graphic organizers to meet the needs of the specific reading material you are engaged with.

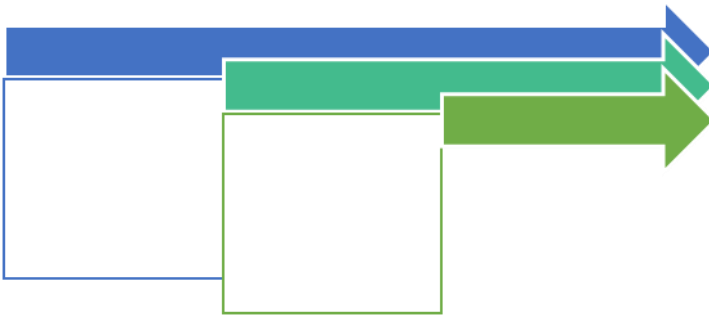


Figure 3.5

3.19. E-Tutor Task 6

Ask students to identify their own visual literacy graphics online. Spend time teaching on how graphic organizers can be used for identifying any text structure, especially as both a reading and writing skill.

3.20 Learning Activity 11: Incorporating Graphic tools into the planning of a cause and effect essay

The following template will help you when planning a cause and effect essay. Practice these steps using a wide range of reading material in a variety of genres and of various complexities.

1. Read the extract/s or reading passage/s in order to gain an overview of the main events.
2. Choose the appropriate graphic organizer for the reading material/s chosen.
3. Identify the key events or actions within the passage/s.
4. Determine whether each event or action is a cause or an effect.
5. Record each of the events or actions on the graphic organizer.

As you advance in your experience and ability to use graphic organizers, you may be able to make further links with inference strategies as well.

Making Inferences and Drawing conclusions in a cause and effect essay

Being able to identify the causes and effects in an essay is only one part of the task. You have to then draw conclusions or make inferences. The art of drawing a conclusion involves your ability to bring to the fore information which is never openly stated, but usually implied or inferred. Try not to feel overwhelmed because, generally writers give us hints or clues that help us to "read between the lines." The task of *inferring requires* you to go beyond the surface details to see other meanings that the details suggest or *imply* (not stated). When the meanings of words are not stated clearly in the context of the text, they may be *implied* – that is, suggested or hinted at. When meanings are implied, you may *infer* them.

We make inferences on a daily basis, mostly without thinking about it. For example, you are sitting in a taxi which has stopped at a red traffic light. You see nothing, but hear the sounds of tyres screeching, something crashing and glass breaking. You *are highly likely to infer* that there has been a car accident because it is common knowledge that such sounds *almost always* mean a car accident. Before we offer an inference, we first consider other possibilities and therefore another explanation for the sounds. Making *inferences* means choosing the most likely explanation from the facts at hand.



Student Exercise 30

Read the essay “*Workplace Hostility*” (Gaetz, et al. 2018: 125) and complete the following tasks:

1. Use *The Cause and Effect Column Organizer* to record the cause and effect aspects from the text. You may do this digitally or on hard copy.
2. Use *The Cause and Effect Chain* to record the cause and effect aspects from the text. You may do this digitally or on hard copy.

Use ONE of your graphic organisers to draw inferences from the text.

3.21 E-Tutor Task 7

Find ways to introduce students to the concept of **inference**. The following are suggested:

1. Show students several pictures that reflect controversial social issues. These can include cartoons or photographs, and ask them to answer text-based questions about the issues.
2. Ask students to use the pictures to try and identify the social issues and think about causes, effects and inferences that can be drawn.
3. Provide students with a list of incomplete sentences. Ask them to complete the sentences to show that they understand the logic of cause and effect.

For example:

Mozambique experienced heavy flooding last night. Consequently _____.

3.22 Conclusion

In this unit, you were introduced to what genres are and how they help writers and readers communicate. You were given opportunities to engage with the idea of developing genre awareness and to acknowledge its value in developing a writing process that will help you write efficiently and effectively. You would have arrived at an understanding of the extent to which genres pervade our lives. You were exposed to different ways in which we use them consciously as well as unconsciously, for social functions and individual purposes and with critical awareness, as well as blind immersion. It is indeed apparent that genres shape our experiences, and our experiences shape them.

3.23 References

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4 Learning Unit 4: Research-based Essays

4.1 Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this learning unit students will be able to:

- Analyse an essay topic.
- Demonstrate an ability to combine the ideas of more than one source with their own.
- Distinguish between summarizing and paraphrasing.
- Use appropriate citation and referencing styles.

4.2 Introduction

Writing for academic purposes is quite different from writing for other purposes. It is not a skill that most of us master before entering a higher education institution. Developing your academic writing skills includes learning to conform to acceptable writing conventions with regard to style, tone and presentation, while at the same time learning how best, as a first time academic author, to develop presenting your own voice and position. Academic writing is based on a process of reading and evaluating credible sources of information, which then helps you as the writer to organize and use other writer's information to answer a question and suggest a solution or validate a position.

4.3 Learning Activity 1: Research based essay writing

Academic writing is the primary means of assessment at university level, and therefore determines success in academic studies. It is for that reason that we focus on the *research based essay*. As the name suggests, when you write this type of essay, you are expected to conduct research by looking for information that will shed more light and help you better understand the subject that you are writing about. In chapter 1 of your prescribed book, you are introduced to key steps in exploring an academic essay.

How long should an essay be?

The length of the essay will depend on the level at which you are writing and the type of text that is expected. For instance, at an undergraduate level, you may be asked to write an essay of about three to four pages as part of an assignment or between 500 words and 1000 words. At post graduate level, you are more likely to write longer research essays or even research reports and dissertations which may even be divided into chapters.

The starting point

Step 1, Think about the topic. Determine what you will write about.

Step 2, Think about your audience. Consider your intended readers and what interests them.

Step 3, Think about your purpose. Ask yourself what your goal is.

Step 4, Try exploring strategies. Experiment with different ways to generate ideas.

Let us look at the first step on analyzing essay topics or titles:

Topics or titles contain key words that tell the student what to do. Note that topics/titles often have two or more parts. For example:

What is meant by ineffectiveness of advertising and why would you believe the contrary?

In this case, 'what' is asking for a description and 'why' for a reason or explanation. The following are some task or action words that are often found on research essays.



Student Exercise 1

Understanding key words

Match the key words on the left to the definitions on the right.

Analyse	Give examples
Assess/ Evaluate	Deal with complex subject by reducing it to the main elements
Describe	Divide into section and discuss each critically
Discuss	Break down into the various parts and their relationships
Examine/ Explore	Make a proposal and support it
Illustrate	Look at various aspects of a topic, compare benefits and drawbacks
Outline/ Trace	Give a detailed account of something
Suggest	Explain a topic briefly and clearly
Summarise	Decide the value or worth of a subject

Understanding the task words in an essay instruction gives you an idea of what you are required to do in a particular essay. If you are able to identify key words, that will shed more light on the essay topic. Consider the next activity and practice how to identify key words in a topic.



Student Exercise 2

Identifying key words in a topic

Read the passage and answer the following questions.

My African Childhood

By David Sedaris

When Hugh was in the fifth grade, his class took a field trip to an Ethiopian slaughterhouse. He was living in Addis Ababa at the time, and the slaughterhouse was chosen because, he says, "it was convenient". This was a school system in which the matter of proximity outweighed such petty concerns as what may or may not be appropriate for a busload of eleven year olds. "What?" I asked. Were there no autopsies scheduled at the local morgue? Was the federal prison just a bit too far out of the way?

Hugh defends his former school, saying, "Well, isn't that the whole point of a field trip? To see something new?"

"Technically yes, but...."

"All right then", he says. "So we saw some new things". One of his field trips was literally a trip where the class watched a wrinkled man fill his mouth with rotten goat meat and feed it to a pack of waiting hyenas. On another occasion, they were taken to examine the bloodied bedroom curtains hanging in the place of the former dictator. There were tamer trips, to textile factories and sugar refineries, but my favorite is always the slaughterhouse. It wasn't a big company, just a small rural enterprise run by a couple of brothers operating out of a low-ceilinged concrete building. Following a brief lecture on the importance of proper sanitation, a small white piglet was herded into the room, its dainty hooves clicking against the concrete floor. The class gathered in a circle to get a better look at the animal that seemed delighted with the attention he was getting. He turned from face to face and was looking up at Hugh when one of the brothers drew a pistol from his back pocket, held it against the animal's temple, and shot the piglet, execution-style. Blood spattered, frightened children wept, and the man with the gun offered the teacher and bus driver some meat from a freshly slaughtered goat.

Underline the key words in the following questions and consider what they are asking you to do.

- Briefly describe the writer's attitude to fieldtrips.
- Summarise the good memories that the writer has of his childhood.
- What were the benefits for shorter school fieldtrips?
- Discuss the examples of fieldtrips cited in paragraph 4.

The second step is to think about the **audience** that you are writing for. This refers to the readers who may be in your personal, academic, and professional life. This influences the tone and the register that you will use in your writing. Through the tone, you are able to express your attitude or feeling towards the topic, by adopting a humorous, sarcastic or serious approach in your writing. Knowing your reader is important when you are preparing academic or workplace documents.

When considering your audience, you may ask yourself the following questions:

- Who will read my essay? Will my lecturer be the only reader, or will others also read it?
- What does my audience already know about the topic?
- What information will my readers expect?
- Should I use formal or informal language?
- How should I adjust my vocabulary and tone to appeal to my readers?

Step 3 requires that you think about the **purpose** of your writing. This requires the writer to be clear about why they are writing. Your goal may be to *entertain*, *persuade* or *inform* your audience about a certain topic. As a student, you may be required by your lecturers to answer a given or chosen question relevant to your course of study. Sometimes you may be asked to discuss a subject of common interest and give your own view. At a slightly advanced level, you may be asked to write a report on a piece of research that you might have conducted. In this case, you need to demonstrate the ability to **synthesise** and **summarise** research done by others on a similar topic.

What other reasons can you think of?

-
-

Whatever the purpose, it is important to plan your essay appropriately and address the reason for writing that piece in the first place.

4.4 Learning Activity 2: Synthesising information

Perhaps one of the most important but difficult processes in writing is the *synthesis* of various writers' ideas. Substantiating your position on an argument means being able to summarise and connect your own and other author's views in **your own words**. In this way *evidence* for your argument is presented, and *plagiarism* is avoided. One of the main reasons why students tend to summarise their evidence rather than using it to substantiate their thesis and develop an argument is that they fail to see the relationships between the different pieces of evidence. Instead, they see the evidence simply as a list of various sources without asking themselves how the ideas in one source are related to other sources. In other words, they do not *synthesise* the information and ideas in their sources.

Let us unpack the idea of synthesizing information after using information from different sources. When you synthesise information, you demonstrate your ability to combine the ideas of more than one source with your **own**.

Consider the following diagram as a simple demonstration of synthesizing:

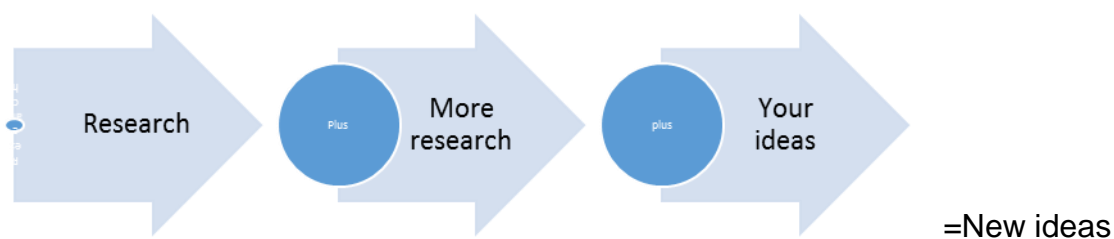


Figure 4.1: Synthesizing

Perhaps one of the most important but difficult processes in writing is the *synthesis* of various writers' ideas. Substantiating your position on an argument means being able to summarise and connect your own and other author's views in **your own words**. In this way *evidence* for your argument is presented, and *plagiarism* is avoided. One of the main reasons why students tend to summarise evidence at their disposal rather than using it to substantiate their thesis and develop an argument is that they fail to see the relationships between the different pieces of evidence. Instead, they see the evidence simply as a list of various sources without asking themselves how the ideas in one source are related to other sources. In other words, they do not [synthesise](#) (2 min 30 sec video) the information and ideas in their sources. Click on the hyperlink on synthesizing and get more information.

N/B Remember that synthesizing and summarizing information go hand in hand.



Student Exercise 3

Purpose of writing an academic essay

When you consider the purpose or reason for writing an essay on a particular topic, it may be to tell a personal story, to convince readers that your point of view is the correct view, or to explain something or present information. Can you identify the purpose of writing an academic essay in these sentences?

- Classical music soothes the soul.
- Advanced driving lessons should be compulsory for taxi drivers.
- My first job interview.
- Smoking cigarettes is better than drinking alcohol.

The fourth step involves **exploring strategies**. After you have selected your topic, determined the audience and purpose, you can use exploring strategies which involve prewriting strategies. Those include freewriting where you record your first thoughts by writing continuously without stopping until you run out of ideas. Brainstorming is another strategy that helps you shape your ideas by creating a list of ideas while taking time to think about the topic. This can be followed by asking yourself a series of questions that will help you to narrow and define your focus on the topic at hand. You can ask yourself questions like *who, what, when, where, why, and how* questions. Finally, you can use clustering where you can arrange ideas in a visual image. You can begin by drawing a circle in the middle of the page and writing your topic inside. That will lead to other ideas, which you will also put inside circles. This will help you cluster or group ideas together so that you can see connections.

4.5 Learning Activity 3: Gathering information about research essay topic

In your academic writing journey, you will be writing on topics that will sometimes require you to collect information from other sources like print books, internet sources, newspapers and various other media platforms. One of the most important aspects of writing for academic purposes is:

- Finding information
- Evaluating it
- Using it to support your argument
- Indicating exactly where you found the information, **both** in the body of your answer, directly after you have mentioned the idea **and** at the end, in a bibliography or list of references.

When we draft an essay on a particular topic, we initially depend on our own experiences, thoughts and reflections which shape up our line of argument. However, we are not experts in everything, and for that reason, we rely on extra sources in order to:

- Find information that we don't know,
- Confirm (or question) our ideas and,
- Discover what other people are thinking.



Student Exercise 4

Evaluating information

Look at the sentence and answer the questions that will help you evaluate information:

More than 13 million young women between the ages of 20 and 25 abstained from the 2019 National elections in South Africa.

- Where is this information coming from?
- Do you believe the statement?
- How do you know if it is true or not?

The above example is to help you think carefully about how you use and capture other writers' ideas without being accused of **plagiarism**.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is submitting statements, ideas, opinions or findings copied without acknowledgement from another source, as if they were one's own (Killen and Walker: 1979:15).

In the context of electronic texts, it has become easy to manipulate the electronically available knowledge capital in the students' assignments that makes electronic sources attractive to them (Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook (2004). We have come to understand that writers, especially novice ones, may end up plagiarising for different reasons, some of which could be the following:

- Inability to paraphrase.
- Failure to summarise ideas.
- Improper punctuation, including direct quotes.

Types of plagiarism

Copying

- Copying another student's essay.
- Copying from books or articles without using quotation marks.

Copying directly from lecture notes.

Paraphrasing

- Paraphrasing an author's work, i.e. rewording it, re-ordering the ideas, and presenting them as your own.

Lifting ideas

- Using an author's ideas, expressed in your own words; and pretending that they are yours.

Cutting and Pasting

- Putting together extracts from various authors to make up your essay. Even if you use quotes or acceptable paraphrasing, this sort of essay cannot be regarded as your own work.

Bailey (2015: 42) states that *summarising* and *paraphrasing* are normally used together in essay writing. While summarising aims to reduce information to a suitable length, allowing the writer to condense lengthy sources into a concise form, paraphrasing means changing the wording of a text so that it is significantly different from the original source, without changing the meaning. The table below addresses summarising, paraphrasing, and quoting from other sources:

SUMMARISING	PARAPHRASING	QUOTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must reference the original source. • The text is much shorter than the original text. (For example, one may write a single page to summarize a four-page article.) • Must use your own words, usually with a very limited use of quotations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must reference the original source. • The text produced may be shorter or longer than the original text • Must use your own words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must reference the original source. • The text produced is the exact length of the original text quoted (unless ellipses are used). • Use the original author's exact words. • Put quotation marks around the original author's exact words. • Include the page number of the original source from which you borrowed the author's original language.

Note that an effective paraphrase usually:

- Has a different structure to the original.
- Has mainly different vocabulary.
- Retains the same meaning.
- Keeps some phrases from the original that are in common use (e.g. 'Industrial revolution', 'twentieth century', 'technological disruption').

The following are some of the techniques that can assist you with paraphrasing:

- Changing vocabulary by using synonyms: *argues-claims, economise-save*
- Changing word class: *explanation(noun)-explain(verb), profitable(adjective)-profitability(noun)*
- Changing word order: *....the best explanation for the British location of the Industrial Revolution is found by studying demand factors. OR*

A focus on demand may help explain the UK origin of the Industrial Revolution.

Notice that the meaning conveyed in the two sentences has not changed, but the author simply wrote the sentences differently.

Sometimes writers confuse paraphrasing with summarizing. The main difference between a paraphrase and a summary is the length. A paraphrase can be close to the same length as the original selection, but a summary is much shorter. To summarise or paraphrase successfully you can do the following:

- Paraphrase if your audience needs detailed information about the subject.
- Summarise if the audience needs to know only general information. A summary is generally a maximum of 30 percent of the length of the original selection.
- Restate the main ideas using your own words. You can keep specialized words, common words, and names of people or places. However, make sure that you also find other synonyms for other words, and use your own sentence structure.
- Maintain the original author’s ideas and intent.
- Acknowledge the source. Mention the author or title of the work. When available, also include the page number.
- Proofread your writing to ensure that you have expressed the message in your own words.

4.6 E-tutor Task 1

Preparing for summary

As students, you are usually expected to summarise huge chunks of information which is sometimes turned into lecture notes, an assignment or a piece of writing that is appropriate for the message that needs to be conveyed.

Write a short description of one of the topics below in no more than 50 words.

- A book you have enjoyed.
- A town or city you know well.
- A film you have recently watched.

What do you think is needed for a good summary?

-
-

Integrating paraphrases, summaries and quotations

In a research essay, you can support your main points with paraphrases, summaries and integrated quotations. They strengthen your research paper and make it more forceful and convincing. All of these strategies are valid ways to incorporate research into your writing, as long as you give credit to the author or speaker.

4.7 E-Tutor Task 2

Quoting sources

Look carefully at the text below and see how the skills of summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting can be used in your own writing:

Organising an interview involves a series of steps (Davies, 2007), including recruiting interviewees, finding a suitable venue and writing appropriate guidelines. However, depending on the research subject, a more flexible approach can be adopted, resulting in a less structured interview (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). As King states: 'gathering a large volume of cases does not guarantee the credibility of a study' (King, 2004:16).

- How many authors/sources have been used in this text?
- Has the writer quoted any author's work? Which author has been quoted and how do you know that this is a quotation?

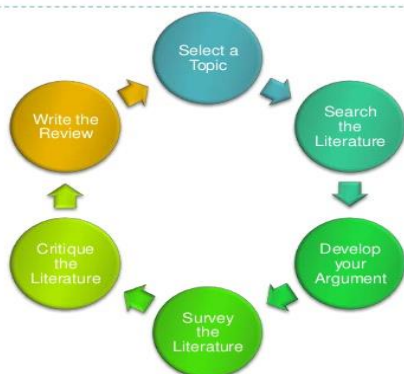
4.8 Learning Activity 4: Referencing

Why should you use a referencing system?

Referencing is important for reasons other than avoiding plagiarism. When you reference correctly, you are demonstrating that you have read widely on the topic. You are also supporting your hypothesis with comments from expert authors. This lends credibility to your own work. Also, by correctly referencing, you allow the marker or reader to follow-up your references and to check the validity of your arguments for themselves. This is an important part of the academic process, as it leads to student accountability.

The diagram below is a demonstration of the steps involved when you conduct a literature search on your chosen topic. This process is also called *literature review*.

The Literature Review Process



From *The Literature Review* (2009) by Machi and McEvoy

Figure 4.2: Literature review

Figure 1 demonstrates that the process of searching for information involves a few activities before you can use that information as part of a complete text. When you plan your own writing, try and follow these steps as they will guide you to a good end product.

4.9 Learning Activity 5: Citations and references

Failure to acknowledge sources may have serious real life consequences. You may have heard of instances where people had to face sanctions because of such acts of dishonesty. Read the story of plagiarism which you can access from this [link](#):



Student Exercise 5

Thinking about referencing practice

Decide if you need to give a reference in the following cases.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| a) Data you found from your own primary research | Yes/No |
| b) A graph from an internet article | Yes/No |
| c) A quotation from a book | Yes/No |
| d) An item of common knowledge | Yes/No |
| e) A theory from a journal article | Yes/No |
| f) An idea of your own based on reading several sources | Yes/No |

N.B. Feedback on the above exercise will be discussed by tutors.

It is important to refer correctly to the work of other writers that you have used. You may present these sources as a summary/ paraphrase, as a quotation, or use both. In each case, a citation is included to provide a link to the list of references at the end of your essay. There are various referencing styles that can be used by authors, for example, Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association, Chicago Style and the Harvard style. The preferred style for ENGLISH 1503 is the Harvard style. If you are in another discipline like psychology, Education or any other field of study, make sure that you are familiar with the preferred style of referencing in that area. Your lecturers will guide you with this.

When taking notes, use a separate page for each new book, journal article or electronic source. At the top of each page, clearly record the following information for future reference.

- The author's or editor's name (names)
- The year the book was published
- The title of the book
- If it is an edition other than the first
- The city the book was published in
- The name of the publisher

For **journal articles** record:

- The author's name or names
- The year in which the journal was published
- The title of the article
- The title of the journal
- The page number/s of the article in the journal
- As much other information as you can find about the journal, for example the volume and issue numbers.

For **electronic resources**, try to collect the information on the left if it is available, but also record:

- The date you accessed the source
- The electronic address or email
- The type of electronic resource (email, discussion forum, www page, etc)

In addition to these details, when you are taking notes, if you copy direct quotations or if you put the author's ideas in your own words, write down the page numbers you got the information from.

In the Harvard system illustrated here, the list is organized alphabetically by the family name of the author. You should be clear about the difference between first names and family names. On title pages, the normal format of first name, then family name is used.

4.10 Learning Activity 6: Referencing in the text of your assignment

The following section shows you a number of different examples when quoting and paraphrasing in the text of your assessment. In all references, you will need to list the author/editor name/s and the year of publication. The year of publication can be found on the first couple of pages of the book, along with the other bibliographic information. Look for the author's name, a copyright symbol and then a date. This will be the date of publication. In most references, you will also need to list the page number/s where you found the specific information. The only type of reference where this is not required is when you paraphrase a summary of an entire piece of work. Let us use a hypothetical example about Chinua Achebe who might have written a book about colonialism in Nigeria. You might summarise and correctly reference the entire gist of his book in the following way:

Achebe (1958) depicts details about life in an African culture as compared to the Western culture.

If this was a direct quote from a book or journal article, it would have looked like this:

Achebe (1958:5) states that "African culture is completely different from Western culture".

OR

When comparing cultures "African culture is completely different from Western culture" (Achebe, 1958:5).

In these examples, *Achebe* is the *author*, '1958' is the year of publication and '5' is the page number where the direct quote can be found.

For a direct quote from a journal or article with two authors you would have referenced like this:

Achebe and Mphahlele (1958:5) state that 'African culture is completely different from Western culture'.

OR

When comparing cultures "African culture is completely different from Western culture" (Achebe and Mphahlele, 1958:5).

For three authors you would follow the same pattern as illustrated by the examples above. Take particular note when the book has more than three authors. For example, if Achebe, Mphahlele, Tsotetsi, Brown and Naidoo wrote the book or journal article, you would use the first author's name followed by 'et al.' which means 'and others'.

Achebe et al (1958:5) states that "African culture is completely different from Western culture".

When you paraphrase, it will look much the same as the direct quotation examples, but without the inverted commas. For example, if we paraphrased an example from Achebe and Mphahlele's book, it would look like this:

When compared to Western culture, African culture is completely different (Achebe and Mphahlele, 1958:5)

You can visit the site and listen to the short [video](#) on citation.

Your prescribed books and study guides.

These have been prescribed for a reason. They generally represent the most useful and relevant books in the field which you are studying. Use them fully and thoughtfully, but do not accept their views without testing them against other sources or your own ideas. This also applies to the study guides themselves. Your lecturers are also human and they may commit errors.

4.11 Learning Activity 7: Recommended reading and other library sources

The Library is making more and more resources available online, including books.

How to find a book

If you are physically in the Library but a book you want is not available, you can always browse amongst other books nearby since these will deal with related topics. You can also do this electronically by using the catalogue online to show you which other books have similar shelf numbers (e.g. they will cover similar subjects).

How to find an article

Do an electronic search through information resources such as electronic databases which will lead you to full-text articles. You can download these immediately.

The Unisa Library is an outstanding resource, one of the best in the continent. Please use it to the full. Further advice is available:

- In <http://libguides.unisa.ac.za> (More information is listed in your Tutorial letter)
- On the Library home page, look under Research support, but note that the librarians cannot handle requests for help by undergraduate students; and
- On the MyUnisa module site for ENG1503

4.12 Learning Activity 8: Evaluating and using information

A good English *dictionary* is essential if you are a student.

- It has to be more comprehensive than a school dictionary and ideally give you more details about word usage.
- Reliable publishers of advanced learners' dictionaries include Cambridge, Collins, Longman, Oxford, AND Webster. A very good online dictionary is that by Merriam-Webster.
- As far as *encyclopaedias* are concerned, the Encyclopaedia Britannica is one of the best available. Some of its articles are online. When it comes to web-based encyclopaedias, these may not be reliable. Usually their authors are not named, and the material in the articles is **not** reviewed by experts.
- Wikipedia is usually easy to access, but its contents may be very uneven. There are some good articles, but also many inaccurate ones. Use them with great caution.

Some writers find it challenging to reference internet sources. The principle is to give readers enough detail to be able to locate exactly the same source if it still exists. Here is an example that you can refer to:

Setiyadi, A.B. (2019). Exploring motivational orientations of English as foreign language (EFL) learners: A case study in Indonesia. *South African Journal of Education*, 39, (1), 1-12. <http://www.sajournalofeducation.co.za/index.php/saje/article/view/1500/844>

4.13 Learning Activity 9: Reference List

All of the sources you refer to in the main body of your assignment need to be listed at the end of the assignment in a reference list.

In a reference list, you only need to list those sources from which you have either quoted or paraphrased. For example, you do not have to list books you used for background reading purposes. When creating a reference list, the sources should be listed alphabetically by author's surname, should be left justified, and the references should **never** be preceded by a bullet-point or number. All sources should be listed together, that is, books, electronic journals and normal journal articles.

When you use the Harvard System, you are usually required to produce a reference list. However, some lecturers may want you to produce a bibliography instead of a reference list.

What is the difference between the two? As stated before, a *reference* list only has sources from which you have quoted or paraphrased, whereas a *bibliography* contains all the works cited in a paper including other sources that the author consulted even if they are not mentioned in the text.

Here is an example of a list of references (Harvard style):

Kirk, E. 1996. 'Evaluating information on the internet'. The Sheridan Libraries at Johns Hopkins University. <http://www.library.jhu.edu/researchhelp/general/evaluating/> (Accessed 2009-06-04; revisited 2013-04-29)

Morris, W. 'David Hume'. 2009. The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (Summer 2009 Edition), E. N. Zalta (ed.). http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum_2009/entries/hume/. (Accessed: 2009-08-15; revisited 2013-04-29)

University of California Berkeley Library. 2009. URL=
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.HTML> (accessed 2009-06-04; revisited 2013-04-29)

Please take note of the *punctuation* and stick to the original web address as it appears on the internet.

Let us now look at how you can tackle the *research essay*, bearing in mind that this type of essay involves gathering, evaluating and synthesising information from various sources, which also need to be acknowledged through proper referencing. As a student, you may be required to gather information not only from written material, but also from *interviews* or *surveys*, depending on the topic given. Read the following text and use it to practice your information searching skills.



Student Exercise 6

Preparing for essay writing

As a starting point, you would prepare yourself for this task by asking a few questions like: what mood disorders are, information about the drug Ritalin, attention deficit disorder and anti-depressants etc.

Medicating ourselves

It is hard to pick up a magazine these days without finding an article attacking or defending some pharmaceutical remedy for syndromes of mood or behaviour. These drugs are in vogue because they have shown themselves spectacularly effective for a range of conditions, though their exact workings are not well understood, and their long-term effects are not known. Yet, for all the noise we continue to hear about, say, Ritalin, for children with attention deficit disorders and related learning or behaviour problems-or Prozac and the new family of anti-depressants prescribed to the stressed and distressed of all ages-the real debate on pharmaceuticals has yet to begin.

If you were to talk to someone from your local clinic or anyone in the health profession, what questions would you ask about *attention-deficit* disorder?

Question 1.....

Question 2.....

Question 3.....

4.14 E-tutor Task 3

Essay writing

Many teachers are faced with the problem of dealing with children who suffer from Attention-deficit disorder (also known as ADD). Write a research essay in which you describe the symptoms of ADD and possible interventions to deal with it.

Refer to Figure 1 on literature review and follow those steps in searching and using the information for your essay.

Checklist: Research Essay

- Have I narrowed my topic?
- Have I created a guiding research question?
- Are my sources reliable?
- Have I organised my notes?
- Have I integrated source information using quotations, paraphrases, and summaries?
- Have I correctly documented my in-text citations?
- Have I correctly prepared and punctuated my Works Cited or Reference page?

4.15 Learning Activity 10: Writing reports

Although essays are the most common assignments in many academic disciplines, students of science and business are often asked to write reports. Reports and essays are similar in many ways. In this section, you will see the difference between essays and reports.

Similarities	Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both have clear and logical format.• Use objective and accurate academic style.• Include citations and references.• Make use of visual information in the form of graphs and tables.• Include appendices where necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May describe an experiment you have conducted.• Reports are likely to be based on primary or secondary data.• Use numbering (1.1, 1.2 etc)• Are more specific and detailed.



Student Exercise 7

Report writing

Consider these topics and state whether they are likely to be written as reports or essays:

- a) The development of trade unions in South Africa.
- b) Two alternative plans for improving the sports centre.
- c) A study you conducted to compare male and female attitudes to eating.
- d) An overview of recent research on the cause of obesity among 15 year old girls.
- e) The arguments for and against corporal punishment in schools.

4.16 Learning Activity 11: Types of reports

At university, you may be required to write different types of reports that are relevant to your discipline. The following are some of the common reports:

- Technical and business reports

These are common in disciplines like Engineering, Information Technology, Commerce, Accounting and finance. Your lecturers may give you an assignment that requires you to research a particular problem and present results of the research in the form of a report.

- Field reports

These are common in disciplines like Law, Psychology, Nursing, History and Education. These types of reports require careful analyses and observation of phenomena or events in the **real** world.

- Scientific reports

This type of report is usually conducted in order to support a [hypothesis](#) (6 minute video) or to validate the work of others. In this case, the writer is expected to provide an accurate record of the experiment which may be shared among other researchers. At graduate level or above, your research is adding to a body of data on your particular area of study. In general, scientific reports follow the same guidelines as other academic writing in terms of style and vocabulary. However, your department may well have its own requirements, for instance, the organisation of a report, so it is advisable to ask if these exist.

Reports in disciplines such as biology, chemistry and physics, business and education generally include the following:

Title

This gives a brief description of what the report is about.

Abstract

This section summarises the main points of the report, including conclusions and recommendations.

Introduction

This is where you justify the research by explaining why the study was undertaken.

Methods

This section reports on how the study was done. It normally includes procedures and materials.

Results

This reports what the study found from the data collected.

Discussion

This section discusses what findings might mean, and why they matter, especially in relation to what other researchers have found. It clearly connects the results with your conclusion.

References

This is a list of all the materials that you referred to in your writing.

Note that it is important to ascertain what structure is used in your discipline. More on this is available on pages 320-340 of your prescribed book.

The 4 minute 48 second [video](#) on this link explains each step of the academic report.



Student Exercise 8

Report writing

Write a report on the topic: "*A study that I conducted to compare male and female attitudes to eating*", in conjunction with the video that you watched on report writing. Your research report should have an introduction, methods, results and discussion. You are free to use other sources for more information on the subject.

4.17 References

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- King, N. 2004. Using interviews in qualitative research. In: *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*. Sage, pp. 11-22
- University of the Witwatersrand. 2006. *Foundation in English Language: Module 1, Introduction to Academic Literacy AELS 123/124*.

5 Learning Unit 5: Academic Language across the Curriculum

5.1 Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this learning unit students will be able to:

- Identify types of sentences that are common in academic writing.
- Describe academic vocabulary, register, style, and nominalization.
- Read and write a paragraph.
- Relate the specific language features to text structures and academic genres.
- Demonstrate competency in editing, and revising sentences and paragraphs.
- Describe features of academic language occurring in specific disciplines.

5.2 Introduction

In academic reading and writing across the disciplines, you will encounter many genres. These include the following:

- Argumentative essay
- Journal article
- Conference abstract
- Book review
- Dissertation
- Textbook
- Laboratory report
- On page 319 to 340 of the prescribed book, more information is provided on some of these genres.

What is meant by genre?

Genre means text type. The term has been used in music, cooking, literature, film studies, and so on. In fact, the internet has introduced many new genres, such as e-mails, Facebook, and twitter.

This term has been used and explained in other units, however, in this section on language, some of the genre features and characteristics that relate to language and academic discourse will be elaborated. See Unit 3 on Genre for more information.

The above is a recap of what has already been taught in the previous Units. What is key for this unit is academic language and discourse. Academic discourse is defined [here](#). Moffett (2014: 26) defines academic discourse as, “the use of a specific register and vocabulary (including scientific terminology) that implies acceptance of a certain history of ideas, while also demonstrating competence in current ideas.”

In this Unit, the focus is on language. Language is central to both academic [style](#) and academic register. Style is defined [here](#). Academic discourse is important for you as a student so that you can learn to speak and write like specialists in your own field of study. For example, you may

learn to use language from disciplines such as Law, Medicine, Accounting, Social Science and so on. Different disciplines have different specialist discourses. You are learning to become a member in one or more of these communities.

In this lesson, you will learn about academic vocabulary, sentences, paragraphs, and text types. You will be exposed to examples of typical academic language, and style. The main text that will be used is 'Brands R Us', available on page 267 of the prescribed book. There will be extracts from other texts that show different versions and extracts of more appropriate academic texts.

The extracts come from a variety of academic contexts. In all of them, you will be expected to describe the genre. In fact, you will find that, just by changing the language, style, and register, the genre also changes, yet the topic remains relatively the same.

5.3. Learning Activity 1: Defining academic language

What is academic language? Typically academic language has been described as formal, factual, objective, and supported by evidence.

Some of the characteristics of academic language are:

- Tentative statements or hedging
- Full forms of words instead of contractions
- Nominalized phrases or nominalization
- Passive voice
- Third person pronouns
- Few direct questions
- Formal negative forms
- No clichés, redundant words or colloquialisms

5.4 E-Tutor Task 1

You have an opportunity to discuss the characteristics of academic discourse with your etutor and fellow students. The discussion covers an explanation of audience, register and style. You can refer to Moffett et. Al. 2014. Note that register can be used as an analytical term that describes the language features of discussion, cause and effect, and argument. Some of the genres have been discussed. See the video [here](#).

Etutors will find out if students agree with all of the above characteristics of academic language. Etutors will discuss these characteristics and show examples from specific disciplines. It is important to note that these characteristics are suggestions and guidelines. Some disciplines may alter some of the rules, for example, by using the active voice and the first person pronouns.

5.5 Learning Activity 2: Titles or Headings

The same topic can be presented in different genres. Journalists do this all the time whenever they present on or write about the same topic in different mediums. The following passage is about advertising. It is on page 267 of the prescribed book.

The following argumentative essay is written in an informal style, and register. In this Unit, you are going to learn about academic language in order to be able to convert any text from an informal one to a more formal academic style. As mentioned above, genre features such as audience, purpose, context and content/message will be used in the analysis.

As an academic reader and writer, right from the beginning of this text, one notices that the title is informal, '**Brands R Us**'. This style of writing is often referred to as SMS language, textese, or netspeak by sociolinguists. In academic language, the standard and formal spelling is preferred, for example, '**Brands Are Us.**'

Formal versus informal titles

Informal	Brands R Us
Formal	Brands Are Us

Can you think of more examples of titles? Use the internet to search for possible examples and complete the table above.

Now let us compare this title in the prescribed textbook with other titles. The following two research articles have been placed on e-reserves. Here are two titles that are used as examples in this lesson:

- a) Youth perceptions of alcohol advertising: are current advertising regulations working?
- b) The effects of television advertisements on adolescents: An exploratory study

Comment: The two titles above are typical headings from academic journals. They are written in formal academic language.



Student Exercise 1

Look for titles from three sources and compare them. You can use google, an online library, or other search engines, etc. The titles should be from a magazine, a newspaper, and a journal article.

Titles and contexts of use

	Magazine	Newspaper	Journal article
Titles			
Structure/introduction			

Complete the table above. You can keep a virtual journal or a print journal where you practice the activities for ENG1503. This was mentioned in Unit 1.

5.6 Learning Activity 3: Analyzing the Language of a Text

Let us analyze the [Brands R Us](#) passage again

Notice that the essay begins with background information, and gives some indication or hint about the theme of the essay. This is not how typical academic genres like essays, and journal articles are written. However, in newspapers this would be permissible. Journalists often highlight the main idea of an article immediately after the title. This is also called *the lead*. We are referring to the words in italics below:

(Stephen Garey is a writer and a former advertising industry creative executive. He has published many articles about consumption and the environment. In the following essay he makes a powerful argument about advertising)

**Student Exercise 2**

- Define the following three terms: academic jargon, style, and register.
- Read the passage on page 267. Identify and explain how or why some of the language used or linguistic features that are used are inappropriate.
- Rewrite portions of some of the paragraphs in more academic language
- Before asking for help from a tutor, work with a fellow student to rewrite some of the paragraphs

Text 1

[1] Most people don't believe, don't remember, and don't think about advertising. Focus groups and other forms of testing have proven time and time again that the majority of ads are inefficient and ineffective. Indeed, it's been estimated that some 80-85 percent of all advertising is neither consciously "seen" nor remembered by the consuming public. Within a few minutes after being exposed to an advertising message and brand, consumers have a hard time remembering the message or the brand that delivered it!

[2] And yet, there's a direct connection between an individual's level of exposure to advertising and levels of product consumption. How can this be? If advertising is largely ineffective, if most advertising is neither seen nor remembered by most people, and if – two minutes after being exposed to a particular message or brand – consumers can't remember the brand or the message, then where's the connection? How does something so seemingly benign and banal impact consumption patterns and habits?

[3] While we may not be paying much attention to each and every individual message that comes our way, the collective effect of all this advertising is quite powerful. All during our waking hours, some 3000 to 5000 messages per day *per individual* are instructing us to Buy, Buy, Buy and Buy Some more. Sometimes these messages are delivered quietly. Many times the advertisers shout them from the rooftops. But no matter how these messages are delivered to us – and as much as we might tend to consider advertising mere background or “wallpaper” in our day-to-day lives – there’s little doubt that advertising as *a whole* strongly influences overall consumer behavior. In other words, by itself, the advertising for Hyundai automobiles has little effect upon one’s personal life. But Hyundai ads combined with Apple Computer ads, Tide detergent TV commercials, Chivas Regal outdoor boards, GE television program sponsorships, and Johnson’s Floor Wax coupons in the Sunday newspaper – not to mention the specials down each and every aisle at the local department store or supermarket – have a very powerful *collective* effect indeed.

[4] Because advertising is generally so lighthearted and entertaining, this collective messaging practically gives us permission to ignore the long term consequences of our daily purchasing decisions. The almost comedic presentation of most advertising carries with it the underlying suggestion that we shouldn’t take any of it too seriously.

[5] But we should...and we must.

[6] At one time, advertising’s collective message to buy – and to replace what we have rather than repair what we have – served us well. When we were far fewer in numbers, when nations and communities were growing and businesses large and small were trying to build their customer base, consumption of goods in high volume was not only desirable, it was also respectable. But our population has exploded, and we’re no longer naïve about the hazards of our consumer culture. It’s all too clear that advertising’s collective power and our collective responses to it over time have had a profound, often adverse, impact upon people’s lives and the planet we all share.

[7] Wanton consumption now presents serious dangers to our health and well-being. It’s a way of life that has outlived its usefulness, and what needs to change is *us*, not the advertising that influences us. We need to change our view of advertising as a banal and benign medium and fully recognize its powerful, collective effect.

[8] We most certainly need to reduce consumption, and one of the first steps we can take towards consuming fewer unnecessary goods is to consume less advertising. Keep counters in the kitchen free of brand names; use unbranded containers. Take the roads less travelled: Use local streets at the edge of town and the old back highways as a way of exposure to commercial clutter. Steer clear of T-shirt advertising: Why should you be a walking, unpaid billboard? Watch less commercial television; listen to less commercial radio. Implementing just one or two of these suggestions can help you consume less advertising and, in turn, fewer products. And that’s the whole idea.

5.7 Learning Activity 4: Academic Features of Texts

Feedback for Student Exercise 2

- 1) Paragraph 5 consists of one sentence with omitted words (This is called ellipsis). The paragraph begins with a conjunction. It is highly unlikely that such an incomplete sentence would be an appropriate paragraph in an academic essay, journal article, or in some textbooks that belong to your many different disciplines, such as Sociology, Law, Environmental Science etc.
- 2) The writer has a tendency to repeat words, phrases, expressions as if it's a conversation amongst friends, almost like a group chat. There are numerous instances of this in the text.
- 3) Most paragraphs begin with conjunctions as opposed to linking devices or cohesive devices. For example, "and yet", "because", "but"...
- 4) There are many rhetorical questions as opposed to statements, or declaratives.
- 5) The methods used for developing paragraphs are inconsistent. See chapter 6 of the prescribed book on page 71 for methods of developing paragraphs.
- 6) This text is more like speech or speaking than formal academic writing.
- 7) This text does not cite any sources, so it cannot be a research-based essay. It is solely based on the opinion, experience and knowledge of the author.

Here are some more characteristics of academic paragraphs to help you understand the passage:

Hint: The topic sentence usually appears at the beginning of a paragraph. Sometimes a topic sentence can be in the middle or at the end of a paragraph. At times the writer may not use a topic sentence at all, but expect the reader to infer the main idea from the other sentences in the paragraph. A paragraph always develops one main idea.

In a well written paragraph, all the supporting sentences are linked to, and develop the topic sentence or main idea by giving evidence, examples, facts, statistics, quotations, and so on. Supporting sentences in a paragraph should be arranged in a logical order – they should build onto one another seamlessly. The ideas should be connected with appropriate links so that the paragraph is easier to read.



Student Exercise 3

- In your own words, write the thesis statement for the entire text "Brands R Us"
- What is the topic sentence in paragraph 3?

5.8 Learning Activity 5: An Op-ed

Text 1 is a typical opinion piece, popularly known as op-ed (opinion editorial) in online newspapers, see for example, the [Daily Maverick](#), the [Guardian.org](#) or the [Atlantic](#). It is an argument that is based on an opinion supported by facts, statistics or scientific research. Thomas Friedman, the columnist for the New York Times explains an op-ed [here](#).

Here is an online dictionary definition of an op-ed: [op-ed](#).

Now read the following extract from an academic journal (The full article is on e-reserves):

Text 2

A significant body of work indicates that exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with increased positive beliefs about alcohol, intentions to drink, likelihood of underage drinking, and increased consumption by young people (Anderson, et al. 2008). Increasing identification with advertising produces changes in consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Krugman, 1965). Alcohol advertisements with greater youth appeal appear to have more of an influence on young people's drinking. The desirability of characters in alcohol advertising predicts identification with these characters, which in turn predicts positive alcohol expectancies, frequency and quantity of alcohol use (Austin & Knaus, 2000). More active engagement with alcohol marketing by young people has been associated with consuming larger quantities of alcohol (Lin et al. 2012).

Adapted from; Alexandra Alken, Tina Lam, William Gillmore, Lucy Burns, Tanya Chlkritzh, Simon Lenton, 2018. Youth perceptions of alcohol advertising: are current advertising regulations working? *Youth and Children*, 42(3), 234 – 239



Student Exercise 4

Compare and contrast the paragraph above (Text 2) with paragraph 1 from 'Brands R Us' [Text 1].

Possible answers:

- Text 2 is formal.
- Text 2 uses in-text citation.
- The text probably comes from a textbook or Journal article.

On the other hand, Text 1 lacks all these features.

Can you add more examples of the differences between Text 1 and Text 2?

5.9 Learning Activity 6: Reading short texts such as journal abstracts, and summaries.

We should practice reading short texts in order to identify the language, genre, style, or register that is used in the text. This will make us better academic writers. Remember in Unit 1, we illustrated different strategies and techniques of connecting reading and writing.

What is an abstract?

Bailey (2011: 22) defines abstracts by mentioning that they are normally found in journal articles. Abstracts act as summaries to enable the reader or researcher to decide if the information contained in the article is worth reading. Undergraduate students do not usually have to write abstracts, however, it is important to be able to read them.

Abstracts normally have a standard structure. The structure is as follows:

- Background position
- Aim and thesis of article
- Method of research
- Results of research

Other features of abstract for journal articles are:

- The research questions
- Recommendations



Student Exercise 5

Collect at least three abstracts from your own discipline and identify the aim, objectives, and main argument. Text 3 and Text 4 below are examples of acceptable abstracts. You can analyze them for further practice. Ask the library to assist with finding the texts.

Text 3

Alcohol marketing and adolescent alcohol consumption: Results from the International Alcohol Control Study (South Africa)

The harmful use of alcohol leads to 3.3 million deaths per annum globally (5.9% of all deaths) and is a major predictor of morbidity. The impact of alcohol use is not only experienced by adults but also by adolescents, for whom alcohol consumption is a key risk factor for non-communicable and infectious diseases as well as various social and psychological harms, including school failure and drop-out. In South Africa (SA), rates of alcohol consumption among adolescents are very high. According to the 2011 Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS) conducted among grade 8 – 11 learners in public schools, about half of the learners had ever consumed alcohol, about a quarter had engaged in binge drinking in the 30 days prior to the survey, and about 12 % had initiated consumption before the age of 12 years.

Adapted from: Morojele, NK; C Lombard, C; Harker Burnhams, N; Petersen Williams, P; Nel, E; & Harry, CDH (2018) Alcohol marketing and adolescent alcohol consumption: Results from the International Alcohol Control study (South Africa), *SAMJ*, 108(9), 782 – 788

Text 4

The impact of exposure to alcohol advertisements on adolescents: A literature review

Alcohol consumption occurs worldwide and is widespread among youth. Although, alcohol was once given as it was cleaner than water, neurological research continues to inform individuals of the toxicity of alcohol on the brain. The topic of interest is the subtle relationship between exposure to alcohol advertisements and alcohol consumption in children. The purpose of this literature review was to determine the current perception held by researchers concerning the relationship between exposure to alcohol advertisements and alcohol consumption by adolescents.

Adapted from: Boggs, M. & Durgampudi, P. (2017) The impact of exposure to alcohol advertisements on adolescents: A literature review, *Int. Public Health J.* 9(1): 13 - 22

5.10 Learning Activity 7: Academic vocabulary and academic discourse

What is the difference between speech and writing? Consider the following table. Do you agree with some of the characteristics of speech and writing? Add some of your own features.

Speaking	Writing
Many repetitions	Less or no repetitions
More actions and processes as seen in the use of verbs	Complex noun phrases and complex sentences
Tends to be based on the context/ e.g. the here and now, with evidence from Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills, and interpersonal cues.	Decontextualized to some degree and depends on Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency.

Text 1 above, **Brands R Us**, has a mixture of both spoken and written language, both formal and informal. Consider some of the following words:

Contractions: don't, there's

Pronouns: we,

Nouns: ads

Punctuation: exclamation marks

Repetitive words: Buy, Buy, Buy and Buy Some More (note the emphasis through repetition and use of capital letters)

Figurative language: But many times the advertisers shout them from the rooftops.

N.B note that Text 1 uses academic vocabulary as well. Therefore, the same text can be used to illustrate examples of academic and none academic vocabulary.

Now let us compare some of the vocabulary from other academic texts like Text 2, Text 3, and Text 4.

The following words represent academic language:

Advertising, consumption, alcohol advertisements, identification, alcohol marketing, regulations.

One of the characteristics of academic vocabulary is a process called nominalization. **Nominalization is a process of** changing a verb and making an abstract noun by adding a suffix like – ance, - ment, or – ation. [Nominalization](#) means converting a word into a noun usually from verbs.

For example:

Govern – governance

Induce – inducement

Nationalize – nationalization

Besides the use of content words in the form of nominalization, academic vocabulary also uses linking words and phrases. As you read, find examples of these.

5.11 E-Tutor Task 2

Activity on nominalization and the use of transitional words

- Page 59 and page 89 of the prescribed book has tables of transitional words, and signaling words.
- Identify all the linking devices used in paragraph 1 to 3 of **Brands R Us**.
- Explain the functions of all the linking words identified above.

You can learn more about grammar and Academic English on the Queen Mary University by clicking on [Academic English](#). You will also find an activity on nominalization on this website and several other academic language related exercises.

Think about the words as the basic building blocks for sentences and paragraphs. You can use both to develop full paragraphs.

5.12 Learning Activity 8: What is a paragraph?

It is a series of sentences that deal with the same idea/theme/topic or issue. The rule is to have one theme per paragraph. A paragraph has three different types of sentences. These are:

- Topic sentence:** This is the sentence that tells the reader the theme of the paragraph. The topic sentence gives the reader a sense of what the paragraph will be about. Topic sentences are precise and straight to the point.
- Supporting sentences:** These are a group of sentences that explain the topic sentence. They elaborate on the topic sentence by doing any of the following: elaboration, definition, description, explanation, research and so on. Supporting sentences should be relevant and relate to the topic sentence. Research can refer to the facts that are provided by the information sources that you consult on this theme. It is also essential to acknowledge your sources by writing in-text references.

- c) **Concluding sentence:** This is the last sentence of the paragraph. When the reader reads it, s/he must get a sense that the theme of the paragraph has been dealt with adequately. The concluding sentence often sums up the theme of the paragraph.



Student Exercise 6

Turn to page 84 of the prescribed textbook: Activity 6.12. Dividing a text into paragraphs,

Divide the following text into three paragraphs by adding ‘//’ where you think one paragraph ends and the next begins. Remember that each paragraph should have a topic sentence. The idea introduced in that topic sentence is then developed.

5.13 Learning Activity 9: General tips on writing a paragraph

A paragraph has the following qualities:

- Deals with a single theme.
- Provides all the answers to questions that the reader might have. Remember that you will not be there to explain to the reader when s/he does not understand.
- Uses appropriate academic language.
- Acknowledges information sources used in the paragraph.

When writing a paragraph, keep the following tips in mind:

- Ensure that your sentences are complete.
- Vary the structure of the sentences.
- Maintain the correct tenses.
- Start every sentence with a capital letter.
- Do not use words or terms that you do not understand.
- Ensure that your concords correspond with the sentence.
- Use correct punctuations, spelling and grammar.

Another tip or strategy of formulating paragraphs is to think of a paragraph as an answer to the 5 W’s and 1 H. A paragraph must answer the following What, Who, When and Where, Why and How. The topic sentence answers the ‘What’ of a paragraph. This is because it tells the reader what the paragraph is about. The rest of the sentences answer the 5 W’s and H. The concluding sentence ends the paragraph.

5.14 Learning Activity 10: Sentences, Vocab, and Discourse

What makes academic discourse difficult to follow is not just the fact that more complex words are used but the style, register, lexical density and jargon can also make it challenging. The various texts that have been used above make use of complex sentences, abstract words and academic vocabulary. The sentences in which the words occur are explained below:

Types of sentences

- Fragments
- Simple sentences
- Compound sentences
- Complex sentences

5.15 E-tutor Task 3

Write your own examples under each column. You can look for examples from newspapers, books, and journals.

Sentence types in different discourses		
Simple sentence	Compound sentence	Complex sentence

In addition, the sentences may be

- Statements
- Commands/imperatives
- Questions
- Exclamations

Statement	Command	Question	Exclamation
I realized that I needed to go for a run.	Be original, be yourself.	What do West African countries have in common?	Stay away!

5.16 Learning Activity 11: Academic discourse

You do not need to know everything about grammar. What is important is that your brain associates particular types of diction, sentence structure and sentence types with a particular discourse. Association, inferencing, and sociocultural background will make you a good reader.

In addition, you need to train your brain (through social practice) to recognize and interpret the discourse of your chosen field of study, for example legal discourse, medical discourse, or economic discourse. This will help you identify with a particular discourse community, and give you a sense of belonging. The benefit of extensive reading and frequent practice is that it is an excellent way of training the brain to recognize any discourse. The more you read, the more knowledge that you gain.

Look at the text below entitled “Translating academic discourse”. You are aiming for a state where your brain will naturally process the text on the left so that it remains in your memory, as the text on the right:

'Translating' academic discourse	
What the journal article or book says	What you should understand
Excessive drinking of alcohol provides the best known example of the type of behavior which constitutes the theme of this book – namely apparent loss of control over a form of activity which, for most people, serves as a pleasurable and moderate indulgence. It forces upon our attention the major psychological issues with which this book attempts to deal, and at the same time illustrates how the same phenomenon can be viewed from totally different perspectives depending upon the fashion of thought at the time and the orientation of the observer. Such an excessive appetite may be viewed as non-problematic overindulgence, as sinful behavior, or as deviance; there is no better illustration of this diversity of view than the recent history of thought concerning excessive drinking.	<p>This book is about activities (like drinking) which many people enjoy but which some people do to excess.</p> <p>Drinking is a good example because it highlights the psychological reasons for addiction.</p> <p>Also, different people have different opinions on the topic (depending on where they're coming from), and this is true of other addictions.</p> <p>These opinions range from "it's not a problem" to the idea that it's "a sin", "a disease", "a behavior problem" or "a crime".</p>

Adapted from ENN103F study guide

5.17 E-tutor Task 4

Audience, Purpose and Register

Audience and purpose determines the register of the text. Register refers to the overall tone or effect achieved by all the text features, including diction, grammar, etc. that we have discussed so far. The process is shown in the following table. Add your own examples to the table.

Audience & Purpose	Discourse	Register
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ask bank manager for a loan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business letter/fax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Informal register is often marked by longer sentences and words. Informal register can also be identified by abbreviations and contractions ('that'll'), colloquial language and even slang. Sentences may be shorter, simpler, or even fragmented.

Informal register is often found in personal circumstances where the parties are well known to one another. But it is also used in adverts (to create a false sense of intimacy), motivational speeches, humorous writing, written dialogues and some types of business document (the email and certain memos). All our ordinary, daily conversations are informal. You need to be self-conscious of the situations where you use informal and formal register. In Unit 2, there is an

example of a formal and an informal email addressed to a professor and to a friend, respectively. Refer to these.



Student Exercise 7

Identify texts from your own field of study and complete the following table by identifying and analyzing their audience, purpose and register.

Text	Audience	Purpose	Register
Constitution of RSA	Population of SA		
Song			
Cartoon	Children		
Sermon			
Textbook			
Poem			
Newspaper report			
Advert			
Biography			
Journal Article			

5.18 Learning Activity 12: Academic Word Lists

Academic vocabulary is essential to academic reading and writing. Researchers and teachers have created a corpus or data base of some of the most common words in academic contexts. This is known as the Coxhead list of common academic word lists. This list also includes commonly used task or action words. Most of these words can be found in the language used in assignments and examinations. See the list on page 190 of the prescribed textbook.

The following website from Victoria University in New Zealand has several lists of the most common academic word lists. Click [here](#).

5.19 Learning Activity 13: Subject-specific vocabulary

Academic vocabulary, glossaries, and subject-specific dictionaries are meant to assist students and academics to learn and use the appropriate language that is related to a particular profession. There are various types of dictionaries that can guide you in the development of subject-specific vocabulary, for example, economics, statistics, legal dictionary and so on.



Student Exercise 8

Complete the following table with your own glossary over time, based on the semester or year you are in. This is a very useful way for recording new words in any subject or discipline, to remember them and to use them correctly. This will be particularly helpful when writing assignments and answering exam questions.

Name of your discipline

Word	Your own definition	Dictionary definition	Subject-specific definition	Your own sentence including the word

Adapted from, Beekman, et. Al 2016 *Academic Literacy* 2nd edition, Cape Town: Juta

5.20 Conclusion

This Tutorial Letter seeks to equip students with academic literacies. We know that many students belong to different disciplines, therefore, we have tried to cater for all of them without focusing on Science, Economics, or Humanities, etc. This is the first time that the module is offered in this way, we encourage you to take part in all the learning resources that are suggested. This will enrich your learning experience. We will continually improve the content and methods of teaching in the module and incorporate feedback from students.

5.21 References

Bailey, S. 2011 *Academic Writing: a handbook for international students* 3rd edition, London: Routledge

Beekman, et al. 2016 *Academic Literacy* 2nd edition, Cape Town: Juta