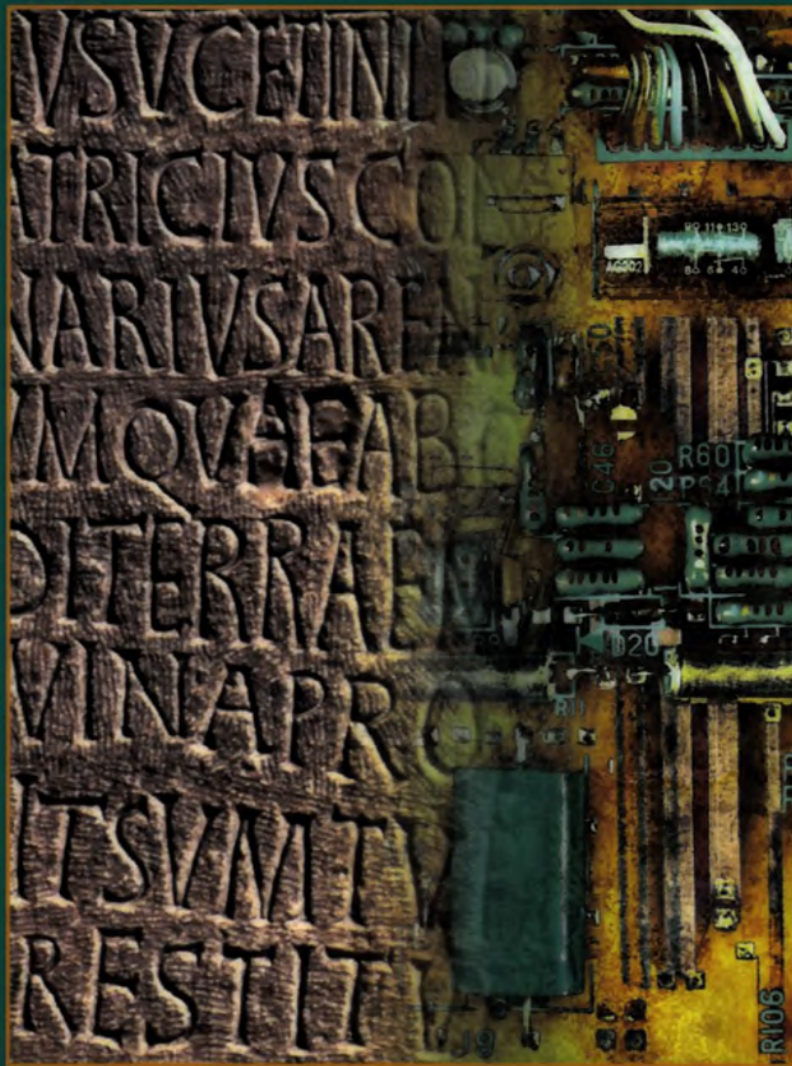


Fundamentals of Academic Writing



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PEARSON
Longman

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Preface



Fundamentals of Academic Writing is intended for beginning-level students learning English as a second or foreign language in college, adult, or secondary school programs. It offers a carefully structured approach that helps students develop basic writing skills, understand writing as a process, and build a solid foundation for becoming confident, independent writers in English.

To the Instructor

The text offers a wealth of realistic models to inspire and guide student writers. It also features clear explanations of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics, followed by the extensive practice students need to assimilate the material and write with accuracy. The text focuses on the elements of good sentences but within the context of simple descriptive and narrative paragraphs on student-centered topics. It effectively combines an introduction to basic paragraph structure with an emphasis on personal writing, the kind of writing that is most appropriate and motivating for learners at the beginning level. There are interactive tasks throughout the text—pair work, small-group activities, and full-class discussions—that engage students in the learning process and complement the solitary work that writers must do. There are also directions for keeping a journal, with plentiful suggestions for journal-entry topics, so that students write for fluency building in addition to doing the more formal assignments. Finally, the extensive appendices and thorough index make the text a valuable and easy-to-use reference tool.

Organization of the Text

Fundamentals of Academic Writing takes students from a look at the big picture to practice of specific elements and then to creating their own paragraphs, where they put together everything they have learned. The text has an introduction (Getting Started) followed by nine chapters and the appendices. Each Chapter Opener page includes a photograph and the chapter title to introduce the theme, and it also outlines the chapter's contents. The chapters are organized as follows:

Chapter Preview

Each chapter begins with a Chapter Preview that includes two simple model paragraphs which let students see exactly where they are headed. The models use structures and vocabulary that are easy for beginners to understand and emulate. The questions following the models draw the students' attention first to content and organization and then to certain features of the writers' language, such as verb forms, transition signals, key vocabulary, and so on.

Organization

The second section of each chapter is devoted to organization. In the early chapters, students learn what sentences and paragraphs are and how their papers should look. Later chapters deal with the elements of standard paragraph structure, patterns of organization within paragraphs (such as chronological order), and writers' strategies for organizing their ideas.

**Sentence
Structure/
Grammar/
Mechanics/
Vocabulary**

Four strands—Sentence Structure, Grammar, Mechanics, and Vocabulary—combine in various ways, always with a focus on writing at the word and sentence level. You will find brief, clear explanations followed by valuable practice in the nuts and bolts of effective and accurate writing.

- *Sentence Structure.* Students first learn to identify subjects and verbs. Then they progress through four patterns of simple sentences, followed by compound sentences with *and*, *but*, and *so*, and finally, a brief introduction to complex sentences with time clauses.
- *Grammar.* Students focus initially on the basic parts of speech and later on the structures that will be most useful to them in writing the assigned paragraph for that chapter. For example, they study the verb tenses needed to write about everyday life (simple present), describe ongoing activities (present progressive), relate past events (simple past), and write about the future (*be going to* and *will*).
- *Mechanics.* Students learn such basics as elementary rules for capitalization, end punctuation, titles, and commas.
- *Vocabulary.* Students further their understanding of the parts of speech and broaden their vocabulary base, particularly in ways that will help them with the assigned writing.

**The Writing
Process**

In Chapter 1, students learn the term *process*, and they get an overview of the writing process. In Chapter 2, they learn the specific steps they will take as they plan, compose, and finalize their paragraphs. In Chapters 2 through 9, students are guided step by step through the process of writing the assigned paragraph, initially with substantial support, later with increasing demands on their own creativity. By consistently following these steps, they learn how to tackle a writing assignment.

**Expansion
Activities**

This concluding section of each chapter has two goals: (1) to encourage journal writing and (2) to provide additional paragraph-writing tasks. The latter can provide further practice for the entire class or serve as extra assignments for those students ready to work independently.

Teaching Suggestions

The Getting Started section offers a good icebreaker at the start of a course. It helps students get to know one another by interviewing, introducing, and writing about a classmate. In addition, its three sections—Prewriting, Writing, and Sharing—anticipate the writing process students will follow. If you collect the students' papers, I suggest you do not correct them but rather keep the focus on content at this point. Consider holding on to the papers until the end of the course, when seeing them again can serve as a delightful reminder to students of how far they have come.

Begin each chapter with a close look at the model paragraphs. Two models are provided in each case so that students can see more than one way of addressing a writing task and have ample material to guide them as they create their paragraphs. The questions about the models are intended for work in pairs or small groups, to be followed by teacher-led full-class discussion. You may wish to do further analysis of the models—comparing and contrasting the writers’ choices, vocabulary, and so on—as appropriate for your class.

As you continue in the chapter, remember that with beginning-level students, it is particularly helpful for you to read explanations and directions aloud or have capable student readers do so. Throughout the text, you will notice direction lines that say, “Work alone or with a partner.” You can leave it up to the individual student whether to collaborate with a classmate or go it alone, or you can assign students to do the exercises as you think best. Sometimes the directions tell students to take a piece of paper because the exercise requires them to write their own sentences, which you will probably want to collect.

An introduction to journal writing appears on page 25, at the end of Chapter 1, but you can take your students to this section even sooner or wait until later in the course if you prefer. Journals are a wonderful way to get students writing about what interests them and give them a safe place to experiment with English as they search for new ways to express themselves. I recommend responding solely to the content of journal entries, ignoring errors (but writing questions if the content is unclear) in order to lessen the writer’s performance anxiety and emphasize writing to communicate. With the writer’s permission, I read aloud to the class the occasional journal entry that is especially thoughtful, funny, or intriguing, a practice that rewards the writer and can inspire others. Journal entries can also provide topics for more formal paragraph assignments. Teachers sometimes find journals time-consuming, but remember that you need not collect journals after every entry, collect all journals on the same day, or respond to entries at length. (Note, however, that teacher responses written in complete sentences model the kind of writing we ask of our students.) Grades for journals can be based on the number, length, and diversity of journal entries.

The writing process, as presented on page 45 and in each chapter thereafter, has four steps: Prewrite, Write, Edit, and Write the Final Draft.

- When they do prewriting, students interact with their classmates in various ways. They brainstorm, take notes, question one another, do freewriting, and learn strategies for organizing ideas. Interaction with classmates is good for generating ideas and, like peer review later on, raises student awareness of the audience for their writing.
- When they write a first draft, students rely on their notes and refer back to the models in the Chapter Preview. This can be done in class or for homework. Composing in class allows you to observe and assist; composing at home saves class time. You may wish to have students hand in both their prewriting and their first draft along with their final draft for clues to the writer’s thinking and the development of the paragraph.

- Students must take responsibility for checking and improving their own work. However, they are often best able to do so when they can see their writing through the eyes of a reader and when they develop revising and editing skills by reviewing other writers' work. For these reasons, I encourage peer review but only at a very basic level. Each chapter includes a simple checklist to guide the reviewer through the process slowly and thoughtfully. See page 46 for an example of a peer reviewer's markings on a first draft.
- The term *final draft* is used to mean a revised and edited draft handed in to the teacher, possibly for a grade. It is not necessarily the last draft that the student will write. As explained to the student under Results of the Writing Process, another draft, based on written and/or oral feedback from you, may be required. Also, a useful set of correction symbols can be found in Appendix N, along with sample marked-up paragraphs, which can form the basis of lessons in understanding and responding to teacher feedback.

Students are instructed to hand in new drafts stapled on top of earlier ones so that you can make comparisons. You may wish to have students keep their final drafts in a folder so that they compile a collection of paragraphs written during the course. They can go back later and further revise their work so that in effect the writing course mirrors the writing process: full of brainstorming, drafting, and sharing early on, with a greater emphasis on polishing later, when students can apply everything they have learned to date about good English sentences and paragraphs.

Answer Key An Answer Key is available upon request from the publisher.

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This book is dedicated to a great teacher of mine, Jane Boggs Sloan. Twenty-five years later, when faced with a teaching dilemma, I still ask myself, "What would Jane do?"

To the Student

Welcome to *Fundamentals of Academic Writing*! Learning to write in English is like learning to play the game of baseball, or almost any sport. There are many rules that all players must follow, but no two games are ever alike. Just as every game is different, so is every piece of writing—and every writer. This book will help you learn the rules that good writers know. It will also give you many chances to "play the game" of writing English. I hope that you will write a lot, that you will have fun writing, and that you will feel proud of your work.

Linda Butler