

## Expository Writing (SS1014)

Date: February 29<sup>th</sup> 2024

### Course Instructor(s)

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## Sessional-I Exam

Total Time: 1 Hour

Total Marks: 40

Total Questions: 02

Semester: SP-2024

Campus: Lahore

Dept: Sciences & Humanities

[Redacted]

Student Name

[Redacted]

Roll No

[Redacted]

Section

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Student Signature

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**Q1: Read the *Principals of Poor Writing* and write the introductory paragraph of 120-150 words to a Response Paper. Ensure your paragraph includes the following. [15]**

- Hook
- Lead-in (Author and article details & Summary)
- Three-point Thesis Statement

### Principals of Poor Writing

Books and articles on good writing are numerous, but where can you find sound, practical advice on how to write poorly? Poor writing is so common that every educated person ought to know something about it. Many scientists actually do write poorly, but they probably perform by ear without perceiving clearly how their results are achieved. An article on the principles of poor writing might help. The author considers himself well qualified to prepare such an article; he can write poorly without half trying. The average student finds it surprisingly easy to acquire the usual tricks of poor writing. To do a consistently poor job, however, one must grasp a few essential principles including ignoring the reading, being verbose and by avoiding revision.

### Ignore the Reader

The world is divided into two great camps: yourself and others. A little obscurity or indirection in writing will keep the others at a safe distance. Write as if for a diary. Keep your mind on a direct course between yourself and the subject; don't think of the reader — he makes a bad triangle. This is fundamental. Constant and alert consideration of the probable reaction of the reader is a serious menace to poor writing; moreover, it requires mental effort. A logical argument is that if you write poorly enough, your readers will be too few to merit any attention whatever. Ignore the reader wherever possible. If the proposed title, for example, means something to you, stop right there; think no further. If the title baffles or misleads the reader, you have won the first round. Similarly, all the way through

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you must write for yourself, not for the reader. Practice a dead-pan technique, keeping your facts and ideas all on the same level of emphasis with no telltale hints of relative importance or logical sequence. Use long sentences containing many ideas loosely strung together. And is the connective most frequently employed in poor writing because it does not indicate cause and effect, nor does it distinguish major ideas from subordinate ones. Because seldom appears in poor writing, nor does the semicolon — both are replaced by and. Camouflage transitions in thought. Avoid such connectives as *moreover*, *nevertheless*, *on the other hand*. If unable to resist the temptation to give some signal for a change in thought, use *however*. In ignoring the reader, avoid parallel constructions which give the thought away too easily. I need not elaborate, for you probably employ inversion frequently. It must have been a naive soul who said, “When the thought is parallel, let the phrases be parallel.”

## Be Verbose, Vague, and Pompous

The cardinal sin of poor writing is to be concise and simple. Avoid being specific: it ties you down. Use plenty of deadwood: include many superfluous words and phrases. Wishful thinking suggests to a writer that verbosity somehow serves as a cloak or even as a mystic halo by which an idea may be glorified. A cloud of words may conceal defects in observation or analysis, either by opacity or by diverting the reader’s attention. Introduce abstract nouns at the drop of a hat — even in those cases where the magnitude of the motion in a downward direction is inconsiderable. Make frequent use of the words *case*, *character*, *condition*, *former* and *latter*, *nature*, *such*, *very*.

## Do Not Revise

Write hurriedly, preferably when tired. Have no plan; write down items as they occur to you. The article will thus be spontaneous and poor. Hand in your manuscript the moment it is finished. Rereading a few days later might lead to revision — which seldom, if ever, makes the writing worse. If you submit your manuscript to colleagues (a bad practice), pay no attention to their criticisms or comments. Later, resist firmly any editorial suggestion. Be strong and infallible; don’t let anyone break down your personality. The critic may be trying to help you or he may have an ulterior motive, but the chance of his causing improvement in your writing is so great that you must be on guard.

Source: Paul W. Merrill, P. W.M (1947). Principals of Poor Writing. In Models for Writers (14th ed., p. 406)

Q2. Write a narrative essay of 320 – 350 words on:

“The most expensive thing I have ever bought”

considering the psychological, emotional and financial effects of making such a decision. [25]

Your Essay must include:

- Introduction -
  - Reader’s Hook
  - Lead-in (Background information & theme)
  - Three-point Thesis Statement
- Three Body Paragraphs
  - Rising Action
  - Climax
  - Falling Action
- Conclusion/Resolution