

UNIT 4

EXEMPLIFICATION

Exemplification writing uses specific, vivid examples for the purpose of adding more information to explain, persuade, define, or illustrate a general idea. Likewise, exemplification provides solid support and strong evidence to prove the writer's main statement.

By supplying specific examples, the writer adds additional who, what, when, where, why, and how information to elaborate on the main idea of a paragraph or essay. Good examples are logically related to the topic, and provide the mental imagery needed by the reader to make important connections.

There are several ways to organize an exemplification paragraph or essay. Some writers need several examples to sufficiently explain their main idea. Other writers might use only one major example and examine all its subordinate features to satisfactorily demonstrate their point.

The examples can be organized chronologically, spatially, from the simple to complex, or with the emphatic order which moves from the first example to the one that is most important. Examples organized chronologically are moving through time, while examples organized spatially are moving through space.

Exemplification moves from the general to the specific

Broad	Specific →	→ More Specific
compound	H ² O	a chemical substance made up of two hydrogen atoms and a one oxygen atom that exists in several forms
lawsuit	Roe vs. Wade	controversial landmark decision granting women the right to choose
tree	Oak	a deciduous genus of the northern hemisphere bearing a fruit known as the acorn
film	<i>Gone With the Wind</i>	a classic American epic tale of riches, ruin, and romance set in the aftermath of the Civil War

To exemplify, we mention **a class** – e.g. animals – and one or some (but not all) of the **members** of that class – e.g. cats, or cats and dogs.

Example:

Defining friendship as it occurs in real life

A friendship occurs when a bond is made between two people that go beyond being an acquaintance. A friendship that is healthy should contain respect, where both people respect each other in a somewhat equal fashion. The two should also care about the fate of the other, and may also care about the emotional and physical wellbeing of the other. A friendship may also include acts, be they of kindness or in general, that work for the best interest of the other without requiring anything tangible in return.

Example 1 – acts of kindness without requiring anything in return

An example of this includes when a young man was dumped by the girlfriend he was living with. The relationship had gone on since school up into college whereupon the two had moved in together. The man's friend, upon discovering that his friend was moving out of the house he and his girlfriend shared, went over to help him move out of his house into a family member's house.

Example 2 – acting in the best interest of the other person

A young woman repeatedly saw the partner of her friend flirt with other women and he appeared on many occasions to be taking it a little too far. The woman did not want to tell her friend just in case she was overreacting, plus it may have damaged their relationship. Instead, she spoke to one of the women that the man was flirting with and convinced her to show her girlfriend the text messages that the man had been sending her. That way her friend was able to see what her boyfriend was up to without it damaging the friendship between the two women.

Example 3 – providing support for the other person without any tangible reward

There are numerous occasions in college when students have gone out of their way to be there for their friends during times of illness and grief without ever receiving anything in return. One may assume that if material rewards were not received that maybe they hoped the other would provide the same type of support when they were ill or upset, and yet there are many times when the person giving never receives it back (possibly because it was not needed) and yet the friendship remained strong.

Conclusion

There are plenty of examples of friendship in a real-life situation where people do things for other people without any sort of tangible reward. There are occasions when a friend looks out for another person's interests, and times when acts of kindness are given

because of friendship alone. There is an argument to be had around if the actual friendship is reward in itself, which would then mean that acts of kindness and caring are still motivated by self-interest.

Complex Example-Giving

Written examples often do more than just name a class member – they **say something about it**. This is what is meant by “complex” example-giving. Here is an example:

Some European languages are widely spoken in other continents. For example, Portugueseis common in Africa and South America.

The extra information about the class member here is underlined. It will usually contain a **verb** (here *is spoken*). Because of this, the example-giving must be in a **new sentence** and *for example* must have a **comma after it**.

Note: the following common errors to avoid with complex example-giving:

WRONG (class member not in a new sentence): Some European languages are widely spoken in other continents, for example Portuguese. It is common in Africa and South America.

WRONG (class member repeated with a pronoun): Some European languages are widely spoken in other continents. For example Portuguese, it/which is common in Africa and South America.

WRONG (class member in a sentence without a verb): Some European languages are widely spoken in other continents. For example Portuguese. It is common in Africa and South America

