

**GE1401**

**University English**

**Summer Semester 2021**

**Unit 1**

**Course Introduction / Understanding Genre**

**Welcome to GE1401**

This course is about English as it is used in academic settings. More specifically, the course introduces the features which distinguish academic English from the language as it is used in everyday life, in order to support your ability to do things like listening to lectures, reading textbooks and writing assignments. This unit introduces the course, its objectives and its content, as well as taking up one important concept in academic writing: genre. The online module will help you identify different types of text. In class, you will learn about the course, and about genres. Outside of class you will familiarize yourself with the course requirements. By the end of this unit, you will:

* understand how the course is structured and assessed
* understand what you need to do in order to succeed in this course
* be able to describe and identify some of the characteristics of academic writing
* have reflected your own strengths and weaknesses as a reader and writer

**The structure of this course**

At university, a great deal of importance is placed on learner independence. In this course, time in class is spent doing the things that can best be done in a group. You are responsible for preparing for class, so that maximum value can come out of class time, and for doing after-class work to consolidate your learning. The course is divided into units, and each unit has a focus on one or more aspects of academic communication. Each unit involves:

**In-class activities**. In-class activities will help you understand the topic of each unit better. Everyone benefits if everyone comes to class prepared and takes an active part in the activities. Class meetings also offer an opportunity to ask questions about things you don't understand, and to learn about and make progress with the assessment tasks.

**Online modules and quizzes**. You will work with selected materials on Canvas which are related to the topic of the unit. Then you'll test your understanding of the topic by taking an online quiz.

**Follow-up**. Each unit is closely linked to one or more of the assessment tasks. After each class meeting you will work on the next step in the assessment tasks. Your teacher may also assign other tasks to be completed before the next class.

**Course content and assessment details**

The Course Intended Learning Outcomes outline the specific course goals and are summarized below. The Course Outline indicates the focus of each unit and week of the course. The Assessment Information section provides information about how your performance on the course will be assessed, and shows important deadlines. After your first class, you should study these carefully and note any questions, so that you can raise them in the next class meeting.

**Aims of the course**

This course aims to develop academic literacy skills of reading and writing in a university context and will help you to:

**Read critically** to evaluate a variety of reading genres and texts in a university context, demonstrate your understanding and integrate ideas and sources into your writing.

**Write an argumentative text** integrating the ideas and words of others in a way that avoids plagiarism.

**Produce multiple drafts of writing** making use of various techniques including identifying characteristics of the argumentative essay, brainstorming ideas and gathering information, working with sources, prewriting and outlining, planning and drafting, reviewing, revising, editing and proofreading.

**Work together with others to improve your reading and writing** through peer review, peer conferencing and peer review responses.

**Collaboratively design an infographic** that visually explains your argument.

**Use English as a tool for discovery and self-directed learning** through in-class discussion and outside-of-class (online) reading and writing activities.

**Course outline**

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| --- | --- |
| **Units** | **Focus** |
| **Unit 1** | Introduction to the course; understanding genre; self-evaluation as reader and writer at university. |
| **Unit 2** | Library workshop; collecting information from different sources; creating an infographic. |
| **Unit 3** | Data Representation and Commentary |
| **Unit 4** | Working with sources |
| **Unit 5** | Infographic sharing; process writing. |
| **Unit 6** | Paragraphing and cohesion |
| **Unit 7** | Argument, evidence and structure |
| **Unit 8** | Critical Reading and Peer Review |
| **Unit 9** | Stance, Style and Register |
| **Unit 10** | Feedback and Reflection (Consultations) |
| **Unit 11** | Tools for Revision |
| **Unit 12** | Local Revision (Self-study) |
| **Unit 13** | Reflection on writing in a university context |

**Assessment Information**

Your grade in this course is based on five components which measure how well you have achieved the learning objectives:

1. an **infographic**
2. an **essay**
3. the **online modules**
4. a **self-reflection**
5. your **participation** in class.

Due dates, and details regarding these assignments are available below. It is **your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the assignment guidelines and rules**. Please note that **all assignments are expected to be submitted on time**:

* **Late assignments will be penalized by 10% of the total possible score per day for three days** after the submission deadline. For example, if you submit an assignment worth 20 marks one day late, your work will be graded according to the rubric with 2 marks deducted for the late penalty. Late penalties are applied for any portion of a day – thus an assignment submitted 15 minutes after the submission deadline is considered one day late.
* Assignments **more than 3 days late will be given a mark of 0**.
* **Requests for extension will not be considered** unless they are supported by valid written proof (e.g. a medical certificate). For assessment worth less than 20% of the course grade, such requests need to be emailed to your instructor. For assignments worth 20% or more, requests need to be submitted via AIMS for vetting by your academic unit.
* **Submission deadlines are strictly enforced by the automated submission system. Your teacher is not able to make exceptions for individual students.**
* The file you submit (which should be either Microsoft Word [.doc/.docx] or Adobe PDF [but not PDF with only images, a scanned file]), via the online Turnitin system, or in class, will be considered the final file for assessment purposes. **Be careful to check carefully that you are uploading or otherwise submitting the correct version of your work** – if, for example, you submit an earlier draft of an essay by accident, the version you have submitted will be assessed.

**Academic Honesty**

In order to be able to assess how well you have achieved the learning objectives, your teacher has to be able to see the work that you produce on your own. Anything else is less than fair to you, your teacher and your classmates. This is the reason why City University, like other universities around the world, has rules about plagiarism. According to the Office of the Provost at City University, “plagiarism can be defined as intentionally or unintentionally failing to acknowledge the source of ideas or quoted text in a creative work.”[[1]](#endnote-1) Some common forms of plagiarism include:

• Presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own

• Submitting the same work (or part of it) for credit in more than one course (**Please note that it is considered plagiarism to submit course work done for another course for GE1401)**

• Copying the words or ideas of others without acknowledgment

• Helping someone else commit plagiarism[[2]](#endnote-2)

The Department of English takes plagiarism very seriously. Students found to have plagiarized work will receive 0 marks for the assignment concerned and may receive an 'F' for the entire course. In the event of repeated offences, student will receive an ‘F’ for the course, and may be placed on academic probation. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism or whether or not you have provided attribution for your sources correctly, you should consult your course instructor or academic advisor. For more information on academic honesty, please see <http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/ah/> and http://www.cityu.edu.hk/provost/academic\_honesty/index.htm.

**Draft 2 and Draft 3 of the essay** as well as **the self-assessment commentary** will be submitted to Turnitin, a text-matching tool which can help identify some problems related to plagiarism and source use.

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| **Assessment Task Deadlines and Basic Information** | | | | |
|  | **Assessment Task** | **Weighting** | **Assessment Type** | **Due Date** |
| 1. | **Participation** | 5% | Individual, in-class assessment throughout the semester | throughout course |
| 2. | **Online Modules** | 20% | Individual, weekly online practice and quizzes  **Week 1 Library module is** **compulsory.** | Sunday of each week by 23:59. **No make-ups or re-takes. Quizzes are only available during the corresponding week (with the exception of quiz 1, which is available longer).** |
| 3. | **Needs Analysis** | N/A | Required for Self-Assessment Commentary (see 6 below) | In class week 2  Consult your teacher if in doubt |
| 4. | **Infographic** | 20% | Group mark – all participants in the group must make a substantial contribution to group work. If a student is found not to have done so, they will receive a lower mark than their group to reflect their inability to demonstrate achievement of learning aims. | In class week 5  (to be uploaded before the start of your fifth class)  Consult your teacher if in doubt |
| 5a. | **Essay Draft 1** | N/A | Individual | In class week 7\* |
| 5b. | **Peer Review on essay draft 1** | N/A | Individual | In class week 8\* |
| 5c. | **Essay Draft 2** | 20% | Individual | Turnitin submission, Sunday, 11 July 2021 by 23:59 (week 9) |
| 5d. | **Essay Draft 3** | 20% | Individual | Turnitin submission, Sunday, 25 July 2021 by 23:59 (week 12) |
| 6. | **Self-Assessment Commentary** | 15% | Individual | Turnitin submission, Sunday, 25 July 2021 by 23:59 (week 13) |

\*Individual instructors may adjust the date and mode of submission for this task. Contact your instructor if you have doubts. ”Sunday” is considered to be the SEVENTH day of an academic week and “Monday” the first day.

**Assessment Task Details**

1. In order to obtain good marks for the **participation** element of the course, you should:

* attend all classes punctually and stay for the entire session;
* make high-quality contributions to all class tasks, activities, and discussions;
* communicate in English at all times throughout the semester;
* produce a medical certificate or another form of justification for absences;
* participate in the peer review activities. Failure to participate in peer review will lead to a 3-mark deduction from your participation mark

2. In the case of **the online modules**, your score will be based on your weekly completion of the scheduled post-module quizzes. Remember that the quizzes are only available for one week each (with the exception of quiz 1, which is available longer). If you miss a quiz, you cannot re-take it or make up the work. **No make-ups or re-takes. If you experience technical difficulties with the online module, it is your responsibility to solve the issue before the submission deadline.** Please contact the Computer Services Centre Help Desk.

3. The **needs analysis** (see unit 1, activity 8 of the course materials) is not in itself assessed, but if you do not complete it in (on time) you will lose 5 marks from your self-assessment commentary.

4. For the **infographic** assessment task, you will work as part of a small group to create an informative visual image (using online software) which presents the results of research on a selected topic in a clear, engaging, and factual manner. As you will be working in groups, you must participate in the group’s work in order to earn marks for this assignment. If your participation is not of an acceptable standard, this will lead to a potential mark of 0 on this assignment. The infographic:

* will allow you to practice the skills of finding, evaluating, and presenting information, not as a written text but as a visual image;
* should combine text with graphics to present information on a clearly defined topic;
* should add value, serving to convey accurate information more efficiently than text would, rather than simply illustrating;
* should be factual and based on academic/scholarly sources;
* should bear a title which accurately reflects its content;
* should be easy to view, with a logical and readily apparent reading pathway;
* should adopt an academic tone with the reference list presented in APA style.

5. The **essay** is worth a total of 40% of your mark over three drafts (i.e. Draft 1, Draft 2 and Draft 3). It is thus the most important assessment task on the course, and one that you will need to put a substantial amount of time into over at least five weeks. You will submit three drafts of your paper; only draft 2 and draft 3 will be marked by your teacher. They are worth 20% each. Your essay should:

* put forward a clear argument on an interesting topic of your own choice;
* be thoroughly supported with evidence (including evidence from at least three academic/scholarly sources);
* be structured effectively, will an introduction, well-developed paragraphs, a conclusion, and a reference list in APA style;
* be written in good English and use signposting, cohesion devices, etc., to guide the reader through the text;
* be between 800-1,000 words long, exclusive of references.
* show evidence of thoughtful revision between drafts based on peer and teacher feedback, and your own reflection. This process will be an important part of the assessment.

6. The **Self-Assessment Commentary** is based on the needs analysis questionnaire which you filled out in Unit 2. The commentary (which should be between 700-750 words long, exclusive of references) should address the five questions listed below, and will be assessed based on the extent to which it presents evidence of reflection, supported by specific details, in a clear, appropriate English.

1. To what extent has your learning this semester addressed the areas identified in the needs analysis?
2. To what extent have you achieved the objectives you identified as part of the needs analysis?
3. What factors have made the greatest contribution this semester to your development as a writer?
4. What are your goals for future development as an academic writer?
5. How will you achieve those goals?

**How are grades awarded in GE1401?**

GE1401 University English has thousands of students and hundreds of sections every year, so it is important to make sure that student work is assessed consistently. The following procedures are designed to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by virtue of the particular class of the course he or she is assigned to, or by the semester in which the course is taken:

1. All assessments have assessment criteria which state what characteristics make a piece of work excellent, good, adequate, etc. Teachers refer to these when they assess your work.

2. Before we start marking an assessment, we come together as a group, look at samples of student work, and discuss what marks they should receive. During this process we come into alignment with each other.

3. When teachers have finished marking an assessment, they share their marks and a selection of assessments with a senior member of the course team. This spot-check confirms whether teachers are marking to the same standard.

4. The senior member of the course team then forwards marks and samples to the course lead and the course coordinator. This is an additional check that teachers are marking consistently.

5. This process is repeated for all assessments across the semester.

6. At the end of the semester, students' final marks are totalled and converted into grades by the course coordinator.

7. Teachers then check the total marks and grades, and report any inaccuracies.

**This process is designed to ensure fair and accurate grading across the course, but it also means that your teachers must release marks on individual assignments in line with the course as a whole.**

**Late Drop**

Please note that requests for late drop will only be considered when there is a strong justification (e.g. a medical emergency). Late drop requests must be made through the English department general office, not your teacher.

**About Different Kinds of Texts**

Different texts are written for different purposes and this affects many of their features. The remainder of this unit takes up the features of different sorts of texts, to help you be aware of the decisions you need to make as you write.

**Activity 1: Differences between spoken and written texts**

One of the primary distinctions we need to make when communicating in an academic environment is between spoken and written language.

**Q.1** What differences can you think of between spoken and written texts?

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| --- | --- |
| Spoken | Written |
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**Activity 2: Genres and Text Types**

Most people do a variety of different kinds, or genres, of writing throughout their life.

**Q.2** Make a list of the different kinds of things you have written.

**Q.3** Then pick two of the things on your list and, with the person sitting next to you, discuss how they were similar or different in terms of:

* **Language**. Was it formal or informal?
* **Audience**. Who were you writing for?
* **Purpose**. Were you trying to persuade, inform, or do something else?
* **Structure**. How was it organised?

Your list may have included things like a What's App message to a friend, an email to a teacher asking a question, a shopping list, an exam or an essay. We call these different kinds of writing *genres.* If you picked two very different genres, your answers to the questions in the tasks were probably quite different as well. This is because the features of a good text are the ones which best serve its purposes, and different genres have different purposes.

The genre we are writing within has a powerful effect on how we write. As Ken Hyland writes:

Genre refers to abstract, socially recognised ways of using language. It is based on the idea that members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognising similarities in the texts they use frequently and are able to draw on their repeated experiences with such texts to read, understand, and perhaps write them relatively easily. This is, in part, because writing is a practice based on expectations: the reader’s chances of interpreting the writer’s purpose are increased if the writer takes the trouble to anticipate what the reader might be expecting based on previous texts they have read of the same kind.[[3]](#endnote-3)

This means that by identifying and using the conventions of a given genre, we can communicate more easily, more reliably, and faster. It also indicates that a major component in successful writing is anticipating the needs and expectations of your readers.

**Activity 3: Which Genre?**

Read the four short extracts below and discuss:

**Q.4** What genres do they belong to?

**Q.5** How can you tell? What “similarities in the texts” to other texts you have seen help you identify the genre?

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| **Extract 1**[[4]](#endnote-4)  Nonetheless, while recognising in the importance of Lubbock’s critical and theoretical achievement, Woolf was uncomfortable with elements of his concept of novelistic form. She argued that a novel, the “book itself,” is not as Lubbock believed “form which you see, but emotion which you feel.”1 Lubbock’s concept of form is, she writes, “interposed between us and the book as we know it,” an “alien substance” interfering with “emotions which we feel naturally, and name simply and range in final order by feeling their right relations to each other.”2 This statement has understandably enough led some critics to argue that for Woolf “form is not an object but an emotion.”3 Indeed, in one particularly strong reading Emily Blair has claimed that for Woolf form “like plot, is an imposition that suggests tyranny” and that she is thus more interested in “the arrangement of emotions” than in the structural and hierarchical relationships implied by the term form.  **Extract 2**  Good 2cu you yesterday. FYI, Adam is interested in the car. IMO, you should ask for more!  **Extract 3[[5]](#endnote-5)**  **Households are more than £800 worse off after Brexit, study says**  *The average household is paying £404 a year extra due to price inflation while the average worker has lost £448*  Households are more than £800 a year worse off as a result of Brexit-induced inflation, a new study has found.  A report by the Centre for Economic Performance has revealed that the average household is paying £404 a year extra due to price inflation.  At the same time the average worker has lost £448, the equivalent of one week’s pay, due to a stagnation in wage growth.  Dr Thomas Sampson, who co-authored the research, said: “Even before Brexit occurs, the increase in inflation caused by the Leave vote has already hurt UK households.  **Extract 4[[6]](#endnote-6)**  **Materials and methods**  **Chemicals**  Peptone, yeast extract, malt extract, K2SO4, CuSO4, Na2S2O3·5H2O, and MgSO4·7H2O were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich; agar, glucose, fructose, H3BO3, HPLC grade water, and (NH4)2SO4 from Fisher Scientific; K2HPO4 from Merck; arabinose from Acros Organics; and KH2PO4 from EMD Chemicals.  **Preparation of soybean flour and soybean hull hydrolysates**  Soybean flour hydrolysate (SFH) was prepared according to previously reported conditions (Loman et al. 2016). In short, soybean flour was hydrolyzed using the mixture of enzymes produced in this laboratory by Aspergillus niger NRRL 341 fermentation according to the method described earlier (Li et al. 2017). The produced enzyme mixture has activities including, but not limited to, cellulase (0.70 ± 0.05 FPU/mL), xylanase (180 ± 5 U/mL), pectinase (7.25 ± 0.42 U/mL), α-galactosidase (8.1 ± 0.3 U/mL), and sucrase (4.22 ± 0.03 U/mL). Soybean flour was first dry heat sterilized in an oven at 160 °C for 2 h. The enzyme solution was adjusted to pH 4.8 and then added to the sterilized soybean flour at a 4:1 (v/w) ratio, i.e., 4 mL of enzyme solution per gram of dry soybean flour. Enzyme hydrolysis was carried out at 50 °C and pH 4.8 for 24 h. Hydrolysate was then separated from the protein-enriched solids by centrifugation at 7500×g for 10 min. A similar procedure was used for preparing soybean hull hydrolysate (SHH) except that the soybean hull was sterilized by autoclaving at 121 °C for 15 min instead of the dry heat sterilization of soybean flour. |

**Activity 4: Text Types**

This course is about writing successfully in an academic context. As we have seen, different disciplines and subjects will require you to generate different types of academic texts – that is, to produce different genres. Every text in a specific genre is built out of a number of features, and one of these are the different textual functions that can occur in it. For example, a movie review is a particular genre, but a review will contain a number of different sections of text carrying out a number of different functions. For example, it might *describe* the subject matter of the movie, *explain* something about its background, and *discuss* its relative merits.

Look at the types of texts listed below.

**Q.6** Which ones have you read? Which ones have you written?

**Q.7** Do you think that you would be more likely to find some of these in one subject area than another? Why?

**Argument***. Factual text that puts forward a point of view/argument*

**Chronology**. *Shows steps in the order they occurred, and possibly an explanation of what caused them.*

**Description.** *Describes material things or abstract concepts*

**Explanation**. *Factual text that attempts to make something clear and understandable*

**Narrative**. *Presents a story line, possibly with complication and resolution*

**Procedural description**. *Shows how something is accomplished through a series of steps*

In academic writing, we can use combinations of these text types to respond effectively to a particular writing task. For example, in order to respond to a question such as “What factors have contributed to changes in the way people communicate in contemporary society?”, we may need to **describe** what the latest technology can do **before explaining** how this has changed communication habits.

**Activity 5: Understanding and structuring texts**

Different types of text, or different text functions, are often associated with different linguistic features. For example, discussions often make use of the language of comparison and contrast.

Read the following texts.

**Q.8** Decide what each text type is and what kind of language is used.

**Q.9** Discuss your answers with your partner.

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| **Text 1: Understanding Oil Refineries**  Before crude oil can be utilized it must be processed in a refinery and converted into different products. Oil is first distilled, which breaks down into gas, petrol, diesel and other fuels. This is done by heating the crude oil, which is then pumped to the bottom of a tall steel tube called a ‘fractionating tower’. This tower is divided into compartments all the way up and the very hot petroleum enters the bottom of the tower as vapour. Crude oil is made up of a number of different ingredients and each of these boils and vaporizes at different temperatures. The vapours at the bottom of the tower are the hottest, and those at the higher levels are cooler. At the bottom of each compartment in the tower are trays at different levels. Petrol collects in the top trays, diesel condenses a little lower down and the other oils become liquids at even lower levels. In this way, the crude oil is separated into the various fractions, which are then drawn off ready for further refining. |
| **Text 2: Logging rainforest in Indonesia**  There is great debate about whether rainforests in Indonesia should be handed over to the private forest industry for logging. Conservationists and industry representatives have put forward strong arguments to support their cases.  Conservationist claim that the forest industry is destroying the natural environment for short term financial gain. Trees help to protect the soil from erosion and they provide habitats for many forms of wild life, some of which are becoming extinct. AS well, rainforests supply fresh air and oxygen and provide recreational facilities for Indonesians who enjoy camping and hiking in national rainforest parks.  Forest industry representatives however argue that a steady timber supply is important for the Indonesian economy where furniture exports are growing steadily. If logging is restricted local markets will suffer because furniture will increase in price but more importantly jobs in this growing industry will be lost.  In summary therefore, while the rainforest timber industry does provide local employment and adds to economic growth, the costs to the environment are very significant and outweigh the economic gain. |

**Activity 6: Reflecting about writing**

The concept of genre is an indication of how writing and reading are collective activities: a genre is a shared set of conventions, a group of text types with a set of more or less fixed functions which enables us to understand each other better. Similarly, common features of good writing within a particular genre can often be identified. But the way we relate to writing (as readers and as writers) is very personal.

**Q.10** Read the pieces of advice about the writing process from famous writers.

**Q.11** Discuss them with your classmates. Which do you think are more or less helpful, and why?

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| **Joyce Carol Oates**: "Most writers find first drafts painfully difficult, like climbing a steep stairs, the end of which isn't in sight. Only just persevere! Eventually, you will get where you are going, or so you hope. And when you get there, you will not ask why? the relief you feel is but a brief breathing spell, before beginning again with another inspiration, another draft, another steep climb."[[7]](#endnote-7)  **Warren Ellis:** "The point is getting it all down, even if it's crap or incomprehensible to anyone but you, so you can see it outside your own head. And then you can start adding to it. Expanding it, putting new layers on it, winding a new plotline around it, moving bits of it around. Just get it down."[[8]](#endnote-8)  **David Mamet:** "I mean, if I'm not writing for the audience, if I'm not writing to make it easier for them, then who the hell am I doing it for?"[[9]](#endnote-9)  **Susan Sontag:** "Though the rewriting - and the rereading - sound like effort, they are actually the most pleasurable parts of writing. Sometimes the only pleasurable parts. Setting out to write, if you have the idea of 'literature' in your head, is formidable, intimidating. A plunge in an icy lake. Then comes the warm part: when you already have something to work with, upgrade, edit."[[10]](#endnote-10) |

**Activity 7: You as Reader and Writer**

**Q.12** Discuss with your partner:

* What things do you like to read?
* What was the last book you read?
* What part of writing is hardest for you?
* What part of writing is easiest for you?

**Activity 8: Needs Self-Analysis**

You will now complete a needs analysis to foster awareness of yourself as a developing writer.

**Q.13** Answer these questions in writing, and keep the document for use with the self-assessment commentary.

1. On a scale from 1-5 (1=very weak; 5=very strong), evaluate your skills in English in the areas below:
2. Reading
3. Writing
4. Speaking
5. Listening
6. Grammar
7. Vocabulary

For each of the statements below, say whether you:

4 = Strongly Agree 3 = Agree 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

1. I am a good academic writer in my native language.
2. I think I am a good academic writer in English.
3. I have experience using information sources in my writing assignments.
4. I know how to use information sources effectively in my writing assignments.
5. I have experience in writing argumentative essays.
6. One of my major strengths as a writer of English is producing interesting ideas.
7. I am skilled at organizing my ideas and expressing them logically.
8. When I write, I think carefully about what my reader wants to know from me.
9. Before I revise a paper, I ask a classmate or friend to give me comments on it.
10. When I revise a paper or draft, I make a lot of changes.
11. The final papers I turn in show that I have a strong command of English vocabulary.
12. My final papers contain few grammatical errors.
13. My final papers contain few spelling and punctuation errors.
14. I have to work hard to write well in English.
15. I enjoy writing in English.
16. I enjoy discussing my writing with others.
17. I have been able to improve my writing after getting feedback from classmates
18. I have been able to improve my writing after getting feedback from the teacher.
19. I select examples of good writing to read in order to learn from it.
20. I know my strengths and weaknesses as a writer.
21. I know where my writing ranks compared to my classmates.
22. I am a fast reader in my native language(s).
23. I am a fast reader in English.
24. When I read in English, I understand most of what I read.
25. I read (in any language) for pleasure.
26. I frequently read in English.

Finally, answer the following questions.

1. My greatest strengths as a writer of English include:
2. Aspects that I would like to improve the most in this course include:
3. Here is how I plan to achieve the goals I have set for myself in 29) above:

**Unit 2**

**Finding, Evaluating and Presenting Information**

This unit focuses on information, where to find it, and what to do with it. **The class meeting this week will take place in the library** (due to scheduling constraints, your group's library session may take place next week instead). A member of the university library team will present the library's resources. Afterward your instructor will go over the instructions and expectations for the infographic. The online module will reinforce the skills from the library unit. Outside of class you will form a team to work on the infographic and develop one or more concrete ideas to present in class the following week.

**Activity 1: Library Workshop**

Attend the library workshop. Be ready to take part, ask and answer questions, and explore the library's resources.

**Activity 2: Infographics**

An infographic provides information about a topic by combining text and graphics to convey information more completely and efficiently than text alone could do. Read the instructions for the infographic assignment below.

**Q.1** Then, with a classmate, discuss the kinds of topics you would like to learn more about which might fit well into an infographic.

**Q.2** What sort of graphic data might apply to the topics you discuss?

Instructions for the infographic

You will form teams of three people to prepare an infographic. The infographic should combine text with graphics to present information on a clearly defined topic. The graphics should add value, serving to convey accurate information more efficiently than text would, rather than simply illustrating. It should be factual and based on authoritative sources. The infographic should bear a title which accurately reflects its content. It should be easy to view, with a logical and readily apparent reading pathway. The quality of the written English should be high, the infographic as a whole should be neat and the references should be presented in APA style.

**Activity 3: Evaluating Sources**

Use the search tools you learned about in the library workshop to identify sources of information for your infographic. Then consider how the sources you have found can be evaluated according to the following criteria.

* How much do you think the author knows about the subject, and what makes you think that?
* What is the author's purpose in writing about this topic? Is it to inform, persuade, entertain, sell? How does that affect the author's credibility?
* Are there specific facts in the source which could be checked for accuracy?
* Does the author provide a balanced view on the topic?
* When was the source published? Could the information be out-of-date?

**Unit 3**

**Data Representation and Commentary**

An infographic is a way of representing data in different visual forms. In this unit you will look at the various ways data can be presented. In the online module the tasks reinforce the skills of graphic representation. In class your group will have a chance to present your ideas for the infographic and get instructor and peer feedback on your proposed topic. Outside of class you will continue to gather information and prepare the infographic. By the end of the unit you will:

* be able to present data graphically and comment on it in writing;
* be able to make informed choices about the best way to present data;
* have made progress on your infographic.

**Activity 1: Presenting Data**

Watch the TED Talk on "The Beauty of Data Visualization" by David McCandless: [**http://www.ted.com/talks/david\_mccandless\_the\_beauty\_of\_data\_visualization**](http://www.ted.com/talks/david_mccandless_the_beauty_of_data_visualization)

Then discuss the following questions with your classmates.

**Q.1** What point does McCandless want to make about data representation?

**Q.2** Among the graphs he showed, which did you think were most effective, and why?

**Q.3** What lessons does this TED Talk hold for graphic representations in your infographic?

**Activity 2: Analysing infographics**

Look at the sample infographics on Canvas. In groups, pretend that you are going to grade them. What are their strengths and weaknesses? What mark would you give them? You might think about some of these features:

* title
* topic
* background information
* accuracy of information
* the nature of the sources
* readability
* visual appeal

**Activity 3: Infographic Idea Coaching**

Since the last unit, your group should have generated ideas for your infographic topic.

**Q.4** Share your ideas with another group and invite their comments.

**Q.5** Listen to their ideas and give them a response. Your instructor will listen to your thoughts as well and give you tips about any potential problems.

**Activity 4: Free Writing**

Free writing is a way of generating ideas by simply writing down the thoughts which come to you about a topic.

**Q.6** Spend five minutes free writing about your infographic now. You will not have to show the result to anybody; the language does not have to be polished; the ideas do not have to be your best; the only rule is that you keep writing for the whole five minutes.

**Q.7** Now compare your freewriting ideas with your infographic groupmates. Use these ideas to plan and develop your infographic.

**Activity 5: Test Infographic Sites**

There are a number of websites that can help you produce infographics. Test out several of them to find out which one works best for your group. Explore their tools and options.

[Infogr.am](http://www.english.cityu.edu.hk/en/portal/freshmanenglish/schedule/Infogr.am)

<http://piktochart.com/>

<https://www.canva.com/create/infographics/>

<https://venngage.com/>

<http://www.creativebloq.com/infographic/tools-2131971>

<http://vizualize.me/>

**Activity 6: Get Inspiration**

Look at some infographics to see what works well and what you think you can improve on. Examples can be found on these sites:

Twitter infographic: <http://creattica.com/infographics/twitter-infographics-and-fun-facts/86694>

Diabetes infographic: <http://hin.com/blog/2012/12/18/infographic-the-impact-of-diabetes/>

CDC infographic on blood pressure: <http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/infographics.html>

SMS Marketing Infographic: <http://www.business2community.com/infographics/the-power-of-sms-marketing-infographic-0514154>

Malaria infographic: <http://www.path.org/blog/2012/04/malaria-control-good-investment/blog-20120425-malaria-infographic-4/>

**Unit 4**

**Using and Reporting Sources**

In Unit 2 the library team introduced resources for finding information. In this unit we will look at ways of incorporating information from other sources into your work. In the online module you will look at strategies for finding the main idea in a text, and this is important, because the first step in reporting information from a source is understanding it well. In class you will work through exercises which relate to the two concepts of effective source use: being transparent with your reader about how other texts have influenced yours; and following a set of conventions to produce a mechanically accurate set of references. Outside of class you should be finding and reading sources of information for your essay, and refining your ideas for it, as well as finalising your infographic. By the end of this unit you will:

* have learned about transparency in source use
* have practiced paraphrasing and summarizing;
* have learned about the mechanics of using sources;
* be able to cite sources transparently and accurately.

**Activity 1: Transparent Source Use**

Virtually all academic writing builds on things other people have written. The expectation in most academic texts is that the writer will start with an awareness of what is already known on the topic, and then build on it. In order to do this, we have to tell our readers some of the things that we've found in our reading, and we have a responsibility to be *transparent* about that. In other words, an academic reader expects to understand how other texts have influenced the new one, and an academic writer has a responsibility to provide the necessary clues to give the reader that understanding. Look at the extract from an academic research article below, and then answer the questions which follow.

|  |
| --- |
| Interest in wine has exploded during the past few decades, thus spreading to new groups of consumers. According to Caballero (2009), "wine is becoming a cultural icon in an emerging hedonistic sub-culture accessible to an ever larger number of consumers (p. 73)." Gluck (2004: 107) specifies the wine-consuming part of the British population as having risen from 4 to over 70 per cent during the past 50 years. Both Lehrer (1990) and McCoy (2005) report on a similar development in the US.  Extract adapted from Hommerberg, C. (2011). *Persuasiveness in the discourse of wine: The rhetoric of Robert Parker*. Doctoral Thesis. Växjö & Kalmar: Linnaeus University Press. |

Respond to each of the following statements with "true" or "false."

1. Caballero writes about wine as a cultural icon.
2. The extract uses the exact words as written by Caballero.
3. Gluck writes that more people are drinking wine in the UK.
4. The extract uses the exact words as written by Gluck.
5. Lehrer and McCoy write that more people in the US are drinking wine.
6. The extract uses the exact words as written by Lehrer and McCoy.

**Activity 2: Types of Transparency**

In Activity 1 you may have answered that all four of the sources (Caballero, Gluck, Lehrer, and McCoy) said the things that the extract represents them as saying. You may also have answered that the same wording in the extract is probably found in Caballero, but not in Gluck, Lehrer, and McCoy. These are all reasonable assumptions, provided that the writer was observing the responsibility to signal transparently to the reader how her sources informed her work. We can now go further and note that there are three areas where transparency is needed:

**The identity of the source**. Writers have to let readers know *which* earlier works influenced them. If Caballero, Gluck, Lehrer, and McCoy really are the sources for the facts attributed to them, then the writer has accomplished this type of transparency. We signal the identity of the source with *in-text references,* also called *citations.*

**The content**. Writers have to convey ideas from their sources accurately. If Gluck really does claim that the proportion of wine drinkers in the UK has risen from 4% to 70% during the last 50 years, then the writer has accomplished this (at least with respect to the reference to Gluck). However, if Gluck actually writes that the number of wine drinkers in the UK has gone down, then she has not. Reporting content transparently starts with reading our sources of information carefully to be sure we understand what they mean.

**The language**. Writers can choose between repeating exactly what the source said (*quotation*) or rewording, summarising, or in some other way producing an independent, original representation of the ideas in the source. We usually signal quotation with quotation marks (though there are other ways as well). If there are no quotation marks, the reader will assume that the wording is new and original, although the idea and information is not.

**Q.1** A group of students were asked to write essays about the history of games. They found a good book on the topic. Here's an extract from the book.

|  |
| --- |
| Chess is a game with deep historic roots. Some form of the game has been in existence for at least 1500 years, and it is possible that it dates back even earlier. Less clear, however, is where the game originated. Many historians believe that it originated in India. A smaller group of scholars believe that the game was developed in Persia.  Adams, D. (1985). *An historical guide to board games.* London: Players Press. |

Here are some extracts from the essays the students wrote. Check to see whether they have all followed all three forms of transparency.

|  |
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| STUDENT 1 |
| Writing about the origins of the game of chess, Adams says that it is at least 1500 years old, and states that "scholars believe that the game was developed in Persia" (1985, p. 179). |

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| STUDENT 2 |
| Adams says that the origin of chess is not certain, but that "most historians believe that it originated in India. " (1985, p. 179). |

|  |
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| STUDENT 3 |
| Adams (1985) writes that chess is a game with long historic roots, and that some form of the game has been around for 1500 at a minimum years, and it may date back even earlier. |

**Activity 3: Paraphrasing**

A paraphrase is an original reformulation of a specific part in a source text. A good paraphrase requires the writer to understand what the source says, identify the elements which are most relevant to the new text, and express them in a new way. Making changes to the source—for example, substituting synonyms, changing the order of words—is not paraphrasing, no matter how much of it you do. Read the text in the box below, and then work through the following steps to practice a good paraphrasing process.

|  |
| --- |
| Christmas in Sweden is a special time, with a number of traditions which are rooted in the past and still followed today. Suprisingly to people from many other countries, the most important day in the holiday season is not December 25th, Christmas Day itself, but rather Christmas Eve. That is the time when families gather for the major celebration of the holiday.  Food plays an important role in holiday celebrations around the world, and Christmas in Sweden is no exception. The meal is called a "Christmas table," a buffet consisting of favourites such as pickled herring, meatballs, small sausages, ham, boiled potatoes and boiled eggs with caviar.  In terms of entertainment, at this family time people play games, talk, and enjoy each other’s company, but the one unbreakable Christmas tradition is watching the Donald Duck Christmas special on TV (or falling asleep in front of it, if the meal has been a heavy one).  The evenings draw in early in Sweden in the window, so after the Christmas meal and Donald Duck, it is dark outside. The lights on the Christmas tree can be turned on. Candles surround the carefully decorated gingerbread house. The windows of the house each bear an upside-down V of Christmas lights, as do the windows of all of the other houses on the street, as far as the eye can see.  Extract from Svensson, S. (2011). *Holiday traditions in the Nordic region.* Copenhagen: Academic Press. |

1. Turn this page over, and take out a separate piece of paper.
2. Note down, in bullet-point form, as many of the details from the Christmas text as you can remember. Do **not** refer to the text while you are making notes.
3. When you have put down as much as you can remember, put your page of notes away and return to the Christmas text to refresh your memory. Do **not** add to your notes while you are re-reading.
4. Put the text away again, and take out your notes, and add to them.
5. Using your notes only, write a sentence with information from the text which would be appropriate in each of the following circumstances:

* You are writing an essay about holiday food around the world.
* You are writing an essay about cultures which practice a primarily vegetarian diet.
* You are writing an essay about unusual or surprising aspects of Christmas traditions around the world.

1. Finally, return to the text if you feel you need to check any of your facts for accuracy.

**Activity 4: Summarising**

Paraphrasing usually involves reporting a specific point from a source; summarizing involves condensing a large text. Like paraphrasing, writing summaries is an independent process, not transferring ideas and words directly from the source. Good summaries can support your argument. They can also demonstrate that you have read and understood relevant sources, are able to separate the core information from the less relevant detail, and can communicate your understanding clearly and briefly.

**Q.2** Read the text below and the summaries of it which follow.

**Q.3** What are the strengths and weaknesses of these summaries? Which works best? Why?

|  |
| --- |
| China and Southeast Asia are home to scores of languages, which can be grouped into several language families. Let us begin with the languages spoken in China. This large geographical area is home to two language families. First, there is the Sino-Tibetan family, which includes all the tongues that are commonly thought of as the different dialects of “Chinese”—Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, etc. Although they share a single writing system made up of pictorial characters, they are in fact separate languages, as any Hong Kong Chinese who has tried to learn Mandarin can attest. The Sino-Tibetan family also includes two other languages—Tibetan and Burmese (the only member not spoken inChina proper). All the Sino-Tibetan languages share common features. For instance, all are tonal; in other words, the same syllable could be pronounced with four different tones(in Mandarin) with four different meanings. The second language family in China is the Altaic family, which are commonly referred to as the Turkic languages because they are all related to Turkish. Members of the Altaic family spoken in China include Mongolian, Uighur (the language of the native people in Xinjiang), and Manchu, which used to be an important language before the rise of Mandarin.  Now let us turn our attention to the languages spoken in Southeast Asia. By Southeast Asia, we mean the following countries: Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. This far-flung region is home to three language families. First among these is the Austro-Asiatic family, which comprises two main languages—Vietnamese and Khmer, the chief language of Cambodia. Next there is the Tai family, containing Thai and Lao. Languages that belong to these two families, like the Sino-Tibetan languages, are tonal. Thirdly, there is the Malayo-Polynesian family. This is one of the most widely-distributed language families in the world, spoken as far west as Madagascar (off the coast of Africa) and as far east as Easter Island (off the coast of South America). In Southeast Asia, the languages that belong to this family are Malay, Indonesian and Tagalog (the language of the Philippines). Incidentally, the language spoken by the original inhabitants of Taiwan before the arrival of the Chinese was a member of the Malayo-Polynesian family.  **Extract from Hobbs, J. & Deley, J. (2002, p. 5)** |

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| **Summary A**  Hobbs and Deley (2002) remark that the various languages of China and Southeast Asia can be divided into several language families. |

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| **Summary B**  Hobbs and Deley (2002) explain that China and Southeast Asia are home to scores of languages, which can be grouped into several language families. In China there are different families that share a single writing system made up of pictorial characters, but they are in fact separate languages, as any Hong Kong Chinese who has tried to learn Mandarin can attest. The Sino-Tibetan family also includes two other languages—Tibetan and Burmese (the only member not spoken inChina proper). All the Sino-Tibetan languages share common features. For instance, all are tonal; in other words, the same syllable could be pronounced with four different tones(in Mandarin) with four different meanings (p. 5). |

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| **Summary C**  Hobbs and Deley (2002, p. 5) note that there is great linguistic diversity in the area encompassing China and Southeast Asia. The many languages spoken in this large region are usually divided into five families. Two of these occur in Greater China: the Sino-Tibetan family (which includes varieties such as Putonghua and Cantonese) and the Altaic family of languages (also called Turkic) such as Manchu and Mongolian. In Southeast Asia, three language families are found, the Austro-Asiatic, Tai, and the Malayo-Polynesian. |

**Activity 5: The Mechanics of Referencing**

So far in this unit we have worked with transparent use of sources. Transparency is the most important thing for a writer to achieve, but getting the details of references right is also important. The relationship between transparent source use and the mechanics of referencing is parallel to the relationship between content and spelling: it is essential that your essay has something to say, but even the best essay will get marked down if it is full of spelling errors.

There are many different referencing styles used in different departments and by different publications. In this course you will learn to use the referencing conventions of the American Psychological Association (APA).

Look at the examples below. They show the same work formatted according to three different referencing styles.

**Q.4** How are they similar and different?

APA style: Gray, D. E. (2013). *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage.

IEEE style: D. E. Gray, *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage, 2013.

MLA style: Gray, David E. *Doing Research in the Real World*. Sage, 2013.

**Activity 6: In-Text References**

Using the guidance you got in the library workshop and the summaries of APA style found on the Purdue OWL (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/), find and correct errors in the following in-text references.

1. According to Stilton and Cheddar, 1990, the moon is made of green cheese.
2. The claim that the moon is made of green cheese (Stilton and Cheddar, 1990) has been disputed by authorities such as P. Gorgonzola, who insists that "evidence to this effect is still lacking" (1995).
3. Stilton & Cheddar's (1990) claim has also been challenged by Brie, who sees the absence of mice on the moon as compelling evidence that it is not made of cheese.

**Activity 7: Reference List Entries**

Using the guidance you got in the library workshop and the summaries of APA style found on the Purdue OWL (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/), write reference list entries for the following works.

1. A book by Curtis Miles and Jane Rauton entitled *Thinking Tools: Academic, Pesonal and Career Applications*, published in 1987 by St. Martin's Press in New York.
2. A book edited by Sue Roe entitled *Women Reading Women's Writing*, published in 1987 by St. Martin's Press in New York
3. An article by Sydney C. Walston entitled "Nontraditional Degree Program Options for Nurses: A Model Program," spanning pages 291-299 in the journal *Alternative Higher Education*, volume 2, number 4, Summer 1978
4. A book by N. Gordon Ray entitled *H.G. Wells & Rebecca West*, published in 1974 by Yale University Press in New Haven.
5. An article by Carol Twigg accessed on the Internet and entitled "New Directions for the Electronic Classroom in the journal *EDUCOM Review*, volume 35, issue 5, 1995, no pages available, accessed on September 12, 1995 via gopher.cic.net

**Activity 8: Proofreading a List of References**

Look at the reference list in the box below.

**Q.5** Find any deviations from APA style and correct them.

|  |
| --- |
| **Bibliography**  Australian Bureau of Statistics. (1997). *Mental health and wellbeing: Profile of adults, Western Australia* (cat. no. 4326.5). Retrieved from AusStats: http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats  Colclough, B., & Colclough, J. (1999). *A challenge to change*. London, England: Thorsons.  Depression (psychology) (2001). In *Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia 2002*. Retrieved from <http://encarta.ninemsn.com.au>  Flower, René. (2015, June 1). How a simple formula for resolving problems and conflict can change your reality [Blog post]. *Pick The Brain*. Retrieved from <http://www.pickthebrain.com/blog/how-a-simple-formula-for-resolving-> problems-and-conflict-can-change-your-reality/  Goldberg, I. (2000). *Dr. Ivan's depression central*. Retrieved from http://www.psycom.net/depression.central.html  Kissane, K. (1998, September 5). Kiss or kill: Who is the victim when a battered woman kills? *The Age: Extra*, p. 6.  Kubler-Ross, E. (1993a). *AIDS: The Ultimate Challenge*. New York, NY: Collier Books.  Kubler-Ross, E. (1993b). *Questions and answers on death and dying*. New York: Collier Books.  Borman, W. C., Hanson, M. A., Oppler, S. H., Pulakos, E. D., & White, L. A. (1993). Role of early supervisory experience in supervisor performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*, 443-449. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.78.3.443  Matthews, J. (1999). *The art of childhood and adolescence: The construction of meaning*. London, England: Falmer Press.  The pain of being a caffeine freak. (2001, October 6). *New Scientist, 172*(2311), 27.  Parker, G., & Roy, K. (2001). Adolescent depression: A review. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 35*, 572-580.  S. Payne. (1976). "Dangerous and different: reconstructions of madness in the 1990s and the role of mental health policy." In Watson, S. & L. Doyal (Eds.), *Engendering social policy* (pp.180-195). Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.  Rosenthal, R., Rosnow, R. L., & Rubin, D. B. (2000). *Contrasts and effect sizes in behavioral research: A correlational approach*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.  (Adapted from: http://libguides.murdoch.edu.au/APA/sample) |

**Unit 5**

**Infographic Sharing & Process Writing**

This unit marks the transition from the infographic to the next subject in the course, writing an extended text. In the first part of class you will share your infographics with your classmates. Afterward you will submit your infographic following the instructions your teacher gives you. Then aspects of the process writing approach will be introduced. In the online module the focus will be on the reading skills which will help you gather information for your essay. Outside of class you can start generating ideas for your essay. By the end of this unit you will have:

* presented your infographic;
* had the opportunity to compare approaches to the infographic task;
* learned about how process writing can help you develop as a writer;
* submitted your completed infographic.

**Activity 1: Infographic Sharing**

You will now present your infographic to classmates, and listen to them present theirs. During the sharing section, ask yourself the following questions:

1. How well do the graphic elements succeed in providing information in the best possible format (as opposed to serving simply as illustrations)?
2. What are the effective elements in each infographic?
3. What elements could have worked better?
4. What's one thing your group did better than average?
5. What's one thing another group did better that you can learn from?

**Activity 2: Process Writing**

A process approach to writing assumes that good writing involves a number of stages and activities. Importantly, these can be recursive; that is, having completed one stage, you can return to it if you need to. Some of the stages in the writing process are:

* generating ideas
* discarding ideas
* reading widely on the topic
* explaining your thoughts to a classmate
* planning the structure of your text
* writing a draft
* getting feedback on your draft
* revising
* proofreading

Discuss with your partner:

**Q.1** Which of these stages did your group go through when you worked on the infographic?

**Q.2** If you planned the infographic before you started preparing, how close was the final result to your original plans?

**Q.3** If your plans changed, how and why?

**Unit 6**

**Paragraphing and Cohesion**

This unit is about the paragraph, the basic building block of texts of any length. We will analyze the way other writers create strong paragraphs, and put those lessons into practice. The online module for this unit looks at reading in context. In class you will also get guidance from your instructor about how to approach the first draft of the argumentative essay. Outside of class you will spend time developing your ideas for the first draft. By the end of this unit you will:

* recognise the characteristics of an effective paragraph;
* recognise the features which create strong relationships within paragraphs;
* be able to compose an effective paragraph;
* be ready to start planning your essay.

**Activity 1: Finding the Purpose of a Paragraph**

**Q.1** Read the paragraphs below and say whether the primary purpose of each is to:

* describe or relate a narrative;
* show cause and effect;
* compare and contrast;
* classify or divide.

**Q.2** Which words or phrases helped you decide?

**Text 1**

When our respondents, the wives and husbands of expatriate workers, move from Hong Kong to Shanghai, they find both similarities and differences. These partners say that Shanghai, like Hong Kong, is polluted and crowded, but, unlike Hong Kong, Shanghai is nearly impossible to navigate unless they speak some Chinese. They can get into any taxi in Hong Kong, utter the name of their destination in English, be it with an Irish, American, Indian, Australian accent, and generally find that the driver has not only understood them but might also be able to make some small talk. However, this is far from the case in Shanghai, where it is suggested that foreigners keep on hand a collection of name cards with the addresses of their common destinations written in Chinese.

**Text 2**

The different types of linking words and phrases can easily be separated. One method is by their grammatical use. The first use here would be subordinators. Common examples are: “although,” “even though,” “despite the fact that,” and “because.” The second group separated by grammatical use would be sentence connectors. Examples are: “furthermore,” “in addition,” “moreover,” “therefore,” “as a result.” The third group would be phrase linkers. Some examples are: “in addition to,” “despite,” “in spite of,” “because of,” “due to,” “as a result of,” “unlike.”

**Text 3**

The impact of the Internet on teen sexuality is enormous. This technology provides more freedom and privacy than seen in the previous generations. Children meet in chat rooms, removed not only from their parents’ eyes, but from the eyes of their peers as well. Hiding behind assumed names and identities, their communication is far less inhibited than it would have been in a face-to-face situation. Desires that would have normally been held in check are freely expressed. As a result, adolescents’ understanding of acceptable behaviour has changed at a much faster rate than in the past. Sexually, children are far more open than in previous generations. Interestingly, our studies show teen pregnancy is down while sexual activity is up.

**Activity 2: Topic Sentences**

Often paragraphs contain—or indeed start—with a sentence which identifies the focus of the paragraph. This is called a topic sentence.

Read the following text entitled "Chocolate: Bad Trick or Good Treat" and try to identify the topic sentences (if available). Then discuss your answers with a classmate.

|  |
| --- |
| **Chocolate: Bad Trick or Good Treat?**  Chocolate has been labelled as junk food for years, as many believe that chocolate has negative effects on one’s health. Recently, the arguments heated up again as the latest research conducted by Columbia University proved that chocolate can improve memory loss, putting it under the spotlight. Every year, the world spends 82 billion dollars on chocolate, which is more than the GDP of 131 nations ("Who consumes, 2012). The British consume 11.1 kg of the substance per year on average, hinting at the fact that chocoholics can easily be found globally. With such a huge phenomenon of chocolate consumption around the world, it is crucial to know whether chocolate is really a guilty pleasure that one should stay away from. This essay argues that chocolate, if eaten wisely, can be beneficial to one’s health.  To begin with, it does not seem to be appropriate to consider chocolate as junk food, as junk food is meant to have little nutritional value (Harrison, 2014). This is not the case for chocolate; in fact, the more cocoa one absorbs through chocolate, the better the effects on one’s health, inside and out.  However, there are claims that chocolate may cause high blood pressure as cocoa butter contains saturated fat. However, according to research, the saturated fat stored within chocolate is different from that the public worry about. It is said that chocolate with high cocoa proportion, like dark chocolate, does not affect the blood lipid proﬁle (Margarida, 2013). This is all due to the fact that chocolate’s saturated fat has polyphenol, an element that helps reduce blood lipids. This means that chocolate plays a beneficial role. Moreover, as its fat can reduce the blood lipid profile, chocolate is capable of lowering blood pressure, and this can help one prevent related heart diseases, or reduce the risk of having them. This means that chocolate is not just another sweet. Further, chocolate has the ability to increase blood flow, and according to research done by Columbia University, this protects against memory loss (Pam, 2014). Since blood flow has a close relationship with heart health, this is further evidence yet for the beneficial effects of chocolate.  In addition, chocolate is rumored to cause acne and other skin problems. However, a major cause of acne is believed to be the glycemic nature of food, and dark chocolate has a low glycemic index. Given that there is no actual evidence from scientific research that chocolate should be linked directly to the formation of acne, it should be regarded as premature to claim this connection. Further, and perhaps surprisingly, chocolate protects the skin against harmful UV light (William, 2009). There is an element called flavonoid, found in fruit and vegetables, which absorbs only good UV light. This can also be found in chocolate (Underwood, 2014). When people dine on foods that are rich in flavonoids, their "antioxidant" power will work on them (Carlson, 2001). This suggests that having chocolate can improve the skin’s hydration and complexion as well.  Finally, people often associate chocolate with obesity. It has been labelled a junk food for decades as people believe it all contains high sugar, fat and calories. However, there is choice. There are three main kinds of chocolate in the market, dark, milk and white. What is called "white chocolate" does not, in fact, have any cocoa in it and can be disregarded. While milk chocolate contains fat from the milk and typically has a higher proportion of sugar and a lower proportion of cocoa, dark chocolate can be different. It can have a proportion of cocoa ranging from 70% to 99%, and typically contains less sugar. Far from always leading to weight gain, studies have shown that dark chocolate can decrease appetite and help weight loss (Pettersson, 2017).  To conclude, given this list of good things that chocolate brings to one’s health, the claims made by critics do not stand up. Now that the real face of chocolate is no longer wrapped under the foil, it is clear that it is not a junk food. With so many benefits inside those delicious bars, one should take advantage of them. |

**Activity 3: Cohesion**

Cohesion is the quality a text has when its components appear to belong together naturally; when it is clear why (for example) the sentences in a given paragraph belong together. To some extent this is an effect created by making logical choices about what ideas to include and exclude. But certain language features also strengthen cohesion by causing the reader to make a connection between two parts of the text. Here are some coherence devices which can be found in the first paragraph of the text above.

**Repetition**. Repeating a word reminds the reader that it was used before. Example: *Chocolate has been labelled as junk food for years, as many believe that chocolate has negative effects on our health.*

**Pronoun substitution**. Replacing a word with a pronoun sends a reader back mentally to understand what the pronoun refers to. Example: *Recently, the arguments heated up again as the latest research conducted by Columbia University proved that chocolate can improve memory loss, putting it under the spotlight.*

**Paraphrasing**. Replacing a word with another phrase which means the same also makes connections within the text. Example: *The British consume 11.1 kg of the substance per year on average.*

Read the rest of the text and look for these and other language features which help build cohesion.

**Activity 4: Signposting**

"Signposting" language directs your readers to make connections among parts of the text. Signposting can include showing order (*first, second, third*), a cause-and-effect relationship (*since X, therefore Y*), a reminder of something that came earlier in the text (*As we saw in the previous unit. . .)*, a preview of what will come later (*As will be seen in the next unit. . .*), etc.

What sort of signposting language does the text on chocolate use?

Could the text be improved with more signposting? How?

**Activity 5: Brainstorming Essay Topics**

Write down three possible topics for your argumentative essay.

1.

2.

3.

Compare your list with a classmate's and discuss what sort of support you might find for each topic. If you have difficulty finding ideas for support, your topic may be too narrow; conversely, if you find you have too much to say, it may be too broad.

**Activity 6: Creating an Outline**

Read the instructions for your essay below.

Then use the following questions to sketch out a preliminary outline for your essay.

**Instructions for the essay**

The essay should put forward a clear argument and support it thoroughly with evidence. It should be structured effectively, have well developed paragraphs, be written in good English and use signposting, cohesion devices, etc., to guide the reader through the text. It should be between 800-1,000 words, exclusive of references.

|  |
| --- |
| **I. Introduction**   * What does the reader need to know to understand the position you want to argue for? * How can you attract the reader's attention from the beginning? * Is there any terminology that needs to be defined? * How can you make your argument clear quite close to the beginning?   **II. Body**   * What are the points you want to make in support of your argument? * Is there a logical order for presenting them? * What examples, details, evidence, etc., can work as effective support? * What are the authoritative sources on this topic? * Are there any counter-arguments your reader might have in mind, which you can address pre-emptively?   **III. Conclusion**   * Do you need to restate your thesis, and if so, how can you do it without being repetitive? * Do you need to summarise the points you made in the body? * How can you give the essay a strong sense of conclusion? |

Use the blank area in the following box to plan an outline of your essay

Essay Outline

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Unit 7**

**Argument, Evidence and Organisation**

In this unit we will consider argumentative texts, and how providing evidence and a strong organisational structure can make them more effective. The online module looks at the relationship between the purpose and the structure of a text. Outside of class you will finish the first draft of your essay and submit it to the Turnitin assignment box in Canvas by the specified date. You will also send your draft to the partner with whom you will work on peer review. Next week in class you will engage in peer review, so it is important that you read your partner's draft carefully beforehand. You can preview Unit 8 to see some of the things you should have in mind as you read. By the end of this unit you will:

* understand how to distinguish between topic and argument;
* be able to identify the central argument in a text;
* understand how a clear thesis statement or statement of purpose can strengthen a text;
* be able to identify evidence used to support an argument;
* be able to identify the organisational structure of a text;
* have finished draft 1 of your argumentative essay.

**Activity 1: Topic versus Argument**

Consider the topic of your essay. You may want to write about a topic related to your infographic, although this is not required.

**Q.1** Then write a sentence that starts like this:

*This essay will be about. . . .*

For example, you might write "This essay will be about organ donation" or "This essay will be about no-kill policies in animal shelters."

**Q.2** Now take your idea and use it to complete a sentence which begins like this:

*In this essay I will argue that. . . .*

For example, you might write "In this essay I will argue that minors should not be allowed to donate organs" or "In my essay I will argue that no-kill policies have unintended cruel results."

Finally consider the difference between the two sentences you have written for Q1 and Q2. The second is more specific, and it makes a commitment to the reader. It leads the reader to expect that you will present evidence, argumentation or other support which will lead naturally to the conclusion you preview. Although your essay does not need to have such an explicit statement of purpose in it, you should be committed mentally to a specific idea you wish to argue for before you start writing.

**Q.3** Now write a good statement of purpose ("In this essay I will argue that…”) for these topics:

* Streaming media
* Artificial Intelligence
* Corporate taxes
* Arts education

**Activity 2: Thesis Statements**

In Activity 1 we saw the difference between a statement about the topic of a text, and a more specific statement about its purpose: to argue for a particular position. A statement which identifies the purpose of an essay is often called a *thesis statement*. Sometimes the thesis is exposed in a single sentence; at other times it may be expressed less directly, but the purpose and scope of the text should always be identified clearly.

**Q.4** Consider the pairs of thesis statements below and discuss which is likely to be more effective, and why.

1a. Eating fast food is bad and should be avoided.

1b. Americans should eliminate the regular consumption of fast food because the fast food diet leads to preventable and expensive health issues, such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

2a. There are high numbers of homeless people living in Hong Kong.

2b. Homeless people in Hong Kong should be given access to services, such as regular food donations, public restrooms, and camping facilities, because it would improve life for all inhabitants of the city.

3a. Secondhand smoke is bad and can cause heart disease and cancer; therefore, smoking should be outlawed in public places in U.S., but outlawing smoking is unfair to smokers so maybe non-smokers can just hold their breath or wear masks around smokers instead.

3b. Secondhand smoke is just as harmful as smoking and leads to a higher prevalence of cancer and heart disease. Added to this, people who inhale secondhand smoke are doing so without consent. For these reasons, smoking in any public place should be banned in the U.S.

**Activity 3: Structure of an Argumentative Essay**

In the previous unit we worked with paragraphs and saw that each paragraph should have a clear focus. In an argumentative essay, paragraphs also serve different purposes.

**Introduction**: One or more paragraphs providing the background to the essay, introducing the topic, and identifying the thesis.

**Body paragraphs**: Each paragraph provides support, evidence, discussion or analysis which advances the argument. Counter-arguments may be introduced and rebutted. Each has a clear focus.

**Conclusion**: One or more paragraphs showing how the evidence presented leads to the writer's argument, possibly restating or summarising some of the evidence presented in the body paragraphs and providing a finishing point for the essay.

Read the text below about Dorothy L. Sayers and

**Q.5** identify the introduction, the body paragraphs and the conclusion.

**Q.6** How does the introduction provide background, and how does it identify the thesis? **Q.7** What is the main idea of each of the body paragraphs?

**Q.8** What happens in the conclusion?

|  |
| --- |
| Dorothy L. Sayers (1893-1957) was a key practitioner and perhaps the leading theorist of Golden Age detective fiction. Her eleven Lord Peter Wimsey novels are touchstones of the form, and despite the cavils of some notable critics are classic examples of the way the genre can exceed its ostensible limitations. It is important, however, to understand that Sayers was more than a writer of crime fiction. Indeed, as her career demonstrates she was a versatile and innovative writer with wide-ranging interests.  Sayers entered Somerville College at the University of Oxford in 1912 on the Gilchrist Scholarship in Modern Languages––at the time of her entry, women were not eligible for degrees, but Sayers’ was among the first to be awarded an MA when rules were belatedly changed in 1920. During this period, Sayers’ literary interests were quite conventional, as indicated by the publication of volumes of poetry in 1916 (*Op. I*) and 1918 (*Catholic Tales and Christian Songs*). Following the completion of her studies, however, instead of returning to her family as might have been expected, Sayers worked as a teacher in a girl’s school, a reader for a publisher, and as a secretary to a school in France. From 1922 she worked for advertising agency S.H. Benson as a copy-writer in London.  While this work allowed her to live independently of her family, she was by no means well-off, and her first venture into detective fiction, the 1923 novel *Whose Body?* was written as much to sell as to produce something “more like a novel” than a conventional detective story.1 The need to make money from her writing became more acute when the unmarried Sayers’ gave birth to a son in 1924, and over the next decade Sayers was extraordinarily productive, publishing on average a novel a year, in addition to numerous short stories, articles, and reviews. By 1931, Sayers had made enough money to quit work at Benson’s, but she continued to produce crime fiction until late in the decade, despite an increasing “weariness with forcing all of her talents into one mold.”2 In 1935 she published what many consider her masterpiece, *Gaudy Night*, in which the great romantic tale of Lord Peter Wimsey and the fictional crime writer Harriet Vane reached a conclusion.  Despite her success, Sayers gradually abandoned crime fiction in favour of a range of other literary projects. From 1937 onwards, Sayers’ began to write for the theatre, producing a number of plays on largely religious themes, the best-known of which is the twelve-part radio play cycle *The Man Born to be King* which aired on BBC radio at monthly intervals in 1941 and 1942. By the end of the war she had become something of an unofficial representative of the Anglican church, speaking and writing about the role of the institution and the religious individual in a time of strife and violence.  The third stage of Sayers’ career dates from her discovery of Dante Alighieri in 1943, when she realised that he was “the most incomparable story-teller who ever set pen to paper.”3 By 1946 she was lecturing on the Italian poet, and her translation of the first Canticle of the *Divine Comedy*, *Inferno*––in which she attempted the difficult task of preserving the poem’s *terza rima*––was published in 1949, followed by *Purgatorio* in 1955. The work was interrupted by Sayers’ death in 1957, but her friend Barbara Reynolds completed Paradiso from her notes, and the translation (while subject to some criticism over the years) has remained a standard edition into the twenty-first century.  The transformations that shaped Sayers’ career into a trinity of sorts––detective novelist, religious playwright, literary translator––have been interpreted in two main ways. Some see her as an academic and intellectual who, forced for a time to prostitute her talent in order to pay her bills, returned as soon as possible to her proper sphere. Others see her as a wonderful crime writer who did more than anyone else of her generation to develop the potentialities of the form, but was seduced by the siren call of a dreary religious and intellectual respectability. Much of this may depend on taste, but one thing is certain: Sayers was, and remains, not just one of the most important, but also most interesting, literary figures of the early twentieth century.  1Dorothy L. Sayers, “Gaudy Night,” in *The Art of the Mystery Story: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Howard Haycroft (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1946), 208.  2 Ralph E. Hone, *Dorothy L. Sayers: A Literary Biography* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1979), 63.  3 Dorothy L. Sayers, “And Telling You a Story . . .,” in *Further Papers on Dante: His Heirs and His Ancestors* by Dorothy L. Sayers (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006), 2. |

**Activity 4: Coherence among Paragraphs**

In Unit 6 we saw some of the textual features which create coherence at sentence level. Coherence at paragraph level can be addressed in much the same way.

**Q.8** Return to the text above and identify the words and phrases which help establish coherence. Could the coherence of the text be improved? If so, how?

**Activity 5: Logical Fallacies**

In academic writing a good argumentative text should make its point, but it should do so primarily with logic and reason, and should never distort the facts. The Purdue Online Writing Laboratory (OWL; (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/659/03/>) identifies several logical fallicies (that is, faulty ways of reasoning) which should be avoided.

**Straw man**. This argument misrepresents the counter-position by framing it in such an extreme way that it is easy to attack, but nobody is likely really to hold that it. Example: *Some people would require minors to become organ donors, and this is clearly wrong.*

**Ad hominem**. This is an attack on the person who presents an argument, rather than the argument itself. Example: *The proof that the tax plan is wrong is that it comes from such a dishonest politician as Senator Jones.*

**Black and white**. This strategy reduces a complex issue to two choices only. Example: *If we don't do something about taxation now, our children will be paying rates of over 50%.*

**Slippery slope**. This approach says that if A happens, B will as well, and if B is undesirable, then A must be. Example: *If we allow minors to donate organs, it is only a matter of time before parents will choose to cause their newborn infants to be donors.*

**Hasty generalisation**. This involves drawing a conclusion from too few facts. *Beef production has a sharp environmental cost, so it is necessary to ban it.*

**Red herring**. This strategy distracts attention away from the main issue by moving onto a more visible or emotive topic. Example: *It may be true that public transportation is good for the environment, but if everybody used the MTR, taxi drivers would be unemployed.*

**Q.9** Return to the text above and try to insert one of these fallacies into it.

**Q.10** Then consider your essay topic, and give an example of each one of these fallacies as they could be represented in your essay.

**Unit 8**

**Critical Reading and Peer Review**

Drafting is an important part of the writing process, but more important still is turning a draft into an even stronger text. In this unit you will engage in a peer review process. That is, in a team with another classmate you will both give feedback on that person's work and receive feedback on your own. The feedback you receive will help you identify opportunities for improving your own essay, and the process of providing feedback to your partner will help you develop as a critical and thoughtful reader. That in turn will play a vital role in helping you develop as a writer. The online module this week also deals with reading, from a somewhat different perspective. In class in this unit you will engage in peer review discussions. Before class you will prepare by reading your partner's work and noting any comments you have. After class you will prepare your notes and give them to your partner. By the end of this unit you will:

* have thought about the process and purpose of peer review;
* given and received face-to-face peer feedback;
* completed and received written peer feedback.

**Activity 1: About Conducting Peer Review**

**Q.1** Discuss your response to the following statements with your partner.

1. I have taken part in peer review before and found it beneficial.
2. When I give feedback in peer review, I worry about hurting my partner's feelings.
3. When I get peer feedback, I sometimes feel bad about the criticism.
4. I would rather find a weakness in my text in peer review than have it result in a lower grade.
5. When doing peer review, I am unsure how to phrase my feedback in a constructive way.
6. When doing peer review, I feel confident about identifying areas of strength and weakness in my partner's work.
7. When I read or hear my partner's comments, I usually understand what they mean.

**Activity 2: Examples of Peer Review**

Watch this video and notice how one student gives more effective feedback than the other:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCio7AbO3vo&feature=em-share_video_user>

**Activity 3: Peer Conferencing**

Engage in a discussion with your partner about your text. Here are some guidelines to make the peer conference as productive as possible.

**Be aware of time**. Make sure that each text gets approximately the same amount of time for discussion (your instructor will help by telling you when the discussion time is halfway up).

**Prioritise**. If you have comments about structure, content, the relationship among ideas, or more abstract and subjective matters, prioritise them for the discussion. If you run out of time, you can provide comments about word choice, spelling and other mechanical matters on your partner's draft.

**Be honest**.Peer review is useless if it is no more than mutual praise. By criticizing your partner’s work, you are demonstrating your respect for them as a person and a writer. If you don’t give any feedback, or if you feedback is anodyne, you are failing your partner.

**Be polite**. Being critical does not mean being cruel. Remember that your classmate is in the same situation you are, and try to be sensitive about their feelings.

**Don't be too polite.** Effective, constructive criticism will help your partner. Offer your best advice directly.

**Be specific**. Vague, general comments—whether positive or negative—are difficult to respond to. By giving examples and making specific claims, you can provide your partner with better help for revising.

**Listen**. Don't just talk to your classmates. Listen to them. Try to find out what they are really trying to achieve and offer advice which will help them reach their goal.

**Check for understanding**. Try rephrasing what you think your partner is telling you to find out if you are really understanding him/her. You can use phrases such as "What I hear you saying is that. . . ."

**Remember the positive**. To revise your partner needs to know what currently works well in addition to what can be improved.

**Q.2** Let the checklist below guide your discussion. You do not need to speak about every item on the list (some may not be relevant) but you should use it to prompt your thoughts about your partner's text, and to make sure nothing important gets forgotten.

Peer review checklist

* Does the essay make a clear argument?
* Does it have a clearly identifiable thesis?
* Does it provide effective support for the argument advanced?
* Is the organisational structure clear and effective?
* Is the relationship among ideas clear?
* Is the essay organised into paragraphs?
* Does each paragraph have a clear focus?
* Are the paragraphs coherent (i.e., sensible decisions about what to include in each paragraph)?
* Does the essay use academic / scholarly sources?
* Does it signal transparently how those sources have been used?
* Is it clear how the ideas in the text relate to each other?
* Is the right amount and type of signposting used to help show how ideas relate to each other?
* Does it adhere to academic register?
* Is there a good range of vocabulary (as opposed to sticking to safe, simple words)?
* Is sophisticated vocabulary used effectively?
* Is there a good range of grammatical structures (as opposed to sticking to the safe basics)?
* Are complex structures (if any) used effectively?
* Is the text free of grammatical errors?
* Are words used accurately?
* Is the choice of words and structures appropriate?
* Is spelling accurate?
* Is punctuation accurate?
* Is the paper generally tidy?
* Are in-text citations in APA style?
* Is the reference list in APA style?
* Are the title, heading, etc. in APA style?
* Is the text within the length limits?
* Is the essay too wordy (i.e., repeating ideas unnecessarily)?

**Activity 4: Providing Written Feedback**

After having discussed your partner's essay, you are likely to have a better understanding of what your partner hopes to accomplish with the essay, and also to have a better perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the text.

**Q.3** Now you will turn your comments into feedback on the written draft. Time may be available in class to begin this, but you will have to finish after class.

1. Start by reflecting on whether and how your discussion has changed your view of your partner's essay.
2. At the top of your partner's draft, note down the points which you believe should receive priority in revision.
3. Now read through the text again and mark places where you think revision is needed. Depending on the nature of the issue you have identified, you may either insert a comment or make a **tracked** change. If you are uncertain about a change you want to suggest, write your partner a comment to that effect.
4. Send your partner's draft to your partner by whatever means the two of you will have agreed on.

**Activity 5: Receiving Written Feedback**

Your partner's job was to provide you with the best possible feedback; your task now is to decide how to respond to it. You do not need to make every change your partner has asked for. You are the writer, and you have the right—and the responsibility—to decide what goes in your text. However, you should read your partner's feedback carefully. If you decide not to adopt a particular change, you may still want to consider the fact that, if your partner have difficulty with part of the essay, another reader may as well. Ask your partner if you need clarification about any of the comments, and then use the parts you find helpful in revising your essay.

**Unit 9**

**Stance, Style and Register**

This unit is about three elements which distinguish academic writing from other kinds of writing. *Stance* is the position a writer adopts toward the content she is writing about. *Style* refers to the combination of features such as (in)formality, directness, and objectivity which combine to make texts "sound" personal, academic, etc. *Register* is a range of such stylistic features used by particular communities for particular purposes. In other words, all three are closely related concepts which contribute to making your academic writing have an academic "feel" to it. In this unit we will look at some of the features which characterize an academic register. In the online module you will work on specific grammatical choices. Outside of class you will revise your essay draft 1 and submit it on Canvas as draft 2 by the specified date.

**Activity 1: Identifying Components of Academic Style**

Text 1 below is a famous nursery rhyme. Text 2 uses the rhyme to parody academic style.

**Q.1** What are the elements of Text 2 which mark it out as academic in tone?

|  |
| --- |
| Text 1  *Roses are red,*  *Violets are blue,*  *Sugar is sweet,*  *And so are you!* |

|  |
| --- |
| Text 2  *Recent studies have shown that although many roses are indeed red, they can be found in a multitude of colours including, pink, yellow and and orange (Bill & Ben, 2006; Wells & Fargo, 2005). Violets, however, have been shown to be almost always blue, with some exceptions as demonstrated in the excellent work carried out by Titchmarch, Swithinbank and Greenwood (2008). In addition, but not directly related to this, sucrose has been shown to produce a sweet flavour when consumed by most adults (e.g. Fudge, Mint & Smartie, 2001). The metaphorical extension of the term* sweet *to an individual has been widely documented (Candy, 2007; Crush, 2014), though it is contested by some (e.g., Scrooge, 2002) in the name of strict scientific accuracy.* |

**Activity 2: Academic Vocabulary**

To some extent, we draw on a different vocabulary in academic writing. The Academic Vocabulary List (AVL; Gardner & Davies, 2015) provides a catalogue of approximately 3,000 words which occur in academic writing more often than the occur in "everyday" language. Academic Vocabulary List is referred as Academic Word List (AWL) in some websites.

**Q.2** Return to Text 2 from Activity 1 and circle the words which you think might appear on the AVL. Then share your answer with a partner.

Finally, your instructor will show you the answer. If you'd like to see more of the words on the AWL, you can check the list on Canvas, or download it from: <https://www.wordandphrase.info/academic/>.

or

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/publications/AWLmostfreqsublists.pdf>

You can use this website to see a profile of your own writing:

<https://www.lextutor.ca/vp/eng/>

**Activity 3: Hedging**

Academic writers tend to be cautious about the claims they make. Accuracy is important in academic writing, and since few things are absolutely certain, academic writers are careful to avoid overclaiming or exaggerating. This process is called *hedging*, and examples of it can be seen below.

1. *This may be a result of . . .* (it is not certain.)
2. *It appears that the main influence was. . .* (but perceptions could be misleading).
3. *Some studies suggest that. . .* (but not all).

**Q.3** Return to Text 2 in Activity 1 and see how many hedging expressions you can find.

Then go to the Academic Phrasebank, and specifically to the section called "Being Cautious" <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/using-cautious-language/>

**Q.4** For each hedge you identified in Text 2, try to find a different word or phrase which you could use instead. You may have to change some of the other wording in the text to help your substitution fit.

**Activity 4: Rewriting for Greater Formality**

For each of the sentences below, try to rephrase by substituting one or more of the phrases in parentheses for part of the original wording. You will usually need to make other changes to the surrounding text to make your substitution fit.

1. University students **must/have to/need to** study independently. (necessary; mandatory; necessity; requirement; <be> required to)
2. The economy suffered **because** the climate changed. **(**owing to; due to; cause of; lead to)
3. There were numerous objections, **so** the government changed its policy. (as a result; consequently; therefore; as a result/consequence of; <be> a result/consequence of)
4. The Olympic Games **could/may/might**someday be held in South Africa. (possible; it is possible; there is a possibility)
5. Chinese writing uses pictograms, **but** Korean has an alphabet.(while; whereas; however)
6. **Both** China **and** Japan are influenced by Confucian thought. (similar to…in that; like; likewise/similarly; similarity; as is)
7. The server was upgraded **so that** it could manage increased user traffic. (to; in order to; purpose)

**Activity 5: Reporting Verbs**

In Unit 4 we saw the importance of referencing sources appropriately. In addition to letting readers understand how sources have influenced our texts, the choice of words for incorporating a reference can show how we regard, and how we think readers should regard, the idea in question. Consider the following sentences. They all come from a textbook called *An Introduction to Astrocaseinology,* written by Michelle Fromage, and in each one, the writer, Fromage, cites one or more other authors. For each sentence, answer the following two questions.

1. Does the source think that the reported idea is correct? (yes, no, or can't tell)
2. Does Fromage think that the reported idea is correct? (yes, no, or can't tell)
3. According to Stilton (2000), the moon is made of green cheese.
4. Cheddar claims (1999) that the moon is made of green cheese.
5. Gorgonzola (2001) reports disagreement in the literature about whether the moon is made of green cheese.
6. Brie (1998) wrongly states that the moon is made of green cheese.

**Q.5** Now look at some examples of language for referring to sources from the Academic Phrasebank and answer the same questions about them: <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/referring-to-sources/>

**Activity 6: Dispreferred Features of Academic Writing**

Although there are no absolute rules, some language forms which are common in speech or less formal writing are very uncommon in academic writing. Unless you have a particular reason for wanting to use one of these forms, you may want to consider avoiding them. These dispreferred features include:

* contractions (*can't; isn't*)
* imperatives (*Stop! Go!*)
* second person (*you*)
* emotional language (*The effects of the war were heartrendingly tragic.*)
* rhetorical questions (*This is a reasonable position, is it not?)*
* very informal words and phrases (*That is a totally rotten idea.*)

**Q.6** For each of the sentences below, identify the dispreferred feature and rewrite the sentence to avoid it.

1. This doesn’t allow user input.
2. Stop polluting the environment.
3. You can find this kind of information in many web sites.
4. Eating processed food is terrible.
5. Students can get lots of advice from peer counselors.
6. Is this a good solution?

**Unit 10**

**Feedback and Reflection**

Effective revision requires the writer to adopt the reader's perspective. In this unit the focus is on understanding how your work appears to other people. **Instead of class this week, your instructor will schedule consultations** (depending on holidays and other scheduling factors, your instructor may choose to begin consultations earlier and/or continue them next week). The online module works on academic style, an important feature to keep in mind as you revise. By the end of this unit you will have:

* had feedback intended to help you understand the reader's perspective;
* experimented with adopting the reader's perspective;
* identified areas for significant revision in your essay.

**Activity 1: Working with Written Feedback**

If your instructor has provided you with written feedback on your draft before the consultation, work with it as much as possible. Try to understand what your instructor's comments mean. What are the different ways you might address them? The more closely you work with the comments before the consultation, and the more specific questions you are able to raise, the more effective the consultation time will be.

**Activity 2: More Peer Feedback?**

After writing the first version of draft 1 of the essay, you read a classmate's work and provided feedback on it, while receiving feedback of your own. If you found that process helpful, you are encouraged (though not required) to participate in another round of peer review, either with your previous partner or with another classmate.

**Unit 11**

**Tools for revision**

This course stresses the importance of reflection, but writers also need input from outside to help strengthen their texts. In this unit a number of tools and resources which can help improve the quality of writing are introduced. The online module looks at word choice, one of the areas which can be strengthened using these tools. Outside of class you will continue to revise your essay based on the feedback you got from your peers and instructor, as well as your own critical re-reading of your text. By the end of this unit, you will:

* know how to use a range of tools which can help you improve your writing;
* know where to look for answers about language usage;
* be closer to the final draft of your essay.

**Activity 1: Using a Learner Dictionary**

Learner dictionaries are written for people who are learning how to use a language (English, in this case), and provide information about words and how they are used which learners often need: for example, which preposition is used after a certain verb or whether a given noun needs an article. There are several good English learner dictionaries available, and information and resources about them, including on-line look-up and downloadable apps, can be found at the sites below.

*Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary*: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/

*Cambridge Learner's Dictionary*: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/

Macmillan dictionary products: https://www.macmillandictionary.com/

*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English:* https://www.ldoceonline.com/

**Q.1** Together with a partner, look up the following Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) items in at least two of these tools and answer the following questions:

1. For each word, what information, apart from the meaning, are you given?

2. Which tool gives you the most helpful information, and why?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| analysis | institute | utility | psychological | sector |
| technology | perceive | subsequently | marginal | heterogeneous |

**Activity 2: Using a Thesaurus**

A thesaurus is a reference work which gathers information about words with similar meanings (synonyms) and words with opposite meanings (antonyms). Using a thesaurus can be a good way to introduce variety into your writing. However, it is also important to avoid falling into the trap of thinking that the more unusual or distinctive a word, the better. Sometimes the best word to express an idea is a common, simple one.

**Q.2** Your task is to use a thesaurus, like this one from Oxford University Press: at <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/thesaurus/>. Find and write down a synonym for each of the words listed in Activity 1. If the synonym is new to you, look up its meaning in one of the learner dictionaries.

**Activity 3: Using a Corpus**

A corpus (plural=corpora) is a collection of language expressions which can be searched to uncover patterns about how language is used in practice. Corpora of all sorts and sizes exist, and many are free to use. This activity introduces the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which can be accessed freely here: https://corpus.byu.edu/coca/ . (Although access is free, after a certain number of queries you will be asked to register for an account.)

**Q.3** Once at COCA, do the following:

1. Look up each of the AVL words from Activity 1.
2. How frequently does each occur in COCA?
3. Now restrict your search to the spoken subcorpus. How many occurrences ("tokens") do you find for each one?
4. Now restrict your search to the academic subcorpus. Which subcorpus contains more occurrences?
5. Look up the synonyms you found for the AVL words. Which occurs more frequently, the original word or its synonym?
6. Use the "collocates" option to explore the word *perceive*. What word most frequently occurs immediately after *perceive*? What if you specify the most frequent preposition following *utililty*?

If you found it interesting to query a corpus, you might want to visit <https://the.sketchengine.co.uk/open/> where you can explore other corpora, including BAWE, the corpus of British Academic Written English. It consists of a collection of high-marked assessment writing tasks from students at UK universities.

**Activity 4: Using a Concordancer**

When you viewed the results for your searches in Activity 3, you were looking at a concordancer. A concordancer is a tool that allows you to explore a corpus and do things like list the words in it, find out how frequent a word is, and find out what the context for a given word is. You can use a concordancer to explore your own writing in a few easy steps.

1. First, download AntConc, which is freely available here: http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software.html
2. Save the writing you want to explore as plain text files;
3. Upload them to AntConc (a manual is available from the download page);
4. Start querying.

**Activity 5: Checking for Good Source Use**

In Unit 4 we reviewed good strategies for using sources. We distinguished between quotation, which is an exact (and signalled) repetition of another writer's words, and paraphrase, which is an original, independent rewording of someone else's ideas. We also observed that a strategy between quotation—changing a few words but sticking to the language of the source—is not appropriate, not effective in building good texts, and may look like plagiarism.

**Q.4** Your task here is to review your essay for possible problems like this:

1. From memory, identify any place where you think you may have worked closely with the wording of your source.
2. Compare your text to what your source says. Is yours a quotation, an independent paraphrase, or something in between?
3. If you are unsure, ask your instructor.
4. If you conclude that you have depended too heavily on your source, use the paraphrasing strategy introduced in Unit 4.
5. Decide how the content from the source is intended to inform your essay.
6. Read the source carefully to be sure you understand it.
7. Put the source away while you write down the information of interest.
8. Introduce the idea from the source into your own text, with a reference.
9. Return to the source to check for accuracy.

Remember that the most important question is not how similar to or different from the source your wording is; an independent writing process is the objective.

**Unit 12**

**Local Revision**

This unit places the emphasis on finalising the writing process, and on learning to read a nearly finished text to identify places where small, local revisions can make it stronger. By this point your essay should be nearly ready. Unless absolutely necessary, it is not desirable to make large changes to the structure, organisation or content (to the essay or to any text which has reached the final stages). However, there are always opportunities to eliminate ambiguous wordings, find the most appropriate word, identify and fix grammatical and typographical errors, etc. In class in this unit, a number of activities will focus on making local revisions. The online module deals with cohesion, another feature to pay attention to in the final stages of revision. Outside of class in this unit, you will finalise your revisions to the argumentative essay, and submit it on Canvas by the specified date. By the end of the unit you will have:

* learned skills for proofreading;
* practiced adopting a critical distance from your text;
* analysed alternatives for revision;
* completed the draft 3 of the argumentative essay.

**Activity 1: Finding and Fixing Common Errors**

Learning to spot, and fix, grammatical errors in your own writing is an important part of being able to produce polished, professional texts. Each sentence below has one (and only one) grammatical error. Within each group, each sentence shares the same kind of error (although the best way to fix it may vary from sentence to sentence). Your task is to:

1. identify the problem;
2. identify ways of fixing it;
3. explain the rule or principle which helps us understand the errors in each group.

Start by reading through the sentences individually and trying to find the errors. Then, in groups, compare your work. When you've reached agreement on what the problems are, move on to identify ways of fixing the problem, and explain the rule or principle which helps understand the errors in each group.

**Group A**

1. Foreign language is something a person has to study before she can use it.
2. One of them is pharmaceuticals industry, which produces medicines.
3. What we need is food for a better, healthier living.
4. Happiness level in developing countries is generally lower compared with developed countries.

**Group B**

1. The most traditional instruments, common in most countries' music, includes the piano and drums.
2. This movement of the turbines generate electricity.
3. Waterpollution is the result of people and industries that pollutes the water around them.
4. In whose favour is the statistics?

**Group C**

1. Broccoli also contains of minerals, for example iron.
2. If you play a frightening song, you will really scare people up.
3. They have learned to use body language in a greater extent.
4. It is not advisable to expose children at unnecessary health risks.

**Group D**

1. This leads us back to water power, this means that we use water to produce electricity.
2. The splashing waves are not so playful now, they have a threatening feel.
3. Minors should not be organ donors, they are too immature to make such a big decision.
4. Diving is done from a springboard, this helps to push the diver high and away from the board.

**Group E**

1. As a suggestion, by having some people over for coffee on the afternoon or by arranging a birthday party in the night, with food and beverages.
2. How we see varieties of languages, for example French, as beautiful, romantic and elegant, and some others as unpleasant and ugly.
3. Since brain areas for decision-making, motivation and impulsivity are not mature during adolescence (Geist, 2009).
4. If the workload is heavy in a certain project, or if there are many parallel projects running.

**Activity 2: Common Errors in your own Work**

Now look through the most recent version of your essay. Can you find any errors of the types you worked with in Activity 1? Look at a classmate's essay. Is it easier to find errors in somebody else's writing?

**Activity 3: Error Correction Log**

(adapted from Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005)

Identify at least 20 instances where you modified your first draft of the essay to correct an error your teacher or your peer partner identified, or one you found yourself. For each error, answer the following questions:

1. Was it at word level (for example, misspelling) or did it involve relationships between or among words (for example, subject-verb agreement)?
2. How likely is it that this mistake could lead the reader to misunderstand something?
3. What were the most common types of errors?

**Activity 4: Proofreading your In-Text Citations**

Look at the following in-text references and say whether each is formatted correctly according to APA style. If you find an error, correct it.

1. In her landmark book, Carson, 1962, pointed to the damage pesticides were doing to bird populations.
2. Various approaches have been taken to cataloguing academic vocabulary (e.g., Gardner, and Davies, 2015.)
3. The important relationship between reading and writing was stressed by W. Grabe [2001].
4. North Carolina has embarked on an ambitious program intended to conserve a unique species ("Red Wolf," 2014).

**[Remark: The corporate author of “Red Wolf” is: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service]**

**Activity 5: Proofreading your Reference List**

Look at the reference list below, and decide whether it is formatted correctly according to APA style. If you find errors, correct them.

**Reference List**

Gardner, Dee, &Mark Davies, 2015. A New Academic Vocabulary List. *Applied Linguistics*, *35*,

305–327. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amt015

Grabe, W. (2001). Reading-writing relations: Theoretical perspectives and instructional

practices. In *Linking literacies: Perspectives on L2 Reading-Writing Connections* (pp. 15–47), edited by Diane Belcher and Alan Hirvela. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

"Red Wolf" (2014, September) accessed at

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Alligator\_River/wildlife\_and\_habitat/red\_wolf.html

R. Carson, (1962). Silent spring. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

**Unit 13**

**Reflection**

In this unit we will focus on the theme of reflection. In class in this unit you will engage in discussions and tasks which will help you take stock of your development as a writer, and set goals for the future. You will also get additional information about how to prepare your self-assessment commentary. Outside of class in this unit, the online module will reinforce the theme of future development. You will also prepare and submit the self-assessment commentary by the date specified on Canvas. By the end of the unit you will have:

* reflected on your development as a writer during this course;
* set goals and planned strategies for your continued development;
* written a self-assessment commentary.

**Activity 1: Learning Styles**

What sort of learner are you? Complete the questionnaire about your learning style here: <https://www.webtools.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/> and get the report about your learning style. Then, with a partner in class, discuss the answers to the following questions.

1. Does anything in your learning styles report surprise you?

2. Does anything in the report help explain times when you've been successful, or less successful, in your studies?

3. Does the report have any implications for your future learning at university?

**Activity 2: Reflection on a Past Learning Experience**

Think about a **significant learning experience** from your past. It can be something that happened when you were very young or something that occurred just recently, for example, learning to swim, play the guitar, or ride a bicycle, or making a breakthrough in a one of your university subjects or a foreign language. Discuss the following questions with a partner in class:

1. What did you learn?
2. What made this learning experience significant?
3. How did you accomplish that learning?
4. What things went right and wrong in the learning process?
5. Which people contributed to your learning and how?
6. How did you feel about the experience at the time?
7. How do you feel about it now?
8. Are there lessons from this experience for your future learning at university?

**Activity 3: Being a Reflective Learner**

Reflective learning involves five components: **self-awareness; reviewing**; **planning; monitoring;** and **evaluating.** Reflection is not simply about thinking superficially about what happened in the past but critically examining t what happened on a deeper level from a variety of different perspectives. Spend five minutes thinking about a specific course or other learning experience. Did you work with all five of these components? You don't need to write your answers down or share them with anybody other than yourself.

**Activity 4: Planning for the Self-Assessment Commentary**

Read the instructions for the self-assessment commentary. Then spend a few minutes making notes about your answers to the questions you are asked to address. In small groups, share your answers to the questions.

Instructions for the Self-Assessment Commentary

The self-assessment commentary contributes 15% of the marks in this course and is based on the needs analysis questionnaire which you filled out in Unit 2. The commentary (which should be between 700-750 words in length) should address the following questions:

1. To what extent has your learning this semester addressed the areas identified in the needs analysis?
2. To what extent have you achieved the objectives you identified as part of the needs analysis?
3. What things have made the greatest contribution this semester to your development as a writer?
4. What are your goals for future development as an academic writer?
5. How will you achieve those goals?

The self-assessment will be assessed based on the extent to which it presents evidence of reflection, supported by specific details, in a clear, appropriate English. Submit your self-assessment commentary by uploading it to Canvas by the specified date.

1. “The problem of plagiarism.” *Academic Honesty: Fundamental Principles for Knowledge Discovery and Innovation*. Office of the Provost, City University of Hong Kong. <http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/ah/plagiarism.htm>. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Ken Hyland, “Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction*.” Journal of Second Language Writing* 16 (2007) : 148–164. p. 149. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Sandberg, Eric. “To want and not to have”: Desire and Form in Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*.” *Affirmations: Of the Modern*. Vol.1.2 (2014) : 56-74. <http://affirmations.arts.unsw.edu.au/index.php?journal=aom&page=article&op=view&path%5B%5D=19>. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Mortimer, Caroline. “Households are more than £800 worse off after Brexit, study says.”

   *The Independent*. 20 November 2017. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-800-worse-off-households-food-poverty-inflation-a8064286.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Loman, A.A., Islam, S.M.M. & Ju, LK. *Applied Microbiology and Biotechnology* (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00253-017-8626-5>. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. “Writing for a living: a joy or a chore?” *The Guardian*. 3 March 2009. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/mar/03/authors-on-writing>. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Ellis, Warren. “Rough Work.” [www.warrenellis.com](http://www.warrenellis.com). 11 June 2009. <http://www.warrenellis.com/?p=7393>. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Kane, Leslie, Ed. *David Mamet in Conversation*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2001. p. 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Sontag, Susan. “Writer on Writing; Directions: Write, Read, Rewrite. Repeat Steps 2 and 3 as Needed.” The New York Times. 18 December 2000. <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/12/18/books/writers-on-writing-directions-write-read-rewrite-repeat-steps-2-and-3-as-needed.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)