

Module 2: Writing Skills

Vocabulary building - word formation; root words, prefixes & suffixes; synonyms; antonyms; homophones; abbreviations; one-word substitutes, Requisites of a Good Sentence, Common Errors - subject-verb agreement and concord, tenses, articles, preposition; punctuation, Paragraph Writing, Basics of Letter & email writing; notice & memo writing

What are different Word Formation Process? Discuss with example.

The word formation process consists of a combination of morphemes* that are rule-governed (a new word is formed). Morpheme is a word or a part of word that has meaning. It cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts without violation of its meaning.

For example: land - mine, care - ful

Un (Prefix) – Comfort (Root) – able (Suffix)

Different ways of word formation are:

- Borrowing
- Affixation
- Compounding
- Reduplication
- Backformation
- Blending
- Acronym
- Clipping
- Coinage

Borrowing

Borrowing is a process that takes over words from most of the other languages with which it has had contact. The language from which a word has been borrowed will be called the donor language. The English language has been described by David Crystal as an "insatiable borrower." More than 120 other languages have served as sources for the contemporary vocabulary of English.

Examples:

- Latin: Exit, Dictator, Maximum, Virus
- French: Café, Chef, Cheque
- Hindi: Shampoo, Dungree, Chutney, Curry, Loot

Affixation

Affixation is generally defined as the formation of words by adding word-forming or derivational affixes to stems. This process is also known as derivation, for new words created in this way are derived from old forms. The words formed in this way are called derivatives.

According to the positions which affixes occupy in words, affixation falls into two subclasses: pre-fixation, and suffixation. .

Pre-fixation is the formation of new words by adding prefixes to stems. Prefixes do not generally change the word-class of the stem but only modify its meaning. However, present-day English finds an increasing number of class-changing prefixes, e.g. asleep a. (a- + v), encourage v. (en- + n), unearth v. (un- + n), de-oil v. (de- + n). These make up only an insignificant number in the huge contemporary vocabulary.

The majority of prefixes are characterized by their non-class-changing nature. Their chief function is to change meanings of the stems. The italicized and bold morphemes in the following examples are the prefix

Irreplaceable, Unmovable, Irreplaceable, Immovable, Insensitive, Disservice, Malpractice, Misconduct, Underdeveloped, Anti-government, Extraordinary, Multi-purpose, Decentralize, Immature, Disallow, Asleep Injustice , Unfair , Unwilling, Irresistible etc.

Suffix

A suffix (also sometimes called a postfix or ending) is an affix which is placed after the stem of a word. Common examples are case endings, which indicate the grammatical case of nouns or adjectives, and verb endings, which form the conjugation of verbs. With the use of the suffix, the category of a word can be either changed or maintained, e.g. plays, played, and playing, kingdom as Class maintaining and Play-ground, player and playful as class changing. The italicized and bold morphemes in the following examples are the suffix.

Examination, criticize, beautify, beautifully, readable, childhood, Kindness, careful, careless, criticism, development, dentist, financial linguist and childish etc

Compounding:

Noun + Noun

The most common type of word formation is the combination of two (or more) nouns in order to form a resulting noun:

Noun + Noun = Noun

Examples: landmine, wallpaper, toothbrush

Verb + Noun

Here verbs describe what is done with an object or what a subject "does", in short, a new noun is formed, usually referring to something concrete, and the verb defines the action related to it:

Verb + Noun = Noun: draw + bridge = drawbridge.

hitman = a man who carries out "dirty jobs", or, who "hits".

Noun + Adjective

Nouns and adjectives can also be compounded in the opposite order:

Noun + Adjective = Adjective

Camera + shy = camera-shy (Shy in respect of appearing or speaking before cameras).

Dirt-cheap = cheap as dirt;

Adjective + Noun

Another major type of word formation is the compounding of Adjectives and nouns:

Adjective + Noun = Noun:

Brown + bear = brownbear

Examples:

blackboard (a board to write on vertically attached to a wall), redneck (a Southerner of poor social background), yellowpress (see above), blueprint (prints of building plans).

Adjective + Adjective

bitter-sweet, deaf-mute, aural-oral, Anglo-Saxon

Adjective + Participle

far-reaching, far fetched, narrow-minded, single-minded, high-climbing, low-yielding, red-painted, bare-handed

Adjective + Verb

to blackmail, to dry-clean, to blackpaint, to whitewash

Noun + Verb

to proofread, to baby-sit, to brainstorm, to sightsee, to tape-record

Clipping

Clipping is a shortening of a word by the omission of one or more syllables.

Examples: bike (bicycle), decaf (decaffeinated coffee), fan (fanatic), exam (examination), phone (telephone), fax (facsimile), fridge (refrigerator), hyper (hyperactive), intercom (intercommunication system), lab (laboratory), medic (medical student/doctor), memo (memorandum), mike (microphone), movie (moving picture), photo (photograph), pub (public house), zoo (zoological gardens), maths (mathematics).

Acronyms

Words that are formed from the initials of several words. The usually resulting word class is that of a noun: UNESCO(United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organisation), SCUBA (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus), email (electronic mail).

Blending

Process of creating a new word by combining the parts of two different words, usually the beginning of one word and the end of another. Here, two or more Complementing components constitute the basis for the resultant. These components are omitted of one or more syllables before compounded to the blend.

Examples: bit binary+digit, camcorder camera+recorder, contraception contrasting+conception, geepgoat+sheep, glitterati glitter+literaty, modem modular+demodulator, motel motor+hotel, smog smoke+fog, transistor transfer+resistor.

Reduplication

Doubling an entire word (total reduplication) or part of a word (partial reduplication)

Eg. Bye Bye, Blah Blah, Ta Ta, Abra Ca dabra, Knock-Knock, Humpty-Dumpty

Backformation

It is related to removing what looks like a typical affix in the language. A noun enters the language first and then a verb is “back-formed” from it.

e.g. edit (Editor) enthuse (Enthusiasm) and donate (Donation)

Other examples:

a) burgle from burglar

b) Televisе from Television

Coinage

It is related to a completely new word. Often invented by companies with new products or processes, or taken from names.

Examples:

- xerox
- nylon
- fahrenheit – Gabriel Fahrenheit
- volt- Alessandro Volta

What is a Sentence? What are the requisites of a sentence?

Sentence is a set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate, conveying a statement, question, exclamation, or command, and consisting of a main clause and sometimes one or more subordinate clauses.

Requisites of a good sentence

There are three basic requisites of a good sentence:

Clarity, Consistency, and Economy

Clarity refers to the clear expression of writer's thought without any ambiguity. The three basic aids to maintain clarity in a sentence are adequate punctuation, clear pronoun reference and correct word order.

Consistency means grammatical harmony in sentences to make them errorless and effective. Writers should keep tenses consistent, make subjects and verbs agree in number and person and make pronoun agree with their antecedents in gender, number and person.

Economy refers to express one's viewpoints precisely and effectively. To achieve economy in communicating one's thoughts the writer should avoid long winded sentences, repetitions and redundancies from one's expressions.

PARAGRAPH WRITING:

What is a paragraph?

It is a group of sentences that introduces, presents and develops **one** main idea about the topic. It can be divided into **three** major parts.

A. The Topic Sentence

It is normally the first sentence of the paragraph.

It conveys the overall point of the paragraph.

It helps the writer focus on the idea written about.

It helps the reader know about what the paragraph is all about.

B. The Supporting Details

They are sentences used to support the main idea stated in the topic sentence.

They give more information about the main idea through examples.

They say in details what the topic sentence says in general.

They should be clear evidence that what the topic sentence says is trustworthy.

They should be strong convincing points on which the topic sentence can rely upon.

C. The Concluding Sentence

It is a reflection of the main idea pronounced in the topic sentence.

It sums up what the topic sentence and the supporting details talk about.

It is the closing sentence that reminds the readers of what they have to value.

It is compulsory for the completion of the paragraph unity.

It eventually indicates the end of a paragraph.

It prepares the reader for a smooth transition to the next paragraph if there is one.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

Most paragraphs in an essay have a three-part structure—introduction, body, and conclusion. You can see this structure in paragraphs whether they are narrating, describing, comparing, contrasting, or analyzing information. Each part of the paragraph plays an important role in communicating your meaning to your reader.

Introduction: the first section of a paragraph that generally includes the topic sentence and any other sentences at the beginning of the paragraph that give background information or provide a transition.

Body: follows the introduction; discusses the controlling idea, using facts, arguments, analysis, examples, and other information.

Conclusion: the final section; summarizes the connections between the information discussed in the body of the paragraph and the paragraph's controlling idea.

Requisites of a Paragraph

The three basic requirements of a good paragraph are: **Unity**, **Coherence** and **Emphasis**.

1. Unity

The entire paragraph should concern itself with a single focus. If it begins with a one focus or major point of discussion, it should not end with another or wander within different ideas.

2. Coherence

Coherence is the trait that makes the paragraph easily understandable to a reader. In a coherent paragraph, each sentence relates clearly to the topic sentence or controlling idea, but there is more to coherence than this. If a paragraph is coherent, each sentence flows smoothly into the next without obvious shifts or jumps. A coherent paragraph also highlights the ties

between old information and new information to make the structure of ideas or arguments clear to the reader.

Along with the smooth flow of sentences, a paragraph's coherence may also be related to its length. If you have written a very long paragraph, one that fills a double-spaced typed page, for example, you should check it carefully to see if it should start a new paragraph where the original paragraph wanders from its controlling idea. On the other hand, if a paragraph is very short (only one or two sentences, perhaps), you may need to develop its controlling idea more thoroughly, or combine it with another paragraph. You can help create coherence in your paragraphs by creating logical bridges and verbal bridges.

Verbal bridges to maintain coherence in a paragraph:

- Key words can be repeated in several sentences
 - Synonymous words can be repeated in several sentences
 - Pronouns can refer to nouns in previous sentences
 - Transition words can be used to link ideas from different sentences
2. **Emphasis** refers to the force or prominence on important points in the paragraph. It is essential because when a person reads a text, he should know at once what the author is writing about. Also, the most important idea should stand out. There are five devices which help writers emphasize on significant ideas in a paragraph. They are **Balance, Space, repetition, contrast** and **Emphatic words**.

Some methods to make sure your paragraphs are well-developed:

- Use examples and illustrations
- Cite data (facts, statistics, evidence, details, and others)
- Examine testimony (what other people say such as quotes and paraphrases)
- Use an anecdote or story
- Define terms in the paragraph
- Compare and contrast
- Evaluate causes and reasons
- Examine effects and consequences
- Analyze the topic
- Describe the topic
- Offer a chronology of an event (time segments)

Inductive; Deductive; Exposition; Linear; Interrupted; Spatial & Chronological

What is an Inductive method of paragraph

An inductive method of writing begins with either evidence or reasons leading to the statement of the Writer's claim at the end of the text. Inductive paragraphs are 'conclusion-oriented'. The main conclusion is the most important part of the reasoning and usually comes at the end of a paragraph.

What is a Deductive paragraph

In deductive writing, the claim is usually provided in the first sentence of the paragraph. The sentence containing the claim, which is the main point of the paragraph, is often referred to as the 'topic sentence'. The topic sentence is then developed in the rest of the paragraph with evidence and reasoning supporting the initial claim.

What do you mean by spatial paragraph

Spatial order refers to space or layout. To use spatial order, you describe the setting in some sort of order based on location - you can go in a clockwise direction, or start at the front and go to the back, or go from top to bottom - so long as you list things in some kind of logical order. For example, if you write a paragraph about your local mall, you could organize the paragraphs and begin at the entrance, then describe each section of the mall until you got to your favourite store.

What is Expository paragraph

This kind of writing explains or informs an idea. Expository writing's main purpose is to explain. It is a subject-oriented writing style, in which authors focus on telling you about a given topic or subject without voicing their personal opinions.

What is Linear paragraph

Linear writing is when a writer starts at the beginning and plows through to the end without going back to change or fix things. Non-linear writing is when the story is written out-of-order. ... There are pros and cons to each style of writing. Linear writing tends to be the more standard approach to novel-writing

What do you mean by chronological method of paragraph

Chronological order refers to time. To use chronological order, you could describe the subject by starting at the moment it began and working forward until present day; or you could start by describing it as it is now, then working backwards until the moment it began.

Describe the characteristics of business letter?

The various characteristics of business letter are simplicity, clarity, sincerity, formal writing style, persuading, positive language.

1. Structure of business letter

The structure of business letter includes the following:

Heading:

The heading which is also known as 'head address' or 'letter head' contains information relating to the name of the organisation and its address. It is usually given at the top centre or top right side of the paper. The information include: firm's name, addresses, trade mark, telephone number, telex number E-mail address, date etc.

Reference number:

The number which the receiver refers in all future correspondence is called Reference Number. It is usually printed below the date line or on the same line where the date is written to the right margin. The purpose of reference number is to enable replies to be linked with the previous correspondence and to send replies to these letters to the proper official or department.

Date:

The date consists of day, month and year. The date finds its place either at the starting of left margin or at the closing of the right margin as the style adopted. Date enables quick references in future and helps in prompt action and orderly filing.

Inside address:

The inside address contains the name and address of the organisation or the individual to whom the letter is written. It is written below the Reference time starting from the left margin. The inside address makes a record on the copy which helps in identification for filing purpose.

Salutation:

Salutation means to greet the addressee. It is the complementary greeting with which the writer begins his letters. It is written below the inside address or attention line leaving some space. It starts from the left side margin. It may or may not end with comma depending upon the style of letter.

Subject line:

Subject line tells what the correspondence is about. It is placed just below the salutation line. It usually begins at the left margin and may also begin from the centre. It may contain apart from the subject any specific identifications material i.e. date of previous letter, invoice number etc.

Body of the letter:

It is that part of the letter which contains the message to be converged. It is the most important part of the letter and usually consists of three to four paragraph. The first (or the opening paragraph) begins the letter and builds up a relationship with the reader. The second paragraph contains the proper subject matter. It is the main paragraph of the letter. The third paragraph usually is an extension of the second paragraph. The fourth (or the closing paragraph) brings the letter to an end. It must be natural and logical must be final and complete. Closing with an important statement, a question, an offer or a request leaves the door open for further communication.

Complimentary close:

It is also known as subscription. It is merely a polite way of ending a letter. It is written below the last paragraph of the body of the letter, either at the left side or at the right side, depending on the style of letter. The subscription should be corresponding to the salutation.

Signature block:

Signature is the assent of the writer to the subject matter of the letter and is a practical necessity. It is usually hand written and contains the writers name, status, department, firm etc. Signature is put just below the complementary close.

Enclosures:

Sometimes some documents like price list catalogue etc are attached with the letter. Enclosures mention the documents which are enclosed or attached with the letter. The enclosures usually find their place at the bottom left margin.

Sample Letter:

Read part of a letter below from Ms Jenny inviting you to a business reception at which your company will receive an award.

We are pleased to inform you that your company has won this year's Business 2003 Award. The award will be presented at a reception at the Park Hotel on February 19.

I would be grateful if you would let me know as soon as you can whether you will be able to attend and, also, whether you would be prepared to give a short talk during the evening.

Write a letter to Ms Jenny:

- Thanking her for the award
- Suggesting a topic for the talk
- Saying what equipment you will need
- Asking whether some members of staff can also attend

Write 60-80 words on your Answer Sheet. Do not include any postal addresses.

Dear Ms Jenny

I would like to thank you on behalf of everyone at Acme Technology for this award. I will be happy to attend the ceremony. Would it be possible for some of our staff to also attend?

Regarding a short talk, I would be happy to oblige and suggest the theme of creative entrepreneurs, the foundation concept of our business.

If you could provide a projector suitable for connection to a laptop for the talk, it would be extremely helpful.

Yours sincerely

(Name)
Managing Director

Email writing, notice & memo writing

Email is one of the most widely used forms of communication both in and out of the workplace. A well-composed email provides the recipient with a friendly, clear, concise and actionable message. Since we rely so heavily on email, every email we send should be well-written, and serve the intended purpose to disseminate information, while also being collegial. Effective emails, not only share information in a clear and concise manner, they save time and effort for both the reader and the recipient, which in the long run, impacts the bottom line.

Steps for writing professional emails

1. Identify your goal

Before you write an email, ask yourself what you want the recipient to do after they've read it. Once you've determined the purpose of your email, you can ensure everything you include in your message supports this action.

2. Consider your audience

When you compose an email message, make sure your tone matches your audience. For example, if you're emailing a business executive you've never met, keep the email polished and free of any jokes or informalities. On the other hand, if you're emailing a colleague with whom you have a good relationship, you might use a less formal, more friendly approach.

2. Subject Lines are Important

It drives me crazy when I get an email from someone and the subject line is a tease or does not relate to the content of the email. Again, this will add time to my day, when I'm trying to search through my emails for specific content, but the subject line doesn't match that content.

3. Use Bullet Points And Highlight Call To Action

Bullet points make it much easier for the recipient to read the email quickly and effectively. It also helps the reader identify the main points of the email. If the recipient is expected to do something after receiving the email, highlight the call to action.

4. Keep It Short

No one has the time to read a 10-paragraph email, so don't send it. If you have 10-paragraphs, or even four-paragraphs, then you're likely including unrelated content. Your audience might have little time to read through your email, so make it as brief as possible without leaving out key information. Try not to address too many subjects at once as this can make your message lengthy, challenging to read and difficult to take action on. When editing your email, take out any information that's irrelevant to the topic you're addressing. Use short, simple sentences by removing filler words and extraneous information.

5. Proofread your email

An error-free email demonstrates diligence and professionalism. Before you send an email, take a moment to check for any spelling, grammar or syntax errors. Also, double-check to ensure you've included any attachments you may have referenced in your message. If it is an important email to critical stakeholders, you might ask your direct supervisor or a trusted colleague to read over it before you send it.

6. Use proper etiquette

Include a courteous greeting and closing to sound friendly and polite. Additionally, be considerate of the recipient and their time. For example, unless it's an emergency, avoid emailing a contact asking for something after-hours or while they're on leave.

7. Watch Your Tone

The tone of an email is difficult to assess, but more often than not, the reader will assign a tone, even when one was not intended, so be careful not to craft the email with tone by watching the use of exclamation marks, using inflammatory words, etc.

8. Avoid Too Many Exclamation Marks And No Emojis

I find I use too many exclamation marks in my emails, usually to sound excited, but one could also read the exclamation marks as being angry, frustrated, etc. And NEVER use emojis in a work email, to anyone other than a close friend.

9. Always Proofread Your Emails

Sending out an email with typos, misspelled words, etc., makes you look bad. Take the extra minute to proofread the email.

10. Never Send An Email When Angry Or Frustrated

If you need to write the email, do so in a word document, where it is impossible to hit the send button by accident.

Sample Email:

You have to cancel a meeting with James Lewis, a senior manager in your company, at very short notice.

Write an email to Mr Lewis:

- Apologising for the cancellation
- explaining why this is necessary
- Suggesting a date when you are free

Write 30-40 words on your Answer Sheet. **Answer:**

Subject: Meeting
Hello Mr Lewis

I'm afraid I won't be able to attend this afternoon's meeting. I'm covering for my boss Colin Frazer, who was involved in a car accident this morning.

I apologise for the inconvenience.

Can we reschedule? Friday is good for me.

Regards

(Name)

Memo Sample:

Memo is normally used for communicating policies, procedures, or related official business within an organization. It is often written from a one-to-all perspective (like mass communication), broadcasting a message to an audience, rather than a one-on-one, interpersonal communication. It may also be used to update a team on activities for a given project, or to inform a specific group within a company of an event, action, or observance.

You have arranged for a new brochure to be printed for your company. However, it will now arrive later than you planned.

Write a memo to all staff:

- Apologizing for the late arrival
- Giving the reason for the delay
- Saying when the brochure will arrive

To: Name, Designation

From:

Date:

Subject: New Brochure

I'm sorry but our new brochure has not arrived yet. I realize that this is very inconvenient but there have been technical problems at the printer's. It will hopefully be with us in two week's time. Please carry on using the old brochure for the moment and tell customers about any changes.