

# EFFECTIVE ACADEMIC WRITING 2

THE SHORT ESSAY



ALICE SAVAGE  
PATRICIA MAYER

OXFORD

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# OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

198 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10016 USA

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP UK

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.  
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,  
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi  
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi  
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece  
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## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Savage, Alice.

Effective academic writing 2 : the short essay / Alice Savage, Patricia Mayer.  
p. cm.

ISBN-13: 978-0-19-430923-3 (student book)

1. English language—Rhetoric—Problems, exercises, etc. 2. Essay—  
Authorship—Problems, exercises, etc. 3. Report writing—Problems, exercises,  
etc. I. Title: Effective academic writing two. II. Mayer, Patricia. III. Title.

PE1471.S28 2006

808'.042—dc22

2005030686

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Executive Publisher: Janet Aitchison

Senior Acquisitions Editor: Pietro Alongi

Associate Editor: Scott Allan Wallack

Art Director: Maj-Britt Hagsted

Art Editor: Justine Eun

Production Manager: Shanta Persaud

Production Controller: Zai Jawar Ali

ISBN-13: 978-0-19-430923-3 (STUDENT BOOK)

ISBN-10: 0-19-430923-3 (STUDENT BOOK)

Printed in Hong Kong

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Cover art:

Richard Diebenkorn

Ocean Park #122; 1980

oil and charcoal on canvas; 100 in. x 80 5/8 in. (254 cm x 204.79 cm)

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Charles H. Land Foundation Fund purchase

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# Acknowledgements

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Our thanks to the editorial team: Kimberly Steiner, Kenna Bourke, and Scott Allan Wallick for their insight and expertise, and to Pietro Alongi for his endless positivity and for getting us involved in this project. We also want to gratefully acknowledge the work of Susan Kesner Bland. Last but not least, our gratitude to the following reviewers for their contribution to the project: Sharon Allerson, East Los Angeles College; Frank Cronin, Austin Community College; Kieran Hilu, Virginia Tech; Peter Hoffman, LaGuardia Community College; Carla Nyssen, California State University, Long Beach; Adrianne Ochoa; Mary O'Neill, Northern Virginia Community College; Maria Salinas, Del Mar College.

I would like to thank the administration, faculty, and staff of North Harris College for making it such a great place to work. I especially want to applaud the students of the ESL program for being such a joy to teach. Your papers are full of delightful surprises and interesting insights. Thank you for allowing your work to be used to assist others. Finally, I wish to thank my family—Masoud, Cyrus, and Kaveh—for helping me balance work and home. I always look forward to seeing you at the end of the day.

A.S.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Robert Cohen and Kim Sanabria for their constant enthusiasm, encouragement, and camaraderie. Thanks are also due to the CUNY Language Immersion Program students and staff, whose creativity and dedication inspired many of the activities in this book. Lastly, and most importantly, I am and will always be most grateful to Jorge Rosero, Ann Gardner, and Sebastian Rosero-Mayer who will always be my greatest sources of inspiration.

P.M.

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# Introduction

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*Effecting Academic Writing* is a three-book series intended to usher students into the world of academic writing. The goal of the series is to provide students and their teachers with a practical and efficient approach to learning the skills, strategies, and knowledge that are necessary for succeeding in content coursework. A parallel goal is to provide opportunities for students to explore their opinions, discuss their ideas, and share their experiences through written communication. By guiding budding writers through the experience of composing various types of short papers, we hope to provide students with the tools and the confidence necessary for college success.

## The Short Essay

Book 2 of *Effective Academic Writing*, *The Short Essay*, introduces students at the intermediate level to three- and four-paragraph essays. The first unit provides a thorough review of paragraph structure and mechanics to consolidate knowledge before moving on to more extended writing. Each of the following five units then addresses a particular rhetorical mode and provides user-friendly guidance to mastering the form. The book also offers numerous opportunities for practicing relevant language points.

All language presentations and practice are correlated to *Grammar Sense 2*.

Book 2 contains several features designed to support students in developing the skills that they need for college writing:

- Each unit contains an adapted authentic text to provide ideas and context for the assignment.
- At strategic points in the unit, students read and analyze authentic student essays to see how other students have written on the same or similar topics.
- Each unit contains concise and effective language presentations designed to develop students' understanding of rhetorical modes, and to improve their grammatical accuracy.
- Each unit offers useful writing outlines so that students can learn to plan and to structure their writing.
- Each unit offers collaborative learning activities allowing students to work together and share ideas.
- At relevant points in the unit, editing exercises and editing checklists are provided so that students can refine their writing.
- Timed writing activities come at the close of each unit to prepare students for in-class writing.
- A series of learner-friendly appendices are provided at the back of the book to encourage student independence. A glossary of common grammar terms for student reference is included.

## **Unit Organization**

Each unit introduces a theme and a writing task and then guides the writer through a five-part process of gathering ideas, organizing an outline, drafting, revising, and editing. As students write, they practice specific skills and put language knowledge to work to produce a short paper that follows academic conventions. The rhetorical and language-related goals of the unit are identified on the opener page.

### **Part 1**

Part 1 opens with an image or a quote to spark interest as students begin thinking about the topic. This is followed by a short passage adapted from an authentic text. Students answer questions about the passage that will help them connect the writer's ideas to their own knowledge and experience. They then move on to a free-writing activity, an unstructured writing task in which they can explore the topic without worrying about organization or grammar.

### **Part 2**

In Part 2 students are introduced to a specific rhetorical mode. They begin by brainstorming ideas and vocabulary that they will use to write their essay. They then learn about rhetorical organizational features and read and analyze a student essay. Finally, students produce an outline for the essay they will write later in the unit.

### **Part 3**

In Part 3 students develop the ideas from their outline and produce a first draft. This part opens with a second student essay for students to analyze. As they answer questions about the second student model, students review the organizational features learned in Part 2. They are then introduced to specific, level-appropriate language points that will help students shape and structure their writing. Students now write their first draft and, using a peer-review checklist, check each other's writing for organization and clarity of ideas.

### **Part 4**

In Part 4 students edit their writing and produce a final draft. This part focuses on particular grammar trouble spots relevant to the theme and the rhetorical style presented in the unit. Following the concise language presentation, students complete practice exercises to help them develop their grammar skills and build confidence. The last exercise always focuses on accuracy and involves editing a piece of writing. Students then move on to editing their own writing, and producing a final draft.

### **Part 5**

The final part of the unit is titled "Putting It All Together." This is the summary of the other parts of the unit. Through a series of skill exercises, students review the points covered in Parts 1–4. They are then given the opportunity to write a timed essay using a similar rhetorical focus, but on a different topic. Guidelines for using their time efficiently are suggested. This part also provides students with a comprehensive checklist to review what they have written. The unit closes with suggested tasks for future writing.

# Unit 1

After more than half of students said they had no problem with writing assignments, nearly three-quarters of them said they did not feel confident in their writing skills. This is according to a recent survey by the National Writing Project, which found that 75 percent of students feel less confident in their writing abilities than they did last year.

## Paragraph to Short Essay

### **Unit Goals**

#### **Rhetorical focus:**

- paragraph structure
- unity and coherence in a paragraph
- the paragraph and short essay
- short essay organization

#### **Language focus:**

- simple and compound sentences
- run-on sentences
- dependent clauses

## The Paragraph



*The reason one writes isn't the fact he wants to say something. He writes because he has something to say.*

— F. Scott Fitzgerald



*I write entirely to find out what I'm thinking, what I'm looking at, what I see and what it means. What I want and what I fear.*

— Joan Didion

- A. Read the quotes about writing. Why did these professional writers write? Do you share their feelings in any way?
- B. Now discuss the quotes in small groups. Make notes about your feelings on writing. As a group, present your views on writing.

### Rhetorical Focus

#### Review of Paragraph Structure

A paragraph is a group of sentences about a topic. A typical paragraph begins with a topic sentence, which introduces the topic. The supporting sentences that follow support the idea in the topic sentence with explanations, reasons, and other details. The concluding sentence brings the paragraph to an end.

#### Formatting a Paragraph

- Leave one-inch margins on the left and right side of the page.
- Indent the first sentence. The rest of the sentences follow each other, so that the paragraph looks like a square with a little space taken out of the corner.
- Double-space your paragraph.

**Exercise 1 Identifying the elements of a student paragraph**

- A. Read the paragraph. Then label the formatting elements of the paragraph. Use the words in the box.

- a. double spacing      b. margin      c. indent

## The Ice-Man

1. → Whenever I remember my experience in the Mexican Air Force, I think of my flight instructor because he taught me how to fly a fighter jet. His nickname was Ice-Man, because he was always calm.
2. → This was a positive characteristic because he had to teach students not to panic in a dangerous situation. For example, one time, I made
3. ← a big mistake while we were flying in the clouds. Most instructors would take control and fix the situation, but not Ice-Man. He just gave instructions to fix the problem. I corrected the mistake and got confidence in my abilities. I will always remember his quiet, clear voice and the black aviator glasses that he wore. He was a special person in my life, and I hope that someday I can see him again and thank him for helping me to realize my dream of flying solo and becoming a real pilot.

- B. Answer the questions about the paragraph above. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Circle the topic sentence. Does the topic sentence help you understand what the paragraph will be about?
2. How many supporting sentences does the paragraph have? Underline them.
3. Do all the supporting sentences relate to the topic sentence?
4. Circle the concluding sentence. Does the concluding sentence make the paragraph feel finished?

**Exercise 2** **Reading a student paragraph**

Read the paragraph. What is the risk that the boy takes?

### **The Coconut Tree**

When I was a boy and first learning about the world, I took a big risk. I was playing in the yard outside of my family's house with my friends. It was a hot day, and we were resting in the shady side of our house. One of my friends dared me to climb the coconut tree in our yard. I looked at the tree. It was mature and very tall, but a little bit curved. I had seen men climbing these trees, and it looked easy, but I had never tried before. I wanted to show my courage, so I said I would. The tree was scratchy, but I found places for my feet and hands and soon I was near the top. But then the tree began to move in the breeze. Suddenly I fell. There was a great pain in my arm. My friends ran to tell my mother who took me to the hospital. I had a broken arm, and one of my ribs was broken. I felt bad for a long time after that. And the worst part was that every day I had to walk past the coconut tree and remember my foolish risk.

**Exercise 3** **Analyzing the student paragraph****A. Answer the questions about the paragraph above.**

1. Underline the topic sentence. Is it the first or second sentence? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is the first sentence indented? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many supporting sentences are there? Which are they? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Circle the concluding sentence.

**B. Respond to the paragraph by answering the following questions.**

1. Where was the writer? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was he with? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the consequence of the risk he took? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Have you ever done something risky? What? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Rhetorical Focus

### The Topic Sentence

An effective paragraph contains a good topic sentence. A successful topic sentence has the following features:

- It introduces the topic, or what the paragraph will be about. It also contains an idea or opinion about the topic. This idea is called a controlling idea about the topic.

topic

controlling idea

Certain types of **insects** can benefit a garden.

- The topic sentence must not be a simple fact or detail. Instead, it must contain a specific idea. The idea or opinion must not be too general, or the topic sentence will be unclear.

There are approximately 4,000 chemicals in cigarette smoke. (*fact, not topic sentence*)

Smoking is bad. (*idea too general for a topic sentence*)

Smoking advertisements are a harmful influence on children. (*specific idea*)

- The topic sentence usually appears as the first or second sentence of a paragraph. Here it is the second sentence.

Have you ever noticed that closets are getting bigger and rooms are getting smaller? Changes in popular culture can be seen in changes to the typical family home.

- The topic sentence implies the purpose of the paragraph: to explain, narrate, compare, describe, tell cause or effect, demonstrate or argue, or tell steps in a process.

My sister's personality is completely different from mine. (*shows comparison*)

Smoking results in thousands of smoking-related deaths each year.  
(*tells cause and effect*)

### Exercise 4 Identifying topics and controlling ideas

Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea in the topic sentences below.

1. The painting *Starry Night*, by Vincent Van Gogh is fascinating in many ways.
2. My first driving lesson was a disaster.
3. The process of getting a driver's license has several steps.
4. My ability to speak English has changed my life in several important ways.
5. Some computer games involve the player in physical activity.
6. Cloudy weather affects certain people in negative ways.

### **Exercise 5 Identifying purpose in topic sentences**

**Identify the purpose of the paragraph that follows logically from each topic sentence below.**

1. Almost anyone can get a good grade if they follow these instructions.  
a. express an opinion    b. tell steps in a process    c. narrate a story
2. There are three major causes of obesity in children.  
a. compare two subjects    b. explain causes / effects    c. describe a topic
3. I will always remember a fishing trip that I took with my father when I was 12 years old.  
a. compare two subjects    b. explain causes / effects    c. narrate a story
4. I believe that students should not own credit cards.  
a. tell steps in a process    b. explain causes / effects    c. express an opinion
5. Owls are different from hawks in several significant ways.  
a. compare two subjects    b. describe a topic    c. express an opinion
6. My dog, Sparky, is my best friend.  
a. tell steps in a process    b. describe a subject    c. narrate a story

### **Exercise 6 Predicting paragraphs from controlling ideas**

**Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea of each topic sentence below. Then with a partner, predict what the rest of the paragraph will discuss.**

1. Immigrating to the United States from Vietnam was difficult for my parents.

Prediction: A narrative about the writer's parents' journey from Vietnam to the U.S.

2. Cell phones should not be allowed in classrooms for several reasons.

Prediction: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Cancún Restaurant has the best seafood in town.

Prediction: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Training for the marathon is a complicated process.

Prediction: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Taking the TOEFL is a hardship for many students.

Prediction: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Exercise 7 Identifying effective topic sentences**

**Read each pair of sentences. Write TS next to the sentence that is more effective. Be prepared to explain your choice.**

1. TS a. An English-English dictionary is the best choice for English learners.  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Many English learners use dictionaries.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ a. The grains of rice should not stick together.  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Persian rice is only considered authentic if it is made in the following way.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ a. The Internet has changed the way students do research for term papers.  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. The Internet is changing students' lives.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ a. A college degree is important.  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Having a college degree has many positive effects on a person's life.

### **Exercise 8 Writing effective topic sentences**

**A. Rewrite each topic sentence so it has both a topic and a controlling idea.**

**Write the revised topic sentence in the left-hand column of the chart.**

**The first one is done for you.**

1. **Topic Sentence:** I have an older brother.

Revised topic sentence: My older brother is a great soccer player.	Topic: My older brother
	Controlling idea: is a great soccer player.
This paragraph will be about: why he is a great soccer player. For example, maybe he has a lot of stamina. He might be good at passing the ball. Or he might be a very effective team player.	

2. **Topic Sentence:** Many students eat a lot of fast food.

Revised topic sentence:	Topic:
	Controlling idea:
This paragraph will be about:	

3. **Topic Sentence:** There is a beach near my house.

Revised topic sentence:	Topic:
	Controlling idea:
	This paragraph will be about:

4. **Topic Sentence:** Many teenagers go shopping.

Revised topic sentence:	Topic:
	Controlling idea:
	This paragraph will be about:

5. **Topic Sentence:** Hurricanes hit Florida every year.

Revised topic sentence:	Topic:
	Controlling idea:
	This paragraph will be about:

B. Now exchange books with a partner. Read each revised topic sentence, and write its topic and controlling idea in the right-hand column of the chart. Then write what you think the paragraph will be about. When you have finished, discuss with your partner.

In Part 2, you will ...

- learn about paragraph unity and coherence.

## Unity and Coherence

### Rhetorical Focus

#### Unity Within a Paragraph

Effective writing must have unity. A paragraph has unity when all the sentences support one single idea:

- The paragraph must have one controlling idea in the topic sentence. Otherwise, the paragraph loses focus.
- The supporting sentences must support, demonstrate, prove, or develop the main idea in the topic sentence. If they do not, they will be irrelevant or off-topic and destroy the unity of the paragraph.
- The concluding sentence should restate the idea in the topic sentence to reinforce the main idea for the reader.

#### Exercise 1 Reading a student paragraph

Read the paragraph. What is the talent of each of the three family members described in the paragraph?

#### Stories of Nepal

My mother grew up in a creative and interesting family in Nepal. Her father was an astronomer who worked for the King of Nepal. Very often he would take her to work with him so she could look through a telescope and see the planets and stars. Then she would play in the planetarium until her older brother came to pick her up. On the walk home, her brother would tell her stories. Sometimes he would point to someone on the street or standing in a doorway and tell her that the stranger was a magician or a time-traveler and begin a new story about the person. My grandmother was also interesting. She liked to paint portraits of children. She painted many beautiful portraits of my mother and her cat, Sani, although my mother said it was difficult to

sit still. After my mother left Nepal, she studied computer programming in Wisconsin. I love to remember my mother's stories, and now I enjoy telling my own daughter about her grandmother's life in Nepal.

### **Exercise 2 Analyzing the student paragraph for unity**

**Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.**

1. Underline the topic sentence. Is it the first or second sentence? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Write the controlling idea from the topic sentence in your own words.  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. One sentence in the paragraph is irrelevant. Draw a line through it.
4. Why is the sentence irrelevant? Write your explanation below:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Exercise 3 Recognizing unity in supporting sentences**

**Read the following topic sentences. Put a check (✓) next to each sentence below that supports the topic sentence.**

1. There are several reasons why online courses are increasing in popularity.  
 a. Online courses are flexible in terms of time.  
 b. Online courses have been available since the 1990s.  
 c. Online courses are more convenient for students who live far away from the campus.
2. Childhood diabetes has many possible causes.  
 a. Obesity is a major cause of diabetes.  
 b. Children who eat too much sugar can get diabetes.  
 c. Children with diabetes need constant medical care.
3. The best way to reduce traffic in our city is to build a metro subway system.  
 a. Pollution is very bad in our city.  
 b. Widening the freeways has not solved the problem of traffic congestion.  
 c. A metro subway system would encourage people to take public transportation to work.

4. I am afraid of dogs because I had a scary experience with one when I was ten.
  - a. My children are not allowed to have a pet dog.
  - b. My neighbor owned a collie dog that ran around the neighborhood without a leash.
  - c. The dog bit me.
5. Scenic Beach is my favorite picnic spot because of its beauty.
  - a. It is a quiet narrow beach covered with oyster shells.
  - b. One time I had an interesting experience there.
  - c. The Olympic Mountains rise straight up out of the water on the other side of the channel.
6. Train stations are interesting places to visit.
  - a. The architecture of each train station is often connected to the history of a city.
  - b. The passengers are frequently more interesting to watch than other types of travelers.
  - c. Trains are a good alternative for people who are afraid of flying.
7. The world of dinosaurs is very familiar to the general population.
  - a. Scientists believe that the birds of today are descended from dinosaurs.
  - b. Every year, new movies and TV shows about dinosaurs are produced.
  - c. Children study dinosaurs and play with dinosaur toys from an early age.

#### **Exercise 4    Editing for unity**

**Read the paragraph. Draw a line through the sentences that are irrelevant. The first one is done for you. Find three more.**

I love to watch the pelicans in Galveston. I usually go in the winter. ~~The weather is not warm enough for swimming, so I usually do not see many people on the beach.~~ Pelicans are not elegant, but they are interesting to watch. They remind me of prehistoric birds from my school textbook on dinosaurs. I studied dinosaurs a lot when I was young, and I am very fond of them. The pelicans have large grayish-brown wings that bend sharply when they are flying, and their beaks are long, so their faces look peculiar and old. My brother also really

likes pelicans. They are also graceful in their own way. A flock of pelicans will fly along the coastline just outside the waves, and when they see a good fishing spot, they stop, then turn and dive straight down into the water. Sometimes there is an oil rig or a cargo ship in the water, too. Sometimes several pelicans will fish in the same spot for a while before moving down the beach and away from sight.

### Exercise 5 **Developing unity**

**Write two or three supporting sentences for each of the following topic sentences. Then exchange books with a partner and check your partner's sentences for unity.**

1. Joining a sports team can provide many benefits. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. My first day in my new school was full of surprises. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. A road trip is the best way to see the United States. \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Many people do not realize that packing a suitcase requires skill and planning. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Rhetorical Focus

### Coherence in a Paragraph

Coherence in a paragraph means that the ideas have a logical flow: the relationship between the sentences is clear and one idea connects to the next. One way to achieve coherence in a paragraph is to use a pattern of organization, such as time order, spatial order, or order of importance.

#### Exercise 6    Reading a student paragraph

Read the paragraph. How many rules does the writer give?

### Important Rules for Acting On Stage

For people who would like to act in the theater, there are several important rules to remember. One rule, often forgotten, is to make sure you face your audience when you are on stage. If you turn away from the audience, they cannot see your facial expressions. Next, make sure that you speak loudly enough. If your audience has difficulty hearing you, they will quickly lose interest. Another important point is to memorize your lines. Rehearse them often—on the train, in the mirror, while you are walking to class—so that you remember them. Finally, perhaps the most important rule of all is to remain calm on stage if you forget your lines. Don't panic and stop speaking because the audience will notice. Instead, make up something to say until you remember your next line. As long as you continue speaking and appear relaxed, the audience will probably not realize that you have made a mistake. In conclusion, following these rules will help ensure a successful stage performance.

#### Exercise 7    Analyzing the student paragraph for coherence

Examine the organization of the paragraph by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. Underline the topic sentence.

2. What should an actor do if he forgets his lines? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The writer uses order of importance as a pattern of coherence. Do the ideas move from more important to less important or less important to more important? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Exercise 8 Reordering for coherence**

**Read the sentences from a narrative paragraph. Some of the sentences are out of order. Number the sentences from 1–10 to show logical time order. Then compare your answers with a partner.**

- \_\_\_\_ a. My family hugged me and cried because I had been gone so long.  
\_\_\_\_ b. I will never forget one day when I had to travel alone on the subway.  
\_\_\_\_ c. I was pregnant, and I had to go to an appointment at the hospital.  
\_\_\_\_ d. When my appointment ended, I got on the subway to go home.  
\_\_\_\_ e. That was why my surroundings looked unfamiliar.  
\_\_\_\_ f. My appointment was at 1:00 p.m.  
\_\_\_\_ g. Suddenly I looked up and did not know where I was.  
\_\_\_\_ h. I was exhausted and fell asleep on my way home.  
\_\_\_\_ i. Then I realized that I had fallen asleep.  
\_\_\_\_ j. It took me five more hours to get back to my home.

In Part 3, you will ...

- learn about short essay structure and organization.
- practice writing a thesis statement.

## From Paragraph to Short Essay

### Rhetorical Focus

#### The Paragraph and the Short Essay

A short essay is longer than a paragraph, but like a paragraph it has three basic parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

- **Introduction:** the introductory paragraph is the first paragraph of a short essay. It contains a topic sentence and thesis statement.
- **Body paragraph:** A short essay has at least one or two body paragraphs. These develop the idea presented in the introduction.
- **Conclusion:** The concluding paragraph is the final paragraph and summarizes the idea(s) presented in the short essay.

Compare the similar ways that a paragraph and a short essay function.

<b>Paragraph</b>	<b>Short Essay</b>
The topic sentence states the topic.	→ The introductory paragraph states the topic.
The topic sentence states the controlling idea.	→ The thesis statement states the controlling idea.
The supporting sentences of the paragraph support the idea in the topic sentence.	→ The body paragraphs support the idea in the thesis statement. Each body paragraph has a topic sentence.
The concluding sentence summarizes the idea in the topic sentence.	→ The essay conclusion summarizes the idea in the thesis statement.

## Exercise 1 Comparing a paragraph and an essay

Read the paragraph and then the short essay. Which is more interesting?

Paragraph	Short Essay
<p>My uncle Patricio is one of the most interesting people in my family. He is old and has a wrinkled brown face. On his arm, there is a tattoo. Patricio has an intriguing history. He and my mother were born in a small village in the mountains. When he was seventeen, he left home to explore the world. Now he fixes air conditioners in Los Angeles, and during the winter months, he sometimes comes to visit us and play the accordion. I love spending time with my uncle Patricio because he has an interesting look and a mysterious past. Someday, I hope that he will tell me more about his life.</p>	<p>My family is full of happy, crazy, and talented people. My aunt Margarita has a yard full of orphaned pets. My brother José is an expert tailor, and my mother loves to experiment in the kitchen. However, I think the most interesting is my mysterious uncle Patricio.</p> <p>Patricio is an elderly man now, with white hair sticking up all over his head. Beneath his messy hair, he has a wrinkled brown face and powerful dark eyes that show many emotions. Patricio is tall and skinny, and he wears baggy pants and a plaid shirt. He has a tattoo of a heart on his arm. The heart has the word Rosa written across it in red and black letters, but he has never told me who she is.</p> <p>Patricio has an intriguing history. He and my mother were born in a small village in the mountains. When he was seventeen, he left home to explore the world. On one trip, he went to Siberia to look for gold. On another trip, he went to Alaska to work on a fishing boat. Now he fixes air conditioners in Los Angeles, and during the winter months, he sometimes comes to visit us and play the accordion.</p> <p>I love spending time with my uncle Patricio. He has an interesting look and a sad and mysterious past. He is also a talented musician. Someday, I hope that he will tell me about Rosa and how he got the tattoo with her name.</p>

## **Exercise 2 Analyzing the paragraph and short essay**

**Answer the questions about the paragraph and short essay on page 16.**

1. What information is included in the short essay introduction that is not in the topic sentence of the paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Write the topic and controlling idea of body paragraph 1 in your own words.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What new details have been added to body paragraph 1 in the essay?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Write the topic and controlling idea of body paragraph 2 in your own words.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What additional details have been added to body paragraph 2 in the essay?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What information is included in the essay conclusion that is not in the concluding sentence of the paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Rhetorical Focus**

### **Short Essay Organization**

An effective essay must have the following elements.

#### **Introduction**

- A hook is an opening sentence that attracts the reader's attention.
- The sentences after the hook give background information necessary to understand the topic.
- The last sentence in the introduction, the thesis statement, is very important because it gives the topic and the controlling idea of the entire essay.

#### **Body Paragraph**

- An essay has at least one body paragraph in which the writer develops the thesis statement from the introduction. The body paragraph begins with a topic sentence, followed by supporting details.

#### **Conclusion**

- An essay ends with a conclusion that summarizes or restates the main idea in the thesis statement.

### **Exercise 3** Understanding thesis statements

**A. Read the short essay. The thesis statement is missing. Choose the best thesis statement from the list following the essay. Discuss your choice with a partner.**

Imagine having a job that fits your class schedule. You do not have conflicts with studying because you only work at night and on the weekends. In addition, you can work in a beautiful room with paintings on the walls, candlelight, and beautiful music playing in the background.

First, restaurant work is a great job for a student because the hours are different. Most restaurants are busiest during the weekends in the evening. Since students have to go to class during the week and during the day, a restaurant job gives them time for class.

The second reason why restaurant work suits students is that the student can eat at the restaurant. Students are short on time. They don't want to go shopping, cook, or clean up, so they need to get meals in a hurry. It is perfect if they can eat at work.

Students can make money, eat, and still have time for class if they work in a restaurant. For this reason, many eating places are staffed by students. It's a great job for those who need to work while they are in college.

- a. A restaurant job is a convenient choice for a college student for several reasons.
- b. Many restaurants hire college students.
- c. A college student can make a lot of money working in an expensive restaurant.

**B. Now read this short essay. The thesis statement is missing. Write a thesis statement on the lines provided. Make sure your thesis states a topic and a controlling idea. Compare your answer with a partner.**

I have many wonderful memories of my childhood in El Salvador, but I have one memory that still makes me shiver when I think about it. I lived with my grandmother in a house in the country, and I had many cousins to play with. The neighbors all knew me, and we children always felt safe. \_\_\_\_\_

My scary experience happened when I was about ten. I was playing hide and seek with some children from the neighborhood when my cousin and I discovered a dark abandoned warehouse. We were happy because we thought that no one would find us there. We went inside. There were boxes, and everything was covered with dust. Suddenly my cousin ran away. I thought she was hiding, so I laughed and called her name, but she did not answer. I started to hide too, but at that moment, I smelled a terrible odor. I looked in the corner, and a big shape was moving. It was dark, and I couldn't see very well, but I knew it was big. I ran outside as fast as I could. My cousin was outside, and we ran back to our house as fast as we could.

I still do not know what was in the warehouse. My grandmother said she thought some thieves had been hiding there. She said it was a lucky thing that they didn't see me. Her words made me more afraid. I thought, "what if they had caught me?" After that, I decided to stay away from that dark warehouse. I learned to be very careful and never go into empty buildings again, no matter what!

In Part 4 you will ...

- review simple and compound sentences.
- learn about main and dependent clauses.
- learn how to correct run-on sentences.

**PART 4**

## Editing Your Writing

### Language Focus

#### The Sentence

A sentence contains at least one subject (a noun or a phrase) and a verb, and expresses a complete idea. The verb expresses the action of the sentence, and the subject tells who or what completed the action. A simple sentence may contain more than one noun or verb.

Subject	Verb
My <b>dog</b>	<b>runs</b> .
My <b>dog</b>	<b>runs</b> and <b>chases</b> squirrels. ( <i>two verbs</i> )
My <b>dog</b> and <b>cat</b>	<b>run</b> after squirrels. ( <i>two nouns in subject</i> )

A complete sentence must contain at least one main clause. A main clause contains a subject and a verb, and expresses a complete idea.

#### The Simple Sentence

A simple sentence, shown below, contains one main clause.

Subject	Verb
My <b>dog</b>	<b>runs</b> after squirrels.

#### The Compound Sentence

A compound sentence has two main clauses, separated by a comma and a conjunction, or by a semicolon.

Main Clause	Conjunction	Main Clause
My dog runs after squirrels,	<b>and</b>	the squirrels run away.
My dog terrifies the squirrels,	<b>so</b>	they stay high in the trees.
My dog chases them everyday,	<b>but</b>	he has never caught one.
The squirrels climb trees,	<b>or</b>	they sometimes run through fences.

Main Clause	Main Clause
My dog is very clever;	he can do many tricks.

## Exercise 1 Identifying clauses

Read the sentences. Then circle the number of clauses contained in each sentences.

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. The fish were hungry.  | 1    2 |
| 2. The fish were hungry, and they ate the food quickly.                 | 1    2 |
| 3. I love to go to the park, so I try to go every weekend.              | 1    2 |
| 4. The bus takes a long time, but it is less expensive than a car.      | 1    2 |
| 5. Computers are very important today; they can do many things.         | 1    2 |
| 6. I want to marry a man with a good education and an honest character. | 1    2 |

## Language Focus

### Run-on Sentences

A run-on sentence is not a correct sentence. In a run-on sentence, important punctuation is missing between the clauses. The sentence "runs on" too long and confuses the reader.

- You can correct run-on sentences with a period, a comma and conjunction, or a semicolon.

My dog runs fast he likes to chase animals in the park. (INCORRECT)

My dog runs fast. He likes to chase animals in the park.

My dog runs fast, and he likes to chase animals in the park.

My dog is difficult to take care of still I love him very much. (INCORRECT)

My dog is difficult to take care of; still, I love him very much.

My dog means a lot to me; he is my best friend.

## Exercise 2 Correcting run-on sentences with conjunctions

The following sentences are run-on sentences. Rewrite them as complete sentences by adding the conjunctions **and**, **or**, **so**, or **but**.

1. I am busy with work I am studying. I am busy with work, or I am studying.

2. Almost everyone in her neighborhood speaks her language she does not have to use English. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Credit cards are convenient they are also dangerous. \_\_\_\_\_

4. I did not have experience I tried to get a job. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Every time I travel, either I take a suitcase I take a backpack. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. My lucky number is seven my favorite color is red. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Language Focus

### Dependent Clauses

A dependent clause is a clause that is not a complete sentence by itself. It has a subject and a verb, but it does not have a complete idea. A dependent clause often starts with a subordinating conjunction like *because, before, since, when, after, or while*. A dependent clause must always be attached to a main (or independent) clause to make one complete sentence. The dependent clause can come before or after the main clause without changing the meaning, but the punctuation is different.

dependent clause

main clause

When I talk to my friend, she likes to tell me about her adventures.

main clause

dependent clause

My friend likes to tell me about her adventures when I talk to her.

### Exercise 3 Identifying dependent and main clauses

Underline and label the clauses. Write **M** above the main clause in each sentence. Write **D** above the dependent clause.

D

M

1. When I was growing up, everything was less expensive.
2. I guess things have changed since I was younger.
3. I was sad when we left my country.
4. When I am older, I want to have a big house with a patio and a swimming pool.
5. After you understand the meaning of a word, you can practice writing sentences.
6. It is only dangerous when the roads are wet.
7. Because the tide went out, the jellyfish were stranded on the beach.
8. My country was invaded many times before we formed our current government.

#### **Exercise 4 Correcting run-on sentences with punctuation**

**Read the sentences. If the sentence is correct, write C. If the sentence is incorrect, write I and add correct punctuation, using a comma, semi-colon, or period. Check for proper capitalization.**

We

- 1. I went to the store with my friend Rachel. we bought milk.
- 2. We brought the groceries through the back door after we got back.
- 3. I noticed that there was a little dirt on the floor the DVD player was missing nothing else was gone.
- 4. We called the police after we realized there had been a robbery.
- 5. The police arrived immediately and inspected the whole apartment.
- 6. They took statements later that afternoon they found the robbers and Rachel's DVD player.

#### **Exercise 5 Editing a paragraph**

**Read the paragraph and edit as necessary. Correct the run-on sentences. There are six mistakes.**

I am the middle child in my family I wish I were not sometimes. My brother and sisters have an easier life than I do. My older brother is very responsible he is like a third parent my sisters and I have to do what he tells us if our parents are not home. He also has more freedom than we do. He can go out on the weekends and stay out late we have to be at home by 10:00 p.m. While my brother has more freedom than I do, my sisters have an easier life. They are twins they get a lot of attention from our parents. My parents don't often spend time with me they spend most of their time with my sisters. Because I am not the oldest, I do not have the same power as my brother, but I do not get the extra attention either. As a result, I think the middle child is not lucky at all.

**In Part 5 you will:**

- review topics and controlling ideas.
- review unity.
- practice identifying thesis statements.
- practice correcting run-on sentences.

## Putting It All together

### Exercise 1 Identifying topics and controlling ideas

**Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea in the topic sentences below.**

1. Pizza is easy to make if you follow these steps.
2. If you compare a Mini-Cooper with a Volkswagen Bug, you will find several important differences.
3. There are several ways to reduce stress.
4. Not getting enough sleep can have negative effects on a student.
5. One of my backpacking trips was almost my last.
6. A good journalist has to have special talents and skills.

### Exercise 2 Editing a paragraph

**Read the paragraph. Draw a line through the sentences that are irrelevant. There are four irrelevant sentences.**

When I want to eat steak, I go to my favorite restaurant, Saltgrass Steakhouse, because I always have a good experience. I love walking through the big heavy wooden doors because the spicy smell of grilled meat makes my mouth water. The hostess knows my family, and she always gives us a good seat where we can watch the other customers and enjoy the cowboy decorations on the walls. The service is friendly and efficient. On the other hand, the cook is often grumpy. He yells at the waiters sometimes. The waiters always bring crayons and paper for my daughters. I always order the rib-eye steak because the grilled meat is tender and seasoned with delicious spices. After dinner, we talk and enjoy the atmosphere. It is not good to eat there every day because the beef has a lot of fat. All red meat has a lot of fat, and it can cause problems such as high cholesterol. I like to eat at Saltgrass Steakhouse once a month, but I would eat there more often if I had the money. It has the best steak in the city.

### **Exercise 3 Identifying thesis statements**

**Read the short essay. The thesis statement is missing. Choose the best thesis statement from the list following the short essay.**

A good party game that is simple and fun for everyone is zombie tag. Children love it and so do adults because there is no fancy equipment and anyone who can jump can participate.

Zombie tag follows the same basic procedure as regular tag with a few additional rules. First, decide on the boundaries. It is a good idea to play outside in a backyard or in a park. Then choose one person to be *It*. *It* must then "tag" another player, and then the tagged player becomes *It*. Finally, in zombie tag all players must keep their arms at their sides and their ankles together. This means that they must jump instead of run, and they must tag with their shoulders or hips rather than their hands. If a player does not keep his ankles together or his arms at his sides, he is cheating and must sit out for five minutes.

In conclusion, zombie tag is a good party game for all ages because it requires no equipment and is easy to play. People usually have a good time because they have to keep their bodies straight and hold their arms at their sides and this makes them look funny when they jump, so they laugh a lot.

- a. I often play zombie tag with my friends at birthday parties.
- b. Zombie tag is easy to play if you follow the steps below.
- c. Zombie tag is different from regular tag in two important ways.

### **Exercise 4 Correcting run-on sentences with punctuation**

**Read the sentences. If the sentence is correct, write C. If the sentence is incorrect, write I and add correct punctuation, using a comma, semicolon, or period. Check for proper capitalization.**

- \_\_\_\_ 1. My father decided to go to dental school he was at the top of his class.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. My writing has improved a great deal but I still need to work on my grammar.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. When I am an industrial engineer I want to design kitchen appliances.

- \_\_\_ 4. Secretaries play a very important role in an office; without them many businesses could not function.
- \_\_\_ 5. I have never been afraid of snakes I think they are beautiful.
- \_\_\_ 6. We lived in Malaysia after we got married.

### **Exercise 5 Editing a paragraph**

**Read the paragraph and edit as necessary. There are six mistakes.**

The memory of summer vacations at my grandmother's home in Ayutta, Thailand, always makes me happy. I loved this house very much because it was a beautiful and spacious place all the members of my family could gather together and enjoy nature. The house was located on a quiet stretch of river under a clear blue sky. It was a traditional, waterfront, Thai-style home it was built from teak wood. The tall, green trees around the house provided shade along the riverbank. Inside the house, there were many rooms my uncle's and my aunt's families could all come together at the same time. When we woke up, we could hear the sound of singing birds We children always rushed outside to breathe fresh air, and dig our toes into the sand. In the afternoon, we played in the shade of the trees, swam in the river, and dug in the gardens. The adults watched us from the patio they could see us and we could see them. This home was the center place of my family I like to think about it when I feel lonely.

# Unit 2

## Descriptive Essays

### Unit Goals

#### **Rhetorical focus:**

- descriptive organization

#### **Language focus:**

- prepositional phrases in descriptive writing
- adding details to sentences
- similes
- using adjectives in descriptive writing

**PART 1**

## Stimulating Ideas

Descriptive writing uses words to build images for the reader. These images may come from sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or even feelings. Good descriptive writing makes the reader feel as if he or she is present in the scene.



### **Exercise 1** Thinking about the topic

**A. Discuss the picture with a partner.**

- What do you think the occasion might be?
- Why is this food special?
- Who are the people in the picture?
- How do they feel?

**B. Make notes about food that you and your family eat during family celebrations and special occasions. Then discuss in small groups.**

### **Exercise 2** Reading about the topic

Sometimes a single event can have a lasting effect on a person's life. A famous New York chef, Anthony Bourdain, describes a childhood experience with an oyster (a kind of shellfish) during a family vacation in France.

## Food is Good

At six in the morning, we climbed into Monsieur Saint-Jour's small wooden boat with our picnic baskets. He was an old man dressed in ancient denim work pants. He had a leathery, tanned and windblown face, **hollow** cheeks, and tiny broken blood vessels on his nose and cheeks. We took the boat out to his underwater oyster park, a fenced-off section of bay bottom, and we sat ... and sat ... and sat, in the roaring August sun, waiting for the **tide** to go out. The idea was to float the boat over the fence walls, then sit there until the boat slowly sank with the water level until it rested on the bay floor.

There was, I remember, still about two feet of water left to go before the boat settled on dry ground and we could walk around the park. We'd already eaten all the food from our picnic baskets, but I was still hungry, and said so.

Monsieur Saint-Jour asked if any of us would like to try an oyster.

My parents **hesitated**. I doubt they'd realized they might actually have to eat one of the **raw** slimy things we were floating over. My little brother pulled away in horror.

But I, in the proudest moment of my young life, stood up smartly in **defiance**, and volunteered to be the first. And in that sweet moment in my personal history, that one moment still more alive for me than so many of the others, I won glory. Monsieur Saint-Jour reached down into the water and came up holding a single oyster, huge and irregularly shaped, in his rough fist. With an oyster knife, he popped the thing open and handed it to me. Everyone was watching now, my little brother pulling away from this shiny, wet object, still dripping and nearly alive.

I took it in my hand, tipped the shell back into my mouth as instructed by Monsieur Saint-Jour, and with one bite and a slurp, I **wolfed** it down. It tasted of seawater ... and flesh ... and somehow ... of the future.

Bourdain,A. *Kitchen Confidential* (Adapted). New York: Harper Collins, 2000: 15-16.

**hollow**: empty

**tide**: the periodic rise and fall of the ocean

**hesitate**: to pause in doubt

**raw**: uncooked

**defiance**: resistance to authority

**wolfed**: ate very quickly

### **Exercise 3 Understanding the text**

**Write T for true or F for false for each statement.**

- 1. Bourdain rode with his family in a large boat.
- 2. When Bourdain and his family arrived at the oyster park, they waited a short time for the water level to go down.
- 3. Everyone in the family wanted to try the oysters.
- 4. Bourdain was proud of himself for eating the oyster.

### **Exercise 4 Responding to the text**

**Write your answers for each question in full sentences. Then discuss your answers with a partner.**

1. How had Monsieur Saint-Jour's work affected his appearance? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How do you think Bourdain felt when he first saw the boat? Do you think his feelings changed during the trip? How so? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How do you think Bourdain described the oyster trip when he returned home? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What did he mean when he said "it tasted of ... the future?" \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Exercise 5**   **Freewriting**

**Write for ten to fifteen minutes on the topic below. Express yourself as well as you can. Don't worry about mistakes.**

The writer of the passage was the only person in his family who was not afraid to try the oyster. On a separate piece of paper, write about the first time you tried a new food.

- Where were you?
- What food did you try?
- What did it taste, smell, or feel like?
- What was your reaction to it?

In Part 2 you will ...

- learn about descriptive organization.
- brainstorm ideas and specific vocabulary to use in your writing.
- create an outline for your essay.

## Brainstorming and Outlining

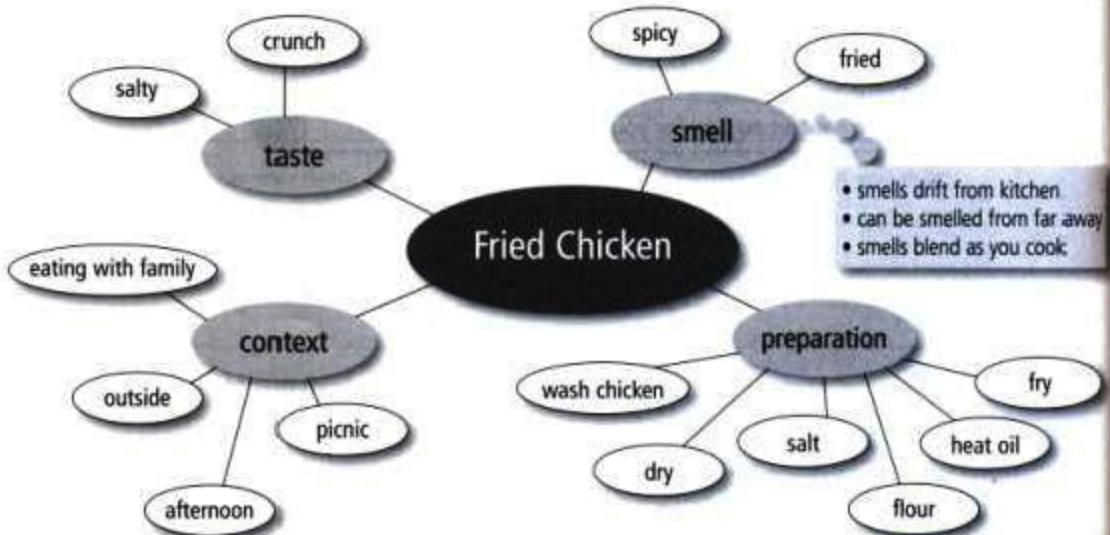


### WRITING TASK

In this unit, you will write a three-paragraph descriptive essay about a food you feel strongly about—one you really like or dislike.

#### Exercise 1 Brainstorming ideas

Think of a food you really like or dislike. On a separate piece of paper write down your ideas about this food in a word web, like the one below. Think about the food's taste, smell, appearance, preparation, any sounds you associate with it, or the context in which you eat it.



#### Exercise 2 Brainstorming vocabulary

A. Think about the food you want to write about. Add two more words to each set to describe the food. Then circle the words you would like to use in each set.

1. **Taste:** salty, sour, bitter, sweet, juicy, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Touch:** soft, hard, chewy, tough, crunchy, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Smell:** sweet, comforting, sharp, strong, faint, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Sight:** small, big, tempting, smooth, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

B. On a separate piece of paper, practice writing these words in sentences. Use your dictionary for help.

### Descriptive Organization

In a descriptive essay, a writer uses details to tell how a subject looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels. The essay should make the reader feel like responding to what he or she is reading.

#### Introduction

- The hook introduces the object or event of description.
- The middle sentences provide the background.
- The thesis statement tells why the object or event of description is important to the writer.

#### Body Paragraphs

- Most of the description is in the body paragraphs.
- Adjectives and adverbs make the experience more vivid.
- The scene is often described with prepositions and prepositional phrases that specify location or position in space.
- Comparisons, such as similes, can make the writing more descriptive, familiar, and expressive.

#### Conclusion

- The conclusion gives the writer's final opinion about the description.

### Exercise 3 Reading a student essay

Read the essay. According to the writer, where can you get the best pizza?

### The Best Pizza in Town and Maybe the World

I have suffered a great deal because of a terrible addiction to pizza. Basically, I enjoy pizza too much. In fact, I enjoy it so much, I won't share it, not even with my mother. People in my hometown of Cabimas, Venezuela, laugh at me and call me the Pizza King of Cabimas, but it is a name that I am proud of. I have eaten pizza in many places, and none is as good as the pizza of Cabimas.

The best place to eat pizza in Cabimas is at Papa's. Customers have to wait in line to get a table but the wait is worth it. Once they are

seated, pizza-lovers can choose from many varieties of pizza, such as pizza with shrimp and smoked oysters or pizza with pine nuts and garlic, but my favorite is the sausage and pepperoni. First of all, it is big. When the waiter puts it down in front of me, I feel happy because I will get enough to eat. It smells of garlic, oil, and spices. And it looks delicious too. The sauce oozes out from under a layer of rich melted cheese. The best part is the first bite. I sink my teeth into a slightly crunchy crust, thick tomato sauce and gooey cheese, and I am in heaven. I can eat two of these pizzas in one night, even though I know I will have a stomachache afterwards.

Now that I am in the United States, I am trying different kinds of pizzas here. I have never seen so many different pizza restaurants! I want to try them one by one. So far, some of them are delicious, but I am convinced that the best pizza in the world is still at Papa's restaurant a couple of blocks from the house where I grew up.

#### **Exercise 4** Examining the student essay

##### **A. Respond to the essay by answering the questions below.**

1. What is the main idea of the introduction?
  - a. how the author has suffered
  - b. pizza
  - c. the author's addiction to pizza
  - d. the author's hometown
2. Which paragraph has the most descriptive details? \_\_\_\_\_
3. The conclusion ends with a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. description
  - b. restatement of the main idea in the introduction
  - c. story
  - d. invitation

**B. Examine the organization of the essay by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.**

1. What is the author's thesis statement about pizza? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What words or phrases does the author use to describe the pizzas? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What words or phrases does the author use to show how he feels when he eats pizza? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the author's final comment about pizza in the conclusion? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 5 Completing an outline**

**Look back at the essay on pages 33–34. Then, fill in the missing information in the outline below.**

**Introduction**

Topic: Pizza in Cabimas

Hook: I'm addicted to pizza.

Background information: don't share pizza with anyone, called the Pizza King, tried pizza in many places

Thesis statement: 1. \_\_\_\_\_

**Body Paragraph**

Details: places to eat pizza, Papa's, types of pizza 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Words or phrases: gooey, cheesy, rich melted cheese, stomachache, big, spices, crunchy crust

**Conclusion**

Final opinion: 3. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Exercise 6 Writing an outline**

**Review your brainstorming ideas and your freewriting exercise. Then use the chart below to write an outline for your essay. Use the outline on page 35 as an example.**

### **Introduction**

What is your topic? \_\_\_\_\_

Think of a hook that will engage the reader. \_\_\_\_\_

Write some notes on relevant background information your reader will need.

What is your thesis statement? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Body Paragraph**

What details will you include in your description? What words or phrases do you think you will use? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Conclusion**

What is the final opinion you want to give about your description? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **In Part 3 you will ...**

- learn about prepositional phrases.
- learn to use descriptive details in your writing.
- learn about similes in descriptive writing.
- write a first draft of your descriptive essay.

## Developing Your Ideas

### Exercise 1 Reading a student essay

Read the essay. What is the main event the writer describes?

#### Food from the Sea

My father told me that we should always respect nature and learn where our food comes from. He said that food tasted better when you got it yourself and ate it in a natural place. To show me this was true, he took me to the ocean, where we caught our own delicious crabs and ate them.

I will always remember the taste of the crabs we caught that day. The beach was quiet and still at six o'clock. The tide had just come in, so there were many crabs walking slowly on the white sand. We sat a few feet away from my father's special crab traps. The traps were made of bamboo, and they looked like round cages, but one side had a small entrance for the crab to go in. There were some small, fragrant fish in the trap. The fishy smell made the crabs hungry, so they crawled into the traps. We watched the crabs walk into the traps, and I smelled the strong smell of the dark, oily fish. Overhead, we heard the sounds of seagulls and pelicans in the sky. I think the seagulls wanted to eat the fish, too. Once the traps were full, we took off our shoes and threw them over our shoulders so we could walk on the wet sand and feel the water pushing and pulling at the beach. Later, we built a fire and ate boiled crabs on the beach. We cracked their shells. The meat was white and pinkish and tender. It tasted sweet and a little salty. We did not want to stop eating them. We sat on the sand surrounded by crab shells and watched the sun go down into the ocean.

From that day on, I knew my father was right. Food tastes best when it is something that you have caught or grown yourself. I have eaten crab many times since then, but it has never tasted as good as it did that day.

## **Exercise 2 Examining the student essay**

**Respond to the essay by answering the questions below in full sentences.**

1. What does the place described in the essay look like? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How does the writer feel about his experience? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What sounds, sights, smells, or tastes are described? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the final opinion that the writer gives in the conclusion? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Language Focus**

### **Prepositional Phrases in Descriptive Writing**

A prepositional phrase is made up of a preposition + a noun phrase or pronoun.

**prepositional phrase**

**prepositional phrase**

The boat slowly sank **with the water level** until it rested **on the bay floor**.

Prepositional phrases are important in descriptive writing. They show the position, location, or direction of objects in space and time. We can also use prepositional phrases to show manner or attitude.

- Prepositional phrases that show position and location:

The boat slowly sank **with the water level** until it rested **on the bay floor**.

- Prepositional phrases that show direction:

We took the boat out **to his underwater oyster park**.

The idea was to float the boat **over the fence walls**.

- Prepositional phrases that show time:

**at six in the morning      in that sweet moment      on Sunday**

- Prepositional phrases that show manner or attitude:

I stood up **in defiance**.      He pulled back **in horror**.

### Exercise 3 Identifying prepositional phrases

A. Look at the following sentences. Circle the prepositional phrases.

1. The idea was to float the boat over the fence walls.
2. The boat settled on dry ground.
3. We could walk around the park.
4. He held an oyster in his rough fist.
5. I tipped the shell back into my mouth.
6. It tasted of the future.

B. Look back at the student essay on page 37. Underline the prepositional phrases. Compare your answers with a partner.

### Language Focus

#### Adding Details to Sentences

Details tell what something looks like, or how it sounds, feels, tastes, or smells. We can use nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs to add details. The more specific the details are the more effective and interesting the writing will be. Clear, specific details allow the reader to create a picture in his or her mind of what is being described. Compare the general sentences below with ones that have specific details.

##### General Sentences

The crabs were good.

He bought some fruit.

She walked to the door.

She walked to the door.

##### Sentences with Specific Details

The crabs were **tender and sweet with a salty taste**.

He bought some **sweet, juicy strawberries**.

She **tiptoed** to the door.

She walked **quickly and silently** to the door.

#### Exercise 4 Adding specific details

Rewrite the general sentences below with more specific details.  
Use adjectives, nouns, verbs, and adverbs.

##### General

1. He bought a vegetable.
2. We returned from the store.
3. I entered the room.
4. My friend cleaned the spinach.
5. We put the spinach in the pan.
6. Our guests enjoyed the dinner.

##### With Specific Details

He bought some bright green spinach.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Language Focus

#### Similes

Descriptive writing may use similes to make something seem more familiar or more creative. Similes make ideas easier to understand, and they can also express feelings. Similes are often used in literature and poetry. Look at the famous examples below:

*The sun was like a glowing ball of fire.*

—Shakespeare

*I was young and easy ... and happy as the grass was green.*

—Dylan Thomas

*My love is like a red, red rose.*

—Robert Burns

#### Simile Structure

- A simile can use the preposition *like* + noun or noun phrase.

**noun**

The stars looked **like** diamonds..

- A simile can also use *as ... as* + noun or noun phrase. This kind of simile also uses an adjective.

**adjective**

**noun**

He is **as clever as** a fox.

### **Exercise 5 Identifying similes**

**Match the first half of each sentence with the second half.**

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| ____ 1. The house        | a. smelled sweet like honey. |
| ____ 2. The ocean        | b. is as solid as a rock.    |
| ____ 3. The cold wind    | c. sparkles like a diamond.  |
| ____ 4. Their friendship | d. was as fast as a bullet.  |
| ____ 5. The train        | e. cut sharply like a knife. |
| ____ 6. The air          | f. was as huge as a castle.  |

### **Exercise 6 Writing similes**

**Fill in the blanks below to make your own similes with *like* or *as*.**

1. My best friend \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The place where I grew up \_\_\_\_\_.
3. My home \_\_\_\_\_.
4. My favorite music \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Coffee \_\_\_\_\_.
6. TV \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Exercise 7 Writing a first draft**

**Review your outline. Then write the first draft of a three-paragraph essay on a food you strongly like or dislike.**

### **Exercise 8 Peer editing a first draft**

**After you write your first draft, exchange it with a partner. Answer the questions on the checklist on page 42. You may also write comments or questions on your partner's draft. Then read your partner's comments on your first draft, and revise it as necessary.**

## Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate. Write answers in complete sentences in the lines provided.

- 1. Does the essay have three paragraphs?
- 2. Does the introduction include a hook to get the reader's attention?  
Does it also include background information?
- 3. Does the body paragraph contain enough descriptive details?
- 4. What other description do you think the writer could add?  
  
*(Leave space for notes)*
- 5. Did the writer use similes to make the writing more descriptive? Are the similes used correctly?
- 6. Did the writer give a final opinion in the conclusion?

In Part 4 you will ...

- learn about the use and formation of adjectives.
- learn about adjective order.
- edit your first draft for mistakes.

## Editing Your Writing

Now that you have written a first draft, it is time to edit. Editing involves making changes to your writing to improve it and correct mistakes.

### Language Focus

#### Using Adjectives in Descriptive Writing

Adjectives are words that describe nouns—people, places, and things. Adjectives appear in different positions in the sentence.

- Adjectives usually come after an article and before a noun.  
We sat in the **roaring** sun.
- Adjectives can also occur after some stative verbs such as *appear, be, become, feel, look, seem*. Use *and* to separate two adjectives that follow a verb. Separate more than two adjectives with commas and the word *and*.  
I was **hungry**.  
He became **thoughtful**.  
He was **sick and tired**.  
We were **excited, nervous, and anxious**.

#### Exercise 1 Identifying adjectives

Read the following sentences. Circle the adjectives and underline the nouns they describe.

1. The beach was quiet and still.
2. Many crabs were walking slowly on the white sand.
3. The traps looked like round cages.
4. There were some small, fragrant fish in the trap.
5. The fishy smell made the crabs hungry.
6. I smelled the strong smell of the dark, oily fish.
7. The meat was white, pinkish and tender.
8. It tasted sweet.

## Language Focus

### Formation of Adjectives

- Adjectives may be formed from verbs. Many of these adjectives are formed by adding *-ing* to verbs.

entertain	entertaining	excite	exciting
(an entertaining film)		(an exciting novel)	

- The past participles of verbs can function as adjectives.

break	broken	excite	excited
(a broken arm)		(an excited child)	

- Nouns may also function as adjectives when they are used to describe or modify other nouns. They are called noun modifiers.

A store that sells shoes → a **shoe** store

### Describing Feelings

- Some adjectives ending in *-ed* and *-ing* can be used to talk about feelings and emotions, for example, *interesting*, *interested*, *boring*, *bored*, *confusing*, *confused*.
- The adjectives ending in *-ed* (past participles) describe how people feel about something.  
The **interested** students listened to the story. (= The students felt interest.)
- The adjectives ending in *-ing* describe the noun that causes the emotion or feeling.  
The students heard an **interesting** story. (= The story caused interest.)

### Exercise 2 Describing feelings

Circle the correct adjective in each sentence.

- The movie was very (bored / boring).
- The audience was very (confused / confusing) by the story.
- As a student, I found the class very (interested / interesting).
- The speaker was very (excited / exciting) by the topic.
- The children were (tired / tiring) by the game.
- The new tastes were (stimulated / stimulating) to the chef.

**Order of Adjectives**

Adjectives appear in a particular order, according to their function, as shown below:

Quality / Purpose /							
Opinion	Size	Age	Shape	Color	Origin	Material	Kind
interesting	huge	old	round	blue	Mexican	wooden	picnic
boring	small	new	square	white	European	iron	wedding

We put out **huge** plates of **Mexican** food out on the **wooden picnic** table.

My mother had a **beautiful, small, antique, Tahitian pearl** necklace that she wore for special occasions.

Rosa and Pablo bought **gold wedding** rings.

**Exercise 3 Using adjectives in the correct order****A. Rewrite the sentences placing the adjectives in the correct order.**

1. It was a (metal / new / fantastic) sculpture.
- 

2. They walked down the (old / elegant / marble) staircase.
- 

3. The museum had (wooden / entrance / beautiful) doors.
- 

4. There were (blue / huge / bright) lights to mark the entrance.
- 

5. The food was served in (simple / tiny) portions on (small / dinner / modern) plates.
- 

6. The women wore (velvet / new / stunning) dresses.
-

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---

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---

6. The women wore (velvet / new / stunning) dresses.

---

**B. Add two adjectives for each of the sentences.**

1. It was a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ car.
2. They lived in a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ house.
3. The house was located on a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ street.
4. She enjoyed the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ movie.

**Exercise 4 Editing a paragraph**

**Read the paragraph and correct the order of the adjectives as necessary. There are eight mistakes.**

I love Saturday night dinner at my family's house. We leave at two in the afternoon, and take the drive long to my parents' house. They live on a narrow dirt road. In summer we have to close the windows to the car so that the dust doesn't come in. It is a large, wooden, white house, with a red, old, big door. There is a kitchen spacious where everyone helps prepare the dinner. Everyone in my family gathers for dinner on Saturday night, all my sisters and brothers and their children. The thing I love the most about the house is walking into the dining room after we finish preparing the dinner. The old, beautiful table is set with a lace, white tablecloth and round, huge platters of food. Then everyone sits down in the big, comfortable chairs to enjoy the dinner. We talk and eat for hours and enjoy our family. Everyone feels happy, relaxed and full. Late at night, we finally say goodbye until the next Saturday.

**Exercise 5 Editing your first draft and rewriting**

**Review your essay for mistakes. Use the checklist on page 47. Then write a final draft.**

## Editor's Checklist

**Put a check (✓) as appropriate.**

- 1. Did you use adjectives after articles and before nouns?
- 2. Did you use adjectives immediately after stative verbs?
- 3. If a sentence has more than one adjective, do the adjectives appear in the correct order?
- 4. Did you use prepositional phrases to show location and time?

In Part 5 you will ...

- review the elements of descriptive writing.
- practice writing with a time limit.

**PART 5**

## Putting It All Together

In this part of the unit, you will complete four exercises to improve your accuracy, write a timed essay to improve your fluency, and explore topics for future writing.

**Exercise 1 Identifying prepositional phrases**

Circle the examples of prepositional phrases.

1. On Saturday we walked to the pizza restaurant in Cabimas.
2. The pizzas that came out of the oven looked delicious.
3. We watched with excitement as the waiter brought the pizza to our table.
4. My favorite pizza comes with sausage and mushrooms on top.
5. The cheese on top of it is hot, and the crust crunches in your mouth when you bite it.
6. There are four chairs around each table.
7. There are a few tables outside the restaurant.

**Exercise 2 Identifying adjectives**

Read the following sentences. Circle the adjectives and underline the nouns they describe.

1. The table was long and narrow.
2. It had tall, straight chairs on each side.
3. It gave the dining room an elegant feeling.
4. Small candles decorated each place.
5. In front of each chair was a delicate lace napkin.
6. Each napkin sat on top of a shiny dinner plate.
7. The guests arrived in beautiful clothing and full of lively conversation.
8. The evening was filled with the warm energy of close friends.

### **Exercise 3 Using adjectives**

**Rewrite the sentences. For each sentence, use all three adjectives given.**

1. The (enormous / wild / exciting) jungle was filled with life.
- 

2. The (ancient / stone / huge) temples could be seen for miles.
- 

3. The (gray / tall / rough) steps led to the top.
- 

4. A (spectacular / vast / green) view could be seen in every direction.
- 

5. People marveled at the (amazing / ageless / tropical) landscape.
- 

6. In their amazement, they forgot their (modern / shiny / small) cameras.
- 

### **Exercise 4 Correcting order of adjectives**

**Read the following sentences. If the sentence is correct, write C.**

**If the sentence is incorrect, write I and rewrite the sentence correcting the mistakes.**

- \_\_\_ 1. The thing I like most about visiting my parents is sleeping in my bed old.
- \_\_\_ 2. Katerina's baby was small and beautiful.
- \_\_\_ 3. Sebastian enjoyed the delicious meal gourmet.
- \_\_\_ 4. They painted the house an antique lovely grey.
- \_\_\_ 5. There were fourteen people seated in the old dining room.
- \_\_\_ 6. Montreal is a city with a history rich.



### **TIMED WRITING: 60 minutes**

**Write a three-paragraph descriptive essay on a tradition in your culture.**

**Before you begin to write, review the following time management strategy.**

**Step 1**

## BRAINSTORMING: 5 minutes

Write down ideas and vocabulary for your essay in the box or on a separate piece of paper. You may want to cluster your ideas.

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**Step 2**

## OUTLINING: 5 minutes

Write an outline for your essay.

### Introduction

Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

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---

---

Background information: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

### **Body Paragraph**

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

Descriptive details: \_\_\_\_\_

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---

### **Conclusion**

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### **Step 3 WRITING: 40 minutes**

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your first draft on a separate piece of paper.

### **Step 4 EDITING: 10 minutes**

When you have finished your first draft, check it for mistakes, using the checklist below.

#### **Editor's Checklist**

**Put a check (✓) as appropriate.**

- 1. Does the essay have three paragraphs?
- 2. Does the introduction include a hook and a thesis?
- 3. Does the body paragraph contain enough descriptive details? Do the details support the topic sentence of the body paragraph?
- 4. Does the conclusion state a final opinion?
- 5. Are adjectives used after articles and before nouns?
- 6. Are adjectives used immediately after stative verbs?
- 7. Do adjectives appear in correct order?
- 8. Did you use prepositional phrases to show location and time?

## **Topics for Future Writing**

- 1. Write a three-paragraph descriptive essay on one of the following topics.**
  - A holiday celebration or family tradition
  - A particular or favorite place or time of day
  - A work of art (painting, sculpture, photograph, etc.)
  - A piece of architecture (bridge, skyscraper, etc.)
- 2. Write a three-paragraph descriptive essay from a friend's point of view.**
  - Select a topic from the list above.
  - Interview a friend about his or her views on the topic.
  - Take notes during the interview
  - Use your notes to write your essay.
- 3. Use the Internet or other sources to research one of the topics in item 1 above or a topic of your own choice. Write a descriptive essay based upon your research.**

# Unit 3

## Narrative Essays

### Unit Goals

#### Rhetorical focus:

- narrative organization

#### Language focus:

- showing sequence in narrative essays
- adding detail to essays

**PART 1**

## Stimulating Ideas

Formative experiences are experiences that shape how we see the world and what type of person we become later in life. In this unit, you will write a narrative about one such experience.

**Exercise 1 Thinking about the topic****A. Discuss the pictures with a partner.**

- What is happening in the pictures? How do you know?
- What do the pictures have in common?

**B. Make notes about three important events or experiences in your life.  
Then discuss in small groups.**

- Describe each event.
- Why was it important?
- How did it change you?

**Exercise 2 Reading about the topic**

U.S. President and humanitarian Jimmy Carter wrote the following narrative passage. It describes his childhood experience "mopping cotton" on his father's farm during the 1930s. To kill insects that ate cotton plants, Carter's family covered each cotton plant with molasses mixed with poison.

## Breaking Ground to Be a Man

Mopping cotton was a terrible job. The **molasses** attracted **swarms** of flies and honeybees. They covered the **barrel**, and followed us through the field. I usually wore short pants and never underwear or a shirt during the warm months, but for this job I preferred to protect my legs with long pants. My pants quickly became covered with the poison, and stuck uncomfortably to my legs. In fact, everything about me was sticky. With time, my pants dried, and the sweet, sticky poison turned to hard sugar, so that at night my stiff pants wouldn't fold, but stood up alone in a corner or against the furniture. They were covered with poison, so they had to be washed separately from the other clothing. For this reason, we didn't change them every day. It was terrible to put them back on in the mornings.



Child farm worker, 1930s.

Carter, J. *An Hour Before Daylight*. (Adapted). New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001: 180-181.

**molasses:** a thick sugar syrup

**swarm:** a large group that is in motion (usually insects)

**barrel:** a round wooden container used for storage

### Exercise 3 Understanding the text

Write **T** for true or **F** for false for each statement.

- 1 Carter wore shorts when he mopped cotton
- 2 The poison turned from a liquid to a solid on his pants.
- 3 Carter folded his pants every night before he went to sleep.
- 4 Carter washed his pants with his other clothes.

#### **Exercise 4 Responding to the text**

**Write your answers for each question in full sentences. Then discuss your answers with a partner.**

1. Carter wrote: "I preferred to protect my legs with long trousers." Why was this necessary? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Was this a comfortable job? Why or why not? How do you think Carter felt about it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why do you think this was an important formative experience for him? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you ever had a difficult job or task? What was it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Exercise 5 Freewriting**

**Write for ten to fifteen minutes on the topic below. Express yourself as well as you can. Don't worry about mistakes.**

In the passage, Jimmy Carter describes difficult and uncomfortable work on his parents' farm. On a separate piece of paper, write about a difficult job you have had or task you have done.

- Describe the job or task.
- How did you feel about it?
- What did you learn from it?
- Did this experience change you in any way?

**In Part 2 you will ...**

- learn about narrative organization.
- brainstorm ideas and specific vocabulary to use in your writing.
- create an outline for your essay.

## Brainstorming and Outlining



### WRITING TASK

In this unit, you will write a three-paragraph narrative essay about an important experience that changed you or taught you something important.

#### Exercise 1 Brainstorming ideas

A. Think back to the three events you discussed in Exercise 1B on page 54. Can you add any more events to the list? Choose one of the events to write about in your narrative essay. Use the following questions to help you in your choice.

1. Which of these events had the strongest influence on you?
2. What effects did this event have on your life?
3. Which of these events do you feel comfortable writing about?
4. Which of these events would make the best story?
5. Once you have selected your topic, write it here. \_\_\_\_\_

B. On a separate sheet of paper, brainstorm a list of details related to this event. Try to expand on your original notes with more detail. Think about who was there; and when, what, and where the event happened.

#### Exercise 2 Brainstorming vocabulary

A. Think about the event. Try to recall your actions and emotions. Add two or three more words to each set.

1. **Actions:** hurry (to), gaze (at), warn (someone), suffer (from), notice (someone / something), \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Emotions:** nervous, eager, relieved, worried, amazed, confused, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

B. Circle words you would like to use from the sets. On a separate piece of paper, practice using these words in sentences. Use your dictionary for help.

## Rhetorical Focus

### Narrative Organization

A narrative is a story. It has an introduction that engages the reader's interest, a body that gives details about the main event or action in the story, and a conclusion that describes the outcome.

#### Introduction

- The hook gets the reader's attention.
- The middle sentences introduce an event (the action of the story) by providing background information about the people, the place, and the time.
- The thesis statement prepares the reader for the action that follows.

#### Body Paragraphs

- The body paragraphs describe what happened in the story.
- They include details that bring the story to life.
- They often use time order to explain the event.

#### Conclusion

- A conclusion describes the outcome of the event.
- It often ends with a comment by the writer about what the event showed or taught.

### Exercise 3 Reading a student essay

Read the essay. What was the writer's embarrassing incident?

### An Embarrassing Incident

Where I grew up, the rules for family life are very strict. I had five brothers and five sisters, and we spent a lot of time with our relatives. My parents taught us we should respect grandparents more than anyone in the world because grandparents had lived the longest. They had more knowledge about life, and no matter what they said, even if it did not make sense, they were right. We were taught that to hug or kiss grandparents was disrespectful and that we should greet them by kissing their hand. I was young, and I thought that everyone lived and thought just as I did. Well, I soon found out this is not true.

One day, an American friend invited me to her birthday party. I was very excited but at the same time very nervous. I wanted her family

to like me, and I wanted to use my best manners. Slowly, I walked up to the house and rang the bell. My friend came running out with a big smile, telling me she was happy that I came. Then she let me in and introduced me to her parents. They smiled and said hello. Later she said, "Come here. I want you to meet my grandpa." I followed her into the living room where her grandfather was sitting. She introduced us, and he reached out his hand. He was going to shake hands, but I thought he was expecting me to kiss his hand, so I did. He pulled his hand away and looked at me in a strange way as if he did not like what I had done. Everyone else in the room looked at me, and my friend started laughing. I was very confused. I sat down and tried to figure out what had happened. Just then, a little boy ran to my friend's grandfather and jumped on his lap. The little boy started to hug and kiss the grandfather. When I saw this, I got up and took the little boy by the hand and said, "NO." I guess I said it pretty loudly because the room became very silent and all eyes were on me.

The next day at school my friend asked me why I kissed her grandfather's hand and why I told the little boy to get away from his grandfather. I explained my customs to her and she explained hers to me. Finally, I learned that good manners are not always the same in different countries. Fortunately, my friend and I stayed very good friends.

#### **Exercise 4 Analyzing the student essay**

**A. Respond to the essay by answering the questions below in full sentences.**

1. What background information do you learn about the writer? Why is this information important to understand the story? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the main event or action in the story? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What does the writer learn? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Examine the organization of the essay by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.**

1. Underline the hook. Is it one sentence or two? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Underline the sentences that give background information. What do you learn from this information? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Underline the thesis statement. Is it one sentence or two? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Reread the body paragraph. Circle one or two details that you like.
5. Circle any words that help you visualize the event more clearly.
6. Reread the conclusion. Underline the sentences that explain what the writer learned.
7. Rewrite the author's conclusion in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 5 Writing an outline**

**Review your brainstorming ideas and your freewriting exercise. Then use the form to write an outline for your essay. Remember to write your outline in note form.**

**Introduction**

Think of a hook that will engage the reader. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Think of relevant background information your reader will need to understand the story. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Body Paragraph**

Give the events of your narrative in the order in which they happened. Make note of any words connected to the story. \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Conclusion**

What did you learn from the event? \_\_\_\_\_

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In Part 3 you will ...

- learn about showing sequence in a narrative essay.
- learn about adding details to your essay.
- write a first draft of your narrative essay.

## Developing Your Ideas

### Exercise 1    Reading a student essay

Read the essay. What is the scary secret?

#### A Scary Secret

My sister and I made a dangerous mistake one summer. I was thirteen and my sister was fourteen, and our parents had taken us to the city where they grew up. We felt very grown up as we rode to the hotel in a taxi. The hotel was very big, and it had a blue tile floor. After we unpacked our suitcases, our parents wanted to go to the market. My mother told us not to go outside. "We won't," my sister promised, but I knew that she was lying. We had already decided to go out and explore this strange and beautiful city by ourselves.

As soon as my parents were out of sight, we got our things and went downstairs. We walked out of the hotel doors and down a narrow street. The sun was setting, and the light was very beautiful. We could hear the noises of traffic nearby, but the little street was quiet. Suddenly, a man with a gun stepped out from a doorway. He said, "Don't move!" He was short, and he was wearing a dark green jacket and sunglasses. He came very close and we could smell cigarettes and something terrible in his breath. We were terrified and couldn't say anything. He said, "Give me your shoes." So I did. Then he took my sister's purse and her gold ring and ran away. I remember that I fell against my sister. I heard her take a deep breath; she was shaking. Afterward, we ran back to the hotel, across the blue tile floor and up to our room.

The man scared us, but he also taught us something important. Before this experience, we did not always listen to our parents. We now learned that we should obey them. My sister and I became

obedient daughters, and we enjoyed the rest of our vacation. However, we decided not to tell our parents about our adventure. We knew they would punish us even though we had learned our lesson. This dangerous adventure is still a secret that I share with my sister.

### Exercise 2 Analyzing the student essay

**Respond to the essay by answering the questions below in full sentences.**

1. Underline and label the hook in the introduction. Does it get your attention?
2. Underline and label the thesis statement. What will the body paragraph discuss according to the thesis? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What events are given in the body paragraph? Which descriptive details make the story vivid, or easy to imagine? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What was the outcome of the story that is explained in the conclusion? What did the girls learn as a result? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Language Focus

### Showing Sequence in Narrative Essays

In narrative essays, we use time expressions to make the chronological sequence of events clear.

- We use connectors (time adverbs) such as *then*, *finally*, or *eventually* to link sentences within a paragraph.
- We use subordinating conjunctions to link clauses within a sentence.

### Time Adverbs

We use time adverbs such as *afterward*, *after that*, *eventually*, *finally*, *later*, *later on*, *now*, *then*, and *suddenly* as connectors. These connectors usually appear at the beginning of a sentence. When they do, they are immediately followed by a comma.

▲ **Then** is an exception. It is not followed by a comma.

Our train was running late. **Finally**, it arrived.

We got on board the train. **Then** we realized that we did not have money for the fare.

### Exercise 3 Identifying time adverbs

Read the student essay on pages 62–63. Circle the time adverbs. On a separate piece of paper, write sentences of your own using the adverbs you found. After you finish, compare your sentences with a partner.

## Language Focus

### Subordinating Conjunctions

We use subordinating conjunctions such as *as soon as*, *before*, *after*, *when*, and *while* in complex sentences as connectors. Complex sentences contain a main (independent) clause and a dependent clause.

- The main clause expresses the principal and independent idea of the sentence. The dependent clause expresses additional information about the main idea (for example, where or when it happened) but would be meaningless without the main idea. Dependent time clauses tell us when something happened.

- Subordinating conjunctions establish the time relationship between the dependent time clause and the main clause in the sentence. The subordinating conjunction starts the dependent clause, but the clauses can come in either order. We use a comma when the time clause comes before the main clause.

**time clause**

After our parents left the hotel,  
While we were unpacking,

**main clause**

We went into the street  
The lights went out

**main clause**

we went into the street.  
the lights went out.

**time clause**

after our parents left the hotel.  
while we were unpacking.

#### **Exercise 4 Using subordinating conjunctions in time clauses**

Combine each pair of sentences into one complex sentence. Use the subordinating conjunctions in parentheses to clarify time relationships.

1. We went to the movies. We ate lunch at a restaurant. (after) \_\_\_\_\_
2. We waited a long time for the bus. It arrived. (before) \_\_\_\_\_
3. They saved enough money. They took a great vacation. (as soon as) \_\_\_\_\_
4. She thought carefully about which dress to buy. She bought the red one. (before) \_\_\_\_\_
5. I listened to the radio. I prepared dinner. (while) \_\_\_\_\_
6. She worked very hard for many years. She retired. (then) \_\_\_\_\_
7. I was very surprised. You knocked on my door. (when) \_\_\_\_\_
8. He had a cup of coffee. He got up in the morning. (as soon as) \_\_\_\_\_

## Editing Your Writing

Now that you have written a first draft, it is time to edit. Editing involves making changes to your writing to improve it and correct mistakes.

### Language Focus

#### Using the Past Continuous in Narrative Essays

In a narrative, you often need to describe actions in progress, or to describe background actions.

- To form the past continuous use *was/were* and the base form of the verb + *ing*.
- Use the past continuous to talk about activities that were in progress at a specific time in the past. The activities began before the specific time and may also have continued after that time.

At three o'clock we **were walking** home from school. My friend **was riding** his bicycle.

- Also use the past continuous to describe background actions.
- The sun **was going** down and the children **were still playing** on the grass.

▲ We don't usually use stative verbs (*be, know, own, mean, seem, understand, love, believe*, etc.) in the past continuous. We use the simple past instead.

I **didn't know** John then.

I **wasn't knowing** John then. (INCORRECT)

#### Affirmative Statements

SUBJECT	WAS/WERE	VERB + ING
I	<b>was</b>	working.
They	<b>were</b>	
The sun	<b>was</b>	shining.

#### Negative Statements

SUBJECT	WAS/WERE + NOT	VERB + ING
She	<b>wasn't</b>	
We	<b>weren't</b>	working .
The phone	<b>wasn't</b>	ringing.

### **Exercise 1 Identifying background action**

Read the paragraph below and underline all the verbs that describe background actions.

#### **My Wedding**

I will always remember my wedding day. It was beautiful. I woke up and looked outside. The sun was shining, and the birds were singing.

It was as if they were talking to me, telling me to get up. In reality, the circle radio was playing and my brothers were arguing in the hallway, but it still felt romantic. My dress was hanging on the closet door.

My mother was cooking breakfast in the kitchen, and the coffee was brewing. My father was talking on the phone to his brother, and they were discussing who was the better chess player. This was a constant argument between the two of them, but I knew my father was just trying to distract himself because he was feeling nervous.

### **Exercise 2 Using the past continuous to describe actions in progress**

Complete the following sentences using the past continuous.

1. I'm sorry I wasn't home yesterday afternoon. I was walking my dog in the park.
2. When my uncle visited in 2004, I \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Last week was very busy, my roommate and I had many tests and assignments to complete. While I \_\_\_\_\_, she \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I'm sorry I couldn't talk last night. When you called, we \_\_\_\_\_.
5. I'm so tired! Last night, my sister and I \_\_\_\_\_ until two in the morning!
6. I didn't hear the doorbell. The radio \_\_\_\_\_ too loudly.

### **Exercise 3 Setting the scene with background details**

Continue the stories below. Give background actions using the past continuous to help set the scene. Use the sample paragraph in Exercise 1 as a model.

1. It was an ordinary day at school. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ Suddenly, the fire alarm went off.

2. It was a cold and rainy night. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ And then someone knocked at the door.

### **Language Focus**

#### **Past Time Clauses**

Past time clauses can be used to describe the relationship between two or more events.

- Past time clauses are dependent clauses. They must be attached to a main (or independent) clause.
- Past time clauses can contain verbs in the past continuous or simple past, and usually begin with subordinating conjunctions such as *before*, *when*, *while*, and *after*.
- The past time clause can come before or after the main clause; however, if the past time clause comes first, separate it from the main clause with a comma.

## Simultaneous Activities

To describe two simultaneous activities in the past, use the past continuous in both the time clause and the main clause. Use the subordinating conjunctions *when* or *while*.

time clause

When I was sleeping,

main clause

the children were watching TV.

## Interrupted Activities

To describe an interrupted activity, use the past continuous in the time clause, and the simple past in the main clause. Use the subordinating conjunctions *when* or *while*.

time clause

While I was waiting for a bus,

main clause

I heard a crash.

main clause

He fell in love with her

time clause

when he was living in Paris.

## Events in Sequence

To describe a sequence of events, use the simple past in both the time clause and the main clause, and use subordinating conjunctions such as *before*, *after*, *when*, or *as soon as* to indicate the order of events.

main clause

I walked past my sister

time clause

before I recognized her.

time clause

As soon as I heard the news,

main clause

I ran into the street to tell my friends.

### Exercise 4 Practicing time clauses

Read the following sentences. Write *S* (simultaneous) if the sentence involves two simultaneous actions. Write *I* (interrupted) if the sentence involves one action interrupting another. Write *SQ* (sequence) if the sentence involves two actions happening in sequence.

- \_\_\_ 1. My dog was eating its dinner while my cat was playing with a toy.
- \_\_\_ 2. We learned to read the alphabet before we learned to write the letters.
- \_\_\_ 3. After we saw the movie, we went out for a hamburger.
- \_\_\_ 4. Petra was flying into the airport while her daughter was having a baby.
- \_\_\_ 5. Aaron called Veronica as soon as he saw Jacob.
- \_\_\_ 6. Martin was sleeping when he received the call.

**Exercise 5 Editing a paragraph**

Read the paragraph and edit as necessary. There are nine mistakes.

## My Vacation in the Mountains

People go to the mountains on vacation for two reasons: to ski and to enjoy the view. My family doesn't ski but we wanted to enjoy the view! In pictures, the mountains were always beautiful. The flowers were blooming, the sun was shining, and the people were smiling; however, our trip to the mountains was a disaster. As soon as we were arriving at our destination, the sun disappeared. It was rain. I We were stay in a friend's small apartment. My father went to the window in the living room every day and checked the sky. Every day it was the same: rainy and cloudy. One day, while he was look at the clouds, a little sun began to shine through. He saw the sun as soon as, we were jumping in the car. We drove to the Jungfrau Mountain so we could take the tram to the top and enjoy the view. We eagerly got on the tram. It began to climb to the top of the mountain. However, while the tram was climbing, it becoming cloudy. The tram arrived at the top of the mountain, and we got out. We were in the middle of a cloud. I thought it was exciting, but my father didn't. We drove back in silence. Our last day we went to the airport and then were getting on the plane. Just as the plane was taking off, the sun was beginning to shine again.

**Exercise 6 Editing your first draft and rewriting**

Review your essay for mistakes. Use the checklist on page 73. Then write a final draft.

## Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Did you use the correct verb forms for sequence, interruption, and simultaneous actions?
- 2. Did you check that stative verbs were used in the past simple only?
- 3. Does the essay include time expressions such as time adverbs and subordinating conjunctions?

In Part 5 you will ...

- review time adverbs and subordinating conjunctions.
- review the simple past and the past continuous.
- write a timed narrative essay.

### **Exercise 3 Editing a paragraph**

Read the paragraph and edit as necessary. There are six mistakes.

## **Stranger on a Bus**

One morning I was wait at the bus stop. I was worried about being late for school, and I was anxiously waiting for the bus to arrive. It was late as usual, and I began to think of what I would tell my teacher. There were several people at the bus stop, and some of them were complaining. When the bus finally came, we all pushed our way on board. Someone folded his umbrella and sprayed water on me. I was felt upset, but fortunately, I got a place next to the window. I had a good view of the sidewalk. People was hurrying along clutching their umbrellas. Then a boy on a bike caught my attention. He was riding beside the bus and wave his arms. I heard passengers behind me shouting to the bus driver, but he refused to stop until we reached the next bus stop. Still, the boy kept riding. He was carried something over his shoulder and shouting. Finally, when we came to the next stop, the boy was running up to the door. I heard an excited conversation. Then the bus driver stood up and announced, "Did anyone lose a briefcase at the last stop?" A woman at the back of the bus, shouted, "Oh my! It's mine." She pushed her way to the front and gratefully took the briefcase. She thanked the little boy with enthusiasm. After that, everyone on the bus began talking about what the boy had done, and the crowd of strangers suddenly became friendly.



### **TIMED WRITING: 60 minutes**

Write a three-paragraph narrative essay on a formative experience from your past. Before you begin to write, review the following time management strategy.

**Step 1**

### **BRAINSTORMING: 5 minutes**

Write down ideas and vocabulary for your essay on a separate piece of paper. You may want to cluster your ideas.

**Step 2 OUTLINING: 5 minutes**

Write an outline for your essay.

**Introduction**

Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Background information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Body**

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Descriptive details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusion**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3 WRITING: 40 minutes**

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your essay on a separate piece of paper. As you write, remember to include specific details about the experience.

**Step 4 EDITING: 10 minutes**

When you have finished your essay, check it for mistakes using the checklist on page 78.

## Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Does the essay have three paragraphs?
- 2. Does the introduction include a hook and a thesis?
- 3. Does the body paragraph contain enough background information and specific details? Do they support the topic sentence of the body paragraph?
- 4. Does the essay include time adverbs and subordinating conjunctions?
- 5. Are all the verbs in the correct form?
- 6. Does the conclusion explain what you learned from the experience?

### Topics for Future Writing

- 1. Write a three-paragraph essay on one of the following topics.**
  - A special gift I gave or received
  - The first time I met someone who became important to me
  - A favorite childhood memory
  - A mistake that taught me an important lesson
  - A difficult decision I had to make
- 2. Write a three-paragraph essay on one of the topics above, but from a friend's point of view. Interview a friend, classmate, or relative about his or her views on the topic. Take notes during the interview to use for your essay.**
- 3 Use the Internet or other sources to research one of the topics or a topic of your choice, then write a three-paragraph essay on the topic.**

# Unit 4

## Opinion Essays

### **Unit Goals**

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#### **Rhetorical focus:**

- opinion organization
- facts and opinions
- counter-argument and refutation

#### **Language focus:**

- using quantity expressions in opinion essays
- using connectors to show support and opposition

**PART 1****Stimulating Ideas**

Some people like change while others prefer traditional ways of living and doing things. In this unit, you will choose a recent invention or discovery and write an opinion paper discussing why you think it is beneficial or harmful to society.

**Exercise 1 Thinking about the topic****A. Discuss the picture with a partner.**

- Describe the picture.
- Where is the man?
- What is he doing?
- In what ways do you think his life is different from the life his parents lived as children?

**B. Make notes about the changes in the way we live that have occurred in the past century. Then discuss in small groups.****Exercise 2 Reading about the topic**

This article discusses a project to bring wireless communication to Bhutan, a country high in the mountains of Asia that has a traditional way of life.

## Wireless: Bhutan's Hills Are Alive with Sound of Cell Phones

The **ancient** way of life continues in the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. Thimpu, home to the royal family and the government, may be the world's only capital city without traffic lights. But while Bhutan may get by without traffic lights, it has realized it cannot miss out on the **digital revolution**. Soon, thousands of cell phones may ring across the mountain kingdom.

Engineers are traveling across the country, setting up **rural** telecommunications systems. This project will connect the Bhutanese with each other and the outside world through voice and Internet technology. The mountain landscape limits the technology that can be used, so **wireless** is the best solution.

For the engineers, it is a challenging project. Teams bringing equipment will face long pony rides through the mountains. Some villages are so far away that it can take four days to walk there from the nearest road. There are no trains or flights. Engineers also could get sick in the high mountains where some villages are above 3,600 meters (12,000 feet).

For the Bhutanese, this will bring important benefits, such as **distance learning** and **tele-medicine**. "The project is a big change in terms of education and communication for the rural people," said a Bhutanese official. In the villages, people are hoping they can benefit from that kind of access to technology without making too many changes to their ancient way of life.

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Curnow, R. "Wireless: Bhutan's hills are alive with sound of cell phones" (Adapted).  
*The International Herald Tribune*: December 20, 2004

**ancient:** very old

**digital revolution:** a big change that happens to a society with the introduction of digital technology

**rural:** in the countryside or having to do with life far from big cities

**wireless:** without wires or cables

**distance learning:** learning through e-mail and the Internet

**tele-medicine:** medical care in which a doctor works with patients using telecommunications rather than person-to-person contact

### **Exercise 3 Understanding the text**

**Write T for true or F for false for each statement.**

- 1. The Bhutanese capital is not a typical modern city.
- 2. The mountainous landscape of Bhutan limits the kind of technology that can be used there.
- 3. Engineers will have an easy time building communications systems in Bhutan.
- 4. Wireless technology will probably change the lives of rural Bhutanese people.

### **Exercise 4 Responding to the text**

**Write your answers to each question in full sentences. Then discuss your answers with a partner.**

1. What technological changes have occurred in the past fifty years?

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2. Which of these changes have had the biggest effect on everyday life?

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3. What were the benefits and/or disadvantages of these changes?

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4. What change do you especially like or dislike?

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## **Exercise 5**   **Freewriting**

**Write for ten to fifteen minutes on the topic below. Express yourself as well you can. Don't worry about mistakes.**

The article describes how wireless technology is changing the lives of the Bhutanese people. On a separate piece of paper, write about a specific invention that has changed your life.

- What is the invention?
- How has it changed you or the way you do things?
- Who else has been affected by this invention?
- How do you feel about these changes?

### **In Part 2 you will ...**

- learn about opinion organization.
- brainstorm ideas and specific vocabulary to use in your writing.
- create an outline for your essay.

**PART 2**

## Brainstorming and Outlining



### WRITING TASK

In this unit, you will write a three-paragraph opinion essay about an important invention or discovery that has taken place in your lifetime.

#### Exercise 1 Brainstorming ideas

- A. Read the opinions presented in the charts below. Think of arguments for and against these opinions, and make notes in the *Agree* or *Disagree* columns. Consider your arguments: do you agree or disagree with the opinion? Compare your answers with a partner.

1.	Agree	Opinion	Disagree
		TV is bad for children.	

2.	Agree	Opinion	Disagree
		Space exploration is important and should be funded by the government.	

- B. Choose an important invention or discovery that you think has had an important impact on society. Write your opinion about the invention in the middle column. Write arguments that agree with your opinion on the left. Write arguments that disagree with your opinion on the right.

Agree	Opinion (of a discovery or invention)	Disagree

## Exercise 2 Brainstorming vocabulary

A. Circle the words you would like to use. Add two more words to each set.

1. **Positive changes:** foster, support, encourage, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Negative changes:** hinder, discourage, prevent, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Relationships:** influence, alter, react (to), \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Results:** produce, result in, bring about, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

B. On a separate piece of paper, practice using these words in sentences.  
Use your dictionary for help.

## Rhetorical Focus

### Opinion Organization

In an opinion essay, the writer tries to convince the reader of a point of view on a controversial issue (something that people disagree about).

#### Introduction

- The hook introduces a controversial issue.
- The hook may be a short story or an anecdote, a question, or a surprising statement or fact that makes the reader want to know more.
- The middle sentences explain why the issue is important by giving background information. This background information explains the issue with details about the history or the people involved, what they want, or how it affects them.
- The thesis statement at the end presents the writer's point of view.

#### Body Paragraph

- The topic sentence has a controlling idea that supports the writer's main argument in the thesis.
- The following sentences support the topic sentence with reasons, facts, and explanations to help the reader understand the writer's point of view.
- The body paragraph often includes a statement that describes the opposing opinion. This is called the counter-argument. The writer then argues against the counter-argument. This is called a refutation. In the refutation, the writer points out weaknesses in the counter-argument, and shows how his own argument is stronger.

#### Conclusion

- This restates the writer's opinion, but often using different, more persuasive language.
- It may also offer a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment that reinforces the writer's viewpoint.

**Exercise 3** **Reading a student essay**

Read the essay. Does the writer support space exploration?

## What Can Space Exploration Do for Me?

Whether we realize it or not, space exploration has changed our lives in dramatic ways. People have walked on the moon, and robots have traveled to Mars. These exciting events have created history, but they are also important because they have provided many practical benefits for humans here on earth.

The importance of space programs can be seen in the technology we use every day. Satellite technology allows people to watch TV shows and listen to radio programs from everywhere on earth. Also, many of the advances in computer technology were first invented to support space exploration. For example, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has contributed to the creation of software that people use every day in manufacturing and design. Robotic technology is another famous example. Engineers designed robots to work on the International Space Station, but now robots are being developed to do jobs here on Earth. Even with all these advances, some people say that space exploration is an expensive luxury that takes money away from important programs such as health care and education. However, if they considered how space technology has improved life on Earth, they would see that space exploration is actually important to civilization.

Space exploration creates a need for technological advances. Later, these advances are used in other ways that help people. Wonderful new inventions such as satellites and computers are just a beginning. In the future, space exploration will provide useful and amazing new inventions that we cannot even imagine in the present.

**Exercise 4 Examining the student essay****A. Respond to the essay by answering the questions below in full sentences.**

1. Would the writer agree with someone who said the space program does not help ordinary people? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are some of the benefits that space exploration has produced? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do so many technological advances come from space exploration and not other industries? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. According to the writer, what is the opinion of people who do not support space exploration? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Examine the organization of the essay by answering the questions below. Then compare your answers with a partner.**

1. What strategy does the writer use to hook the reader's attention?
  - a. a surprising statement
  - b. a story
  - c. a question
2. Circle the background information that the writer provides.
3. Which of the following best summarizes the author's thesis statement?
  - a. Space exploration creates history.
  - b. Space exploration has improved daily life on earth.
  - c. Scientists discover many things by accident.
  - d. The technology needed for space exploration can be used in other ways.
4. Underline the topic sentence of the body paragraph.
5. Underline examples that support the topic sentence.
6. Do all the supporting sentences relate to the topic sentence? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do the examples include facts and explanations? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Write the counter-argument in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 5 Writing an outline**

Review your brainstorming ideas and your freewriting exercise. Then use the chart on page 88 to write an outline for your essay. Remember to write your outline in note form.

## **Introduction**

Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

Background information: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Body Paragraph**

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Examples/reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

Counter-argument: \_\_\_\_\_

Refutation: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Conclusion**

Summary and comment: \_\_\_\_\_

In Part 3 you will ...

- learn to use facts and opinions to support your argument.
- learn about counter-arguments and refutation.
- write a first draft of your opinion essay.

**Exercise 1** Reading a student essay

Read the essay. What is the best medicine?

### The Best Medicine

Last week, I noticed that my son had a bad cold. I took him to the pediatrician, and she told me he had an infection. Then she gave me a prescription for antibiotics. After two days, my son was happy and healthy thanks to this important medicine. Every day doctors prescribe antibiotics to help thousands of patients around the world fight infections. I do not like to think about what might happen if we did not have antibiotics.

Antibiotics are one of the greatest medical inventions in human history for several reasons. First, infections are frequent. Almost everyone has experienced an ear infection or a sinus infection. These common illnesses cause pain and discomfort to millions of people around the world every year. In addition, infections can be life-threatening. For example, sepsis, a dangerous infection of the blood, is responsible for one out of every one hundred hospitalizations. The victims are usually very young, old, or weak. Another reason why antibiotics are important is that they stop an infection from spreading to others. Infectious diseases can quickly travel from person to person if they are not treated right away. Antibiotics are the most effective way to control the spread of these serious illnesses. Recently, many people have argued that doctors prescribe antibiotics too often and that the bacteria that cause infections are becoming stronger as a result. This may be true; however, this evidence does not mean that antibiotics are not important. It simply shows that we must learn to use them wisely.

Infections can attack anyone at any time. They can also attack entire populations. While many infections create minor discomfort and suffering, some are quite dangerous. Antibiotics are the most effective way to treat infections. Without antibiotics, many more people would get seriously ill, and others would die.

## **Exercise 2 Analyzing the student essay**

**Respond to the essay by answering the questions below.**



## Rhetorical Focus

## Facts and Opinions

Writers use both facts and opinions to support their position or argument. They state their opinion and then back it up with facts. The difference between facts and opinions is shown below.

- **Fact:** a truth that is scientifically proven or generally accepted  
Antibiotics cure infections.

- **Opinion:** one point of view among many

### Exercise 3 Distinguishing facts and opinions

Write **F** if the statement is a fact and **O** if it is an opinion.

- 1. Small airplanes are used in advertising.
- 2. The modern disposable diaper has dramatically improved parents' lives.
- 3. Many nations are working together to build and maintain the International Space Station.
- 4. Internet dating services offer an excellent way to find a husband or a wife.
- 5. Online courses are easier than classroom courses.

### Rhetorical Focus

#### Interpreting Facts to Support an Opinion

After the writer gives factual examples, she or he then interprets the facts, explaining how they support her or his opinion. Look at the example below, which includes an opinion, factual examples, and an interpretation of the facts.

**opinion**

Animals use language to communicate with each other.

**factual examples**

Arctic wolves, for example, communicate the presence of caribou through their howls and barks. Other wolves hear the messages and are able to meet their pack to join the hunt.

**Interpretation**

Clearly, if another animal can understand vocalized messages that tell him or her the location of food, then that animal is using language.

### Exercise 4 Interpreting facts to support opinions

Read each opinion and fact below. Then write a sentence interpreting the fact to support the opinion. The first one has been done for you.

1. **Opinion:** The Internet takes too much time away from family life.

**Fact:** The average adult in the United States spends six hours per week on the Internet.

Those six hours could be spent doing family activities, such as gardening, helping children with homework, or playing games.

2. **Opinion:** The government is doing an excellent job of protecting athletes from the pressure to use performance-enhancing drugs.

**Fact:** Athletes are routinely tested for drug use.

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3. **Opinion:** Employers place too much emphasis on personal appearance.

**Fact:** According to a recent study, people with average appearance earn 3 to 8 percent less money than those who are considered beautiful.

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4. **Opinion:** The cell phone industry is a good place to invest money.

**Fact:** One out of every six people owns a cell phone.

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5. **Opinion:** People spend too much money on food.

**Fact:** Americans eat meals outside the home an average of five times per week.

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6. **Opinion:** People in the United States love pets.

**Fact:** Americans spend 5.4 million dollars each year on pets.

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## Rhetorical Focus

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### Counter-Argument and Refutation

In order to make an opinion essay as persuasive as possible, the writer includes a counter-argument and a refutation.

- The counter-argument is the opposing opinion. It disagrees with the writer's position. By including the counter-argument, the writer shows an understanding of other points of view.
- The refutation is the writer's response to the counter-argument. In the refutation, the writer shows why the counter-argument is weak and the writer's position is strong. The refutation may also address doubts the reader may have about the writer's position.

Look at the example below.

**counter-argument**

Many people think that a child is unhappy without brothers or sisters; however, most only children would disagree with this statement.

**refutation**

An only child receives more attention from parents, gets into fewer fights, and has plenty of social contact with friends and classmates.

In the above example, the writer raises a counter-argument (that people think children are unhappy without siblings). Then the writer gives a refutation: only children are not unhappy, and then gives reasons to support the argument.

### **Exercise 5   Recognizing counter-arguments and refutations**

**Read each statement below. Underline the counter-argument. Circle the writer's refutation.**

1. Even though many photographers love film and say they will never give it up, digital cameras are the cameras of the future.
2. Train travel may be inexpensive and relaxing; however, airplanes are a much more important means of transportation because they are fast and efficient.
3. Most people agree that a traditional home-cooked meal is best, but they have to admit that convenience and low cost is making fast food more popular with students.
4. While some people believe that online courses will never be as popular as traditional classrooms; technology, cost, and convenience are increasing the demand for online instruction.
5. Some people criticize credit cards for causing debt; however, it is the irresponsibility of consumers, not credit cards, that causes credit card debt.
6. People often comment that technology makes life easier, but in reality, technology only makes it possible for people to do more work in less time.

### **Exercise 6   Writing a first draft**

**Review your outline. Then write the first draft of a three-paragraph essay on an invention or discovery that happened in your lifetime.**

### Exercise 7 Peer editing a first draft

After you write your first draft, exchange it with a partner. Answer the questions on the checklist. You may also write comments or questions on your partner's draft. Then read your partner's comments on your first draft, and revise it as necessary.

#### Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate. Write answers in complete sentences in the lines provided.

- 1. Does the essay have three paragraphs?
- 2. Does the introduction include a hook to get the reader's attention along with background information?
- 3. Is the writer's opinion about the issue clearly stated in the thesis statement?
- 4. Does the body paragraph contain facts and reasons that support the opinion?
- 5. Put a check in the margin next to the points that you understand and agree with. Explain why you agree.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 6. Write one or two questions about something that needs clarification or additional support.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### In Part 4 you will ...

- learn about using quantity expressions.
- learn about overgeneralizations.
- learn to use connectors to show support and opposition.

## Editing Your Writing

Now that you have written a first draft, it is time to edit. Editing involves making changes to your writing to improve it and correct mistakes.

### Language Focus

#### Using Quantity Expressions in Opinion Essays

In an opinion essay, writers often make general statements about a group or category. It is important to avoid making a statement that is true for some, but not for all members of a group or category. This is called an overgeneralization. Compare the following statements.

Cats hate water.

Most cats hate water.

The first statement suggests that all cats in the world hate water. It is untrue because some cats, such as tigers, are good swimmers and enjoy being in water. In the second statement, the writer uses the quantity expression *most*. The quantity expression qualifies, or limits the generalization, so that the statement is true.

#### Quantity Expressions

The following patterns guide the use of quantity expressions:

- *Most*, *a lot of*, and *some* are used with both plural count nouns and noncount nouns.

**Most** dormitories have Internet access.

**Some** cafeterias offer healthy alternatives to traditional student food.

- *Much* and *a little* are used with noncount nouns. (*Much* is not usually used in affirmative statements. Use *a lot of* instead.)

Some people have **a lot of** intelligence, but they do not have **much** common sense.

Students might have **a little** money left for entertainment after paying expenses.

- *Many*, *several*, and *a few* are used with plural nouns.

**Many** Web sites charge a fee for information.

**A few** uncooperative participants can destroy a meeting.

### **Exercise 1 Identifying correct quantity expressions**

**Circle the correct quantity expression in each sentences.**

1. (Many / A lot of) creativity is necessary for certain types of technology jobs.
2. There are (a few / a little) places where the sea level is rising.
3. (A little / Several) bills in Congress have tried to protect Internet users from fraud.
4. In the history of the Internet, only (a little / a few) computer viruses have created serious damage.
5. (Many / A lot of) time is spent doing research on cures for cancer.
6. Did you know that (a little / a few) sleep-deprivation can harm a person's judgment?

### **Exercise 2 Avoiding overgeneralizations**

**Using quantity expressions, rewrite the sentences below so that they become more appropriate generalizations.**

<b>Overgeneralization</b>	<b>Appropriate Generalization</b>
1. Everybody has a TV.	Most people have a TV.
2. People do not like change.	Many people do not like change.
3. Computers have the latest software.	
4. Schools are now wireless.	
5. Medications have side effects.	
6. New Yorkers love their city.	
7. Asian countries have hot and humid climates.	
8. Pollution affects everything.	

### Using Connectors to Show Support and Opposition

When we explain an opinion, we can use connectors to clarify the relationship between ideas. Connectors can be used to signal that the second idea will support the first in some way. They can also be used to contrast the first idea with an opposite or very different idea. When they introduce an independent clause, the connector is followed by a comma.

#### Connectors That Show Support

- One way to support an idea is to give an example that illustrates the idea. Connectors like *for example* and *in particular* introduce examples.

Most people are willing to spend money to make their lives easier; **for example**, nearly every new house has an automatic garage door opener.

Children should avoid junk food; **in particular**, they should stay away from sugary snacks.

- A second way to show support is to add facts or explanations that clarify the idea.

The automobile industry is responding to consumer demands for more fuel-efficient cars; **in fact**, the number of available models has tripled in the past three years.

#### Connectors That Show Opposition

It is sometimes difficult for the writer to show that two ideas are opposed to each other. Connectors like *however*, *in contrast*, *on the other hand* help the writer focus the reader's attention on differences.

I'm late every morning; **however**, I never get into trouble.

Many people enjoy listening to CDs; **in contrast**, live concerts are more exciting.

### **Exercise 3 Understanding connectors**

Each of the sentences below has two clauses joined by a connector. Write **O** for opposition if the clauses show opposing information and **S** for support if they show supporting information, such as an example or a similar idea.

- O 1. The Western calendar is used around the world; however, many countries have a traditional calendar that they also use.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Most people say they want to exercise; however, only one in ten adults works out three times a week or more.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Frank Lloyd Wright was an architect who liked straight lines; in contrast, Antonio Gaudi preferred bends and curves in his designs.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Surgeons try hard to protect their hands; for example, they avoid sports such as baseball that might cause an injury to their fingers.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. The place where I grew up only has two seasons; however, my new home, New York, has four.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Women often buy a house before getting married; in fact, single women purchase approximately one in five homes.

### **Exercise 4 Editing a paragraph**

**Read the paragraph and edit as necessary. There are four mistakes.**

Most working people will agree that traffic congestion creates too much stress. As large cities grow even bigger, there is often so many traffic that people's productivity is reduced. There are two good solutions that could greatly improve traffic conditions in this city. First, high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV lanes) are effective. A vehicle can drive in an HOV lane only if the car has at least two passengers. Much workers must begin at work at 9:00 every day, so it is easy for them to carpool. If four people ride together, there are three fewer cars on the road. Providing affordable public transportation is another good solution. Much people like to use public transportation because it is cheap and convenient. However, building an effective public transportation system costs much money.

#### **Exercise 4 Editing your first draft and rewriting**

Review your essay for mistakes. Use the checklist below. Then write a final draft.

#### **Editor's Checklist**

**Put a check (✓) as appropriate.**

- 1. Did you use expressions of quantity?
- 2. Did you use connectors to show opposition?
- 3. Did you use connectors to show support?

#### **In Part 5 you will ...**

- review the elements of opinion writing.
- write a timed opinion essay.

## Putting It All Together

In this part of the unit, you will complete five exercises to improve your accuracy, write a timed essay to improve your fluency, and then explore topics for future writing.

### Exercise 1 Identifying facts and opinions

Write **F** if the statement is a fact. Write **O** if it is an opinion.

- 1. The Galápagos tortoise is the largest living tortoise.
- 2. Animals suffer when they are taken from the wild and put into zoos.
- 3. Scientists have evidence that birds are capable of complex thought.
- 4. Birds make great pets because they are friendly and intelligent.
- 5. The saguaro cactus is the most well-known of all desert plants.
- 6. Bats feed on the fruit of the saguaro cactus, which only blooms at night.

### Exercise 2 Recognizing counter-arguments and refutations

Read the statements below. Underline the counter-argument. Circle the writer's refutation.

- 1. Even though many people say they enjoy visiting bookstores, online shopping for books is becoming increasingly popular.
- 2. Not very many people actually ride in helicopters, so they might not think about them as important for our society; however, helicopters are necessary for many areas of city life, including news agencies, law enforcement, and emergency medicine.
- 3. The hydrogen-powered car is laughed at by many people because they think it is not possible to use water as fuel, but hydrogen-powered vehicles may help us solve serious environmental and political problems.
- 4. Day-care centers offer benefits to the children, their parents, and society even though there will always be people who disagree with them.
- 5. Many people consider a new type of rice as no big deal; however, the development of rice plants that are strong and resistant to disease can help prevent starvation in many countries.
- 6. Some people say that traveling to other countries is a waste of money, but international travel is worth the cost because it is fun and educational.

### **Exercise 3 Understanding connectors**

Each of the sentences below has two clauses joined by a connector. Write **O** for opposition if the clauses show opposing information or **S** for support if they show supporting information, such as an example or a similar idea.

- 1. Kayaking can be a cold and wet sport; however, many people find it exciting and pleasurable.
- 2. A mall is a pleasant place to spend a Saturday afternoon; in fact, many people enjoy spending time at malls even if they are not shopping.
- 3. There are many inappropriate Web sites directed at teenage audiences; in contrast, Homestar Runner is an entertaining site that parents approve of.
- 4. It is true that some people become addicted to exercise; for example, I have a friend who feels anxious if she cannot work out at the gym every day.
- 5. A useful future invention would be one that replaces traditional keys and locks with something that recognizes fingerprints; in fact, most people would love this invention because they would not have to worry about losing or forgetting their keys.
- 6. Almost all parents want their children to get university degrees because they worry about their careers; however, there are many other ways that young people can become successful.

### **Exercise 4 Identifying correct quantity expressions**

Circle the correct quantity expression in the sentences below.

- 1. (Many / A lot) of equipment is needed for rock climbing.
- 2. There will always be (a few / a little) people that prefer to read a traditional printed book.
- 3. (Some / A little) instructions are so badly written that it is impossible to use them.
- 4. (A little / Many) allergies can be treated with over-the-counter drugs.
- 5. (Most / Many) job training involves actually doing a task.
- 6. Gyms usually have (a few / a little) space set aside for stretching.

### **Exercise 5 Editing a paragraph**

**Read the paragraph. Correct the mistakes with connectors. There are five mistakes.**

Immigrants today have an easier life than immigrants of the past because communication and travel make it easier for us to stay connected to our countries. Homesickness and culture shock are big problems; in contrast, many people get very depressed if they cannot speak their language or communicate with their parents. In the past, people had letters and the telephone, but letters took a long time and the telephone was very expensive, so people had a long time to wait for communication. For example, e-mail allows today's immigrants to communicate as often as they want for free. E-mail has other advantages too; for example, I send photographs by e-mail, and my friend has a special video camera that she uses when she talks to her family. She can see them and they can see her. Another advantage for immigrants today is travel. People sometimes visited their country in the past, but it was a long and expensive trip; in fact, traveling overseas is easier nowadays because there are many flights and the tickets are not too expensive. I know many people who live in the United States, but they go back to their countries for special occasions; however, my friend went back two times last year for two different wedding celebrations. For an immigrant, going back home for a visit is the best cure for homesickness; in contrast, it sometimes helps them feel better about living in the new country. Although many people say that an immigrant's life is never easy, I am very glad that I live in these days and not fifty years ago.



#### **TIMED WRITING: 60 minutes**

**Write a three-paragraph opinion essay on the topic below. Before you begin to write, review the following time management strategy.**

- Would you consider marrying someone from another culture?

**Step 1 BRAINSTORMING: 5 minutes**

Write down ideas and vocabulary for your essay on a separate piece of paper. You may want to use a chart similar to that on page 84.

**Step 2 OUTLINING: 5 minutes**

Write an outline for your essay.

**Introduction**

Hook: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Background information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Body Paragraph**

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Example reasons: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Counter-argument: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Refutation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusion**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3 WRITING: 40 minutes**

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your first draft on a separate piece of paper.

**Step 4 EDITING: 10 minutes**

When you have finished your first draft, check it for mistakes using the checklist on page 104.

## Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate.

- 1. Does the essay have three paragraphs?
- 2. Does the introduction include a hook and a thesis?
- 3. Does the body paragraph have a topic sentence?
- 4. Does the body paragraph give reasons and explanations that support the topic sentence? Does it give a counter-argument and refutation?
- 5. Does the conclusion refer to the main idea of the essay?
- 6. Are quantity expressions used to avoid overgeneralizations?
- 7. Are connectors used to show the relationship (opposition or support) between ideas?

### Topics for Future Writing

- 1. Write a three-paragraph opinion essay on one of the following topics.**
  - A school policy that you agree with or disagree with
  - The best solution to overcoming traffic problems in your city
  - The biggest mistake that a college student can make
  - The ideal husband or wife
- 2. Write a three-paragraph opinion essay on one of topics above, but from a friend's point of view. Interview a friend, classmate, or relative about his or her views on the topic. Take notes during the interview to use for your essay.**
- 3. Use the Internet or other sources to research one of the following topics or a topic of your own choice. Then write a three-paragraph opinion essay.**
  - Hydrogen-powered vehicles
  - Testing in schools
  - Children and TV