Short Assignments

Don't get overwhelemd by the size of your endeavour; this will paralyze you

Break assignments into smaller parts "All I have to do is write down as much as I can see through a

"Writing a novel is like driving a car at night. You can only see as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way."

Take it one thing at a time - "Bird by bird"

LAMOT

BIRD BY BIRD

Finish your short assignments!

Not necessarily practical for

essays, but the idea to keep

going without knowing ex-

actly how your ideas are

going to develop is useful

Opposite of the driving at

night analogy. To alter the

driving at night; you know

wish to take, but the scene-

rey will only appear as you 🔨

Long paragraphs don't look \

good. Many short para-

Begin each paragraph

topic of paragraph

lowing details

graph will take

graphs in a row don't look

1) sentence that suggests

2) sentence that helps tran-

Should hold together fol-

Indicates direction para-

Making word subject of

which voice is to be used

ject is emphasized

sentence often determines

Voice determines what sub-

in advance the route you

drive along.

good either.

analogy: Writing is like

for getting started.

one-inch picture frame."

down on paper.

You just need to begin.

Start by writing ANYTHING

Refer to Mundanity of Excellence. You need to put in meaningful practice and nurture skill.

Your lead might be somewhere on the 5th page of your shitty first draft.

Shitty First Drafts

Shitty first drafts lead to better future drafts

Skilled writers don't produce perfect first drafts

You don't know what you're doing until you've done it

"The right words and sentences just do not come pouring out like ticker tape most of the time."

Let everything pour out; something good that you wouldn't have otherwise come across may come out of your jumble of thoughts

Write without reining yourself in; no one else has to read this

Trust the process!

Draft Stages

First draft - "down draft" Get it down Second draft - "up draft" Fix it up

AFTER THE SHITTY

FIRST DRAFT

Third draft - "dental draft" Check every "tooth"

Quiet the Voices

Close your eyes Wait for chatter to start Isolate one voice Imagine speaking as mouse Pick up by tail, drop into jar Repeat Put on lid Imagine volume control Turn up and listen

Go back to shitty first draft

Figurative Description

"...Encountering a good similie is like meeting an old friend in a crowd of strangers"

Use description to see an old thing in a new way

Stay away from cliché similies, metaphors, and images

 I lit a cigarette that tasted like a plumber's handkerchief He fought like a tiger

Fresh images and simple vocabulary

Description

ON WRITING

STEPHEN KING

Reader becomes "sensory participant"

"How much to see" rather than just "how-to"

Reading -> how much Writing -> how

Begins: Visualization of what writer wants reader to experience

Ends: Translating from mind to words

Thin description -> reader feels nearsighted Overdescription -> buries reader in deatails

Know what should be described and what should be left

Description begins in writer's imaginations, but ends in reader's

Few well-chosen details that stand for everything else usually first to come to mind

It's not about the setting, it's about the story. Good de-

scription will aid the narrative.

"If the reader wants to know more about Palm Too than can be found above, he or she can either visit the next time he or she is in New York, or send for a brochure."

I don't like how he attaches his description to the real world while knocking overdescription. A main aspect of reading a novel is escaping the real world and experiencing something completely new. Something fantasy-based, such as Harry Potter, needs more description to bring it to life. Or look at Michel Butor, George Orwell or Graham Greene's novels, where nothing much happens, but the description is what keeps the reader interested. Sometimes thick description can aid a narrative, depending on the type of narrative and purpose of description.

Turn down

THIS IS HOW TO GET GOING

THIS IS HOW TO CRAFT AND EDIT

HOW DO I WRITE THIS ESSAY?

HOW TO WRITE WELL

STRUNK & WHITE THE ELEMENTS OF STYLE

Chose a suitable design

Writing should follow thoughts of writer, but not necessarily in order in which thoughts occur

Need undelying structural design

Planning must occur before writing

"...foresee or determine the shape of what is to come and pursue that shape"

compositon should have a skeleton; writer then brings flesh and blood

Paragraph is unit of composition

Any length

After writing one praragraph, examine to see if it should be divided

Treat each topic in different paragraph to aid reader

Each new paragraph signals new development

Moderation and sense of order are main considerations

Use active voice

More direct, vigorous, and concise

Sometimes passive voice is useful

"Dead leaves covered the ground"

 "There were a great number of dead leaves lying on the ground

Summaries

Keep to one tense

Reduce "he said" expressions; state only at the beginning

Aim for discussion with evidence, not summary with occa-

sional comment

Statements in positive form

Make definite assertions

• "She thought the study of Latin was a waste of time."

• "She did not think that studying Latin was a sensible way to use one's time"

Reader wants to be told what is, not what is not

forgot

did not remember

Negative + positive in oppostion = strong structure

Not charity, but simple justice.

Never > not

Will > would, should, could, can, may, might - unless situation involves real uncertainty

Use definite language

Specific > general Concrete > abstract Definite > vague

Allows for words to call up pictures

Give significant details accurately

Especially important when dealing with general ideas - give examples of application

Omit needless words

whether the question as to whether

because

the reason why is that

which was

the fact that who is

MORE ON PARAGRAPH COMPOSITION

Avoid sucession of loose sentences

Tips

"...say what you see, and then

Reader can imagine charac-

Don't need to write detailed

ter faces, clothing, builds.

descriptions for these.

get on with your story"

Read a lot and write alot

Learn by doing

Loose sentences - containing 2 clauses with conjuntions or relatives

Occasional loose sentence is good -> prevents too much formality

Express coordinate ideas in similar form

Parallel construction

Expressions with similar content should be written in similar form

Place articles or preopositions in a series either before each term or before the first term

 His speech was marked by disagreement with and scorn for his opponent's position.

position.

Position of words show relationship

Poorly placed -> confusion and ambiguity

Sometimes interruption is good if suspense is wanted

Toni Morrison, in Beloved, writes about...

Words writer wants to make prominent should go at end of sen-

graph in composition

(and, but, who, which, when, where, while)

When prepositions are different, include them separately

His speech was marked y disagreement and scorn for his opponent's

Keep related words together

In Beloved, Toni Morrison writes about...

Placing emphatic words

tence (or very beginning if it is not the subject alone)

New element is prominent -- periodic sentences

Applies for words in sentence, sentence in paragraph, and para-

EXAMPLE OF WHEN

SUSPENSE IS WANTED

good

bad