

# **Writing 2101F (530)**

## **Introduction to Expository Writing**

**Lisa Macklem**  
**January 11, 2021**



# Today's class

- Introduction
- Syllabus
- Writing Purposes
- Audience



“Don’t be shy about speaking up.  
Have company when you do so,  
so that you’re not a lone voice.”

~Ruth Bader Ginsberg~

# Brescia University College

## Writing 2101F – Introduction to Expository Writing Section 530 – Summer 2021

Wednesdays: 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
Room: Synchronous Lectures via Zoom

Instructor: Lisa Macklem

Office: Via Zoom  
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
Other times by appointment

### Course Description

An introduction to the basic principles and techniques of good writing. The course will emphasize practical work and the development of writing skills for a variety of subjects and disciplines.

### Course Outcomes and Brescia Competencies

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- Avoid common grammar and style errors to ensure that writing is as easy to read as possible and appropriate to the target audience (Communication)
- Adopt genre conventions for various types of writing (Communication)
- Develop logical writing supported by quality academic research and critical thinking (Critical Thinking; Inquiry & Analysis; Problem Solving)
- Plan and structure writing to enhance its maximum impact and ensure major points are compelling (Communication; Problem Solving; Critical Thinking; Inquiry & Analysis)
- Present scholarly research in a variety of styles and draw on a variety of academic sources (Communication; Social Awareness & Engagement; Valuing)
- Construct useful feedback on writing by peers and deliver constructive criticisms that lead to measureable improvement (Communication; Critical Thinking; Inquiry & Analysis; Problem Solving; Self Awareness & Development)

## **Class Organization**

Each class will include a mix of lectures, practice activities and active learning activities. You must come to class ready to participate, having read the assigned readings and after downloading required materials from OWL.

Slides and additional materials will be posted to the class OWL website.

## **Course Materials**

### *Required Text:*

Faigley, Lester, Roger Graves and Heather Graves. The Brief Pearson Handbook. 4<sup>th</sup> Cdn. Ed. Don Mills, ON: Pearson, 2017. (Available in the Western Bookstore)

### *Weekly Readings:*

Rather than ask you to purchase a separate reading text, weekly readings will be available to download through the course site on OWL. In order to keep the readings interesting and relevant, they will be posted as the semester progresses. Students are responsible for checking OWL regularly to stay informed about the readings for class. Readings will be short and relevant for discussion or as examples of writing.

# Assignments and Evaluations

Assignment	Value	Due Date
Short Essay	15%	May 26
Essay 2 Proposal	10%	June 9
Annotated Bibliography	10%	June 23
Quizzes & Exercises	15%	Weekly - Online
Peer Review	10%	July 14
Essay 2	40%	July 21

# Attendance and Participation

This course has a very strong practical aspect that requires students to attend each class.

## **Due Dates**

- Late assignments will be penalized at 2% per day (weekends included) to a maximum of two weeks, unless approved accommodation is granted. If you need accommodation, please contact your Academic Advisor at the earliest opportunity. If you are struggling with an assignment, let me know right away. You can also seek help with the Brescia Writing Centre.

## **Submissions**

- All assignments must be submitted no later than the start of class on the due date, unless otherwise specified. Submissions must be in word and uploaded to the Assignments page of Owl. Specific guidelines will be provided with each assignment as to the expected format for that assignment. All assignments will be posted on OWL.

**Remember to keep a copy of your work!**



## **Statement on Academic Offences**

Please consult the Brescia Academic Policies and Regulations. Academic integrity is expected and plagiarism will not be tolerated.

## **Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

Students are expected to refrain from inappropriate use of technology in the class. This does not extend to actively searching for material pertinent to an active discussion. Cell phones should be silenced



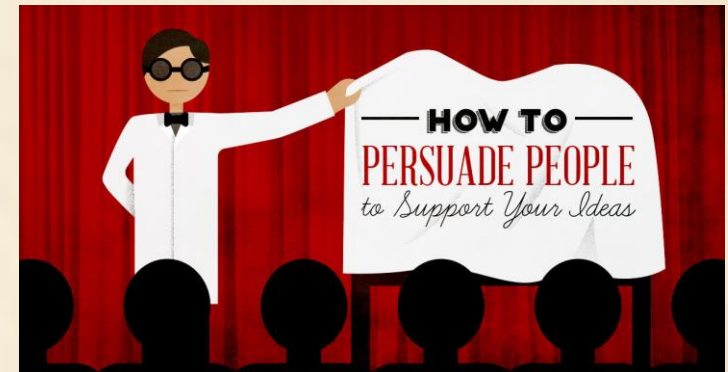
# Purpose



## Inform




## Persuade



## Entertain




# What two things do you need to know before beginning to write?

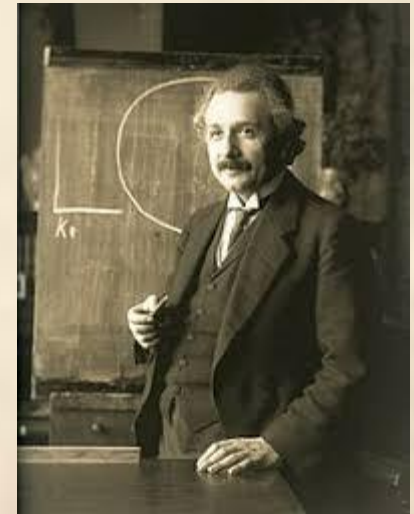
 What are you writing?

 Purpose?



 Who are you writing for?

 Audience?




# What do you need to know about your audience?

 Age


 Gender

 Education level

 Sexual orientation


 Religious orientation

 Racial/ethnic background

 Occupation

 Social class

 Politics

 Geographical region

 Marital status

 Expectations

 Needs

# Choosing words...

Diction: How you say or express something

Whoever is reading or listening should understand on a first pass

Register = level of diction

 Familiar = very close relationship between writer, audience, topic

 Informal = close relationship between writer and audience

 Formal = some distance between writer/audience

 Ceremonial = language of ceremony or ritual



# Formal Register

- ✍ For academic, business, professional
- ✍ No colloquialisms
- ✍ No slang
- ✍ No contractions or abbreviations\*\*
- ✍ Attention to grammatical rules and correctness





# Choose words carefully...

Diction = How you say or express something

Connotation = what the word suggests

Denotation = the dictionary meaning



# Connotation

*The connotations of words will be different for different groups.*



1. sensitive, touchy, tender, thin-skinned, impressionable
2. Carefree exuberant, light-hearted, frivolous, rash, high-spirited, riotous, animated, reckless, joyful
3. Smell, odour, fragrance, stink, aroma, scent, stench, whiff, perfume
4. Flexible, yielding, wishy-washy, adaptable, tolerant, indulgent, undemanding, weak, submissive
5. Alone, lonely, single, solitary, individual, deserted, independent, isolated, unique



# Make words work for you...

The author \_\_\_\_\_ that the world is round.

Claims, says, states, complains, asserts, explains, thinks, believes, writes

Avoid:

Perhaps, maybe, could



# Exercise

Answer the question: Where do babies come from?



One short paragraph each for three distinct audiences:

1. A young child
2. Your spiritual advisor
3. Your doctor



# Language Sensitivity

## **Why Bother?**

-  Presumably writing to have someone read it – don't inadvertently turn the reader/audience against you
-  Changing language can bring about a change in society

# Writing about...

People with disabilities

People of different ages

People of different genders

People of different religions

Recognize idioms

Canadian vs International ways of expression

# Stereotypes & Assumptions

- Watch for generalizations
- Don't exclude groups





Be accurate



**INCONCIEVABLE**

I do not think it means what you think it means.

# Be concise

1. Eliminate Redundancy
2. Avoid Unnecessary Repetition





# Be Concise

3. Cut inflated phrases

4. Simplify – don't smother with adjectives



# Word Choice

1. Use concrete, specific, and clearly specified terms.
2. Variety! Don't always use the same words.

The old man drove his old car across the old bridge.



# Appropriate Language

1. Jargon: Special vocabulary of a trade or profession, enabling members to speak & write concisely, but not widely understood
2. Neologism: New words not yet in the dictionary
3. Pretentious/Pompous language: Inflated language – “baffle with baloney!”
4. Doublespeak: use of language to hide or distort the truth in the interest of the speaker or the writer





# Appropriate Language...

5. Euphemism: Making something sound pleasant

6. Slang

7. Colloquial



8. Cliché: A general term that has lost its freshness and vigor through over use

# Appropriate Language

## 9. Recognize and avoid idioms



An expression that doesn't exactly mean what the words say.



Example:

She spilled the beans.

(she talked too much and told the secret)

Canadian vs International ways of expression

# IDIOMS

Two heads are much better than one!



I've been on cloud nine all day!

When my dad found out, he blew his top!



I believe I have a lemon on my hands.

Something fishy is going on around here!



John is one of those fair weather friends.

We were just shooting the breeze for awhile.



Why don't you just zip your lip, buddy?

The class is going to have to be all ears today.



That poor guy is all washed up!





# Passive vs Active Voice

- Use the active, eliminate the passive whenever possible
- Active is more concise and creates a picture
- Makes your writing stronger and more immediate





# How to recognize the Passive Voice

1. Verb is usually more than one word
  2. Form of “to be” added\*
  3. Subject is receiving the action, not doing it
- \*Pro-tip? Don't just remove all the “to be” verbs...



# More examples...

1. The ball was thrown by Jack.
2. The entire operation was managed by Ahmed, the producer.
3. The bar exam was passed by Julia on her first attempt.

# More “voice lessons”



## Subjective Voice

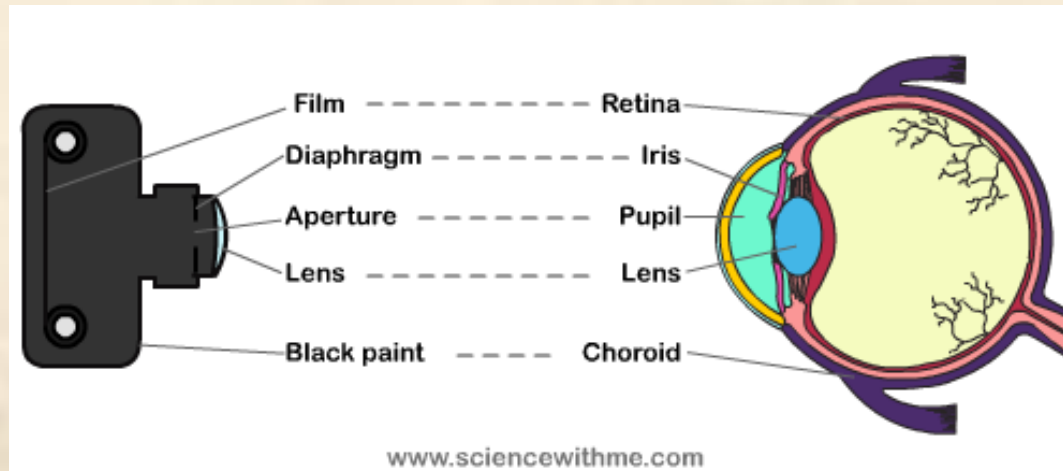
- ~ “I” = opinion
- ~ Don’t use in a formal essay/formal diction
- ~diminishes your argument

## Apologetic Voice

- ~ Start by apologizing (Don’t do it!)
- ~AVOID like the plague!
- ~ really diminishes your argument

# Figures of Speech

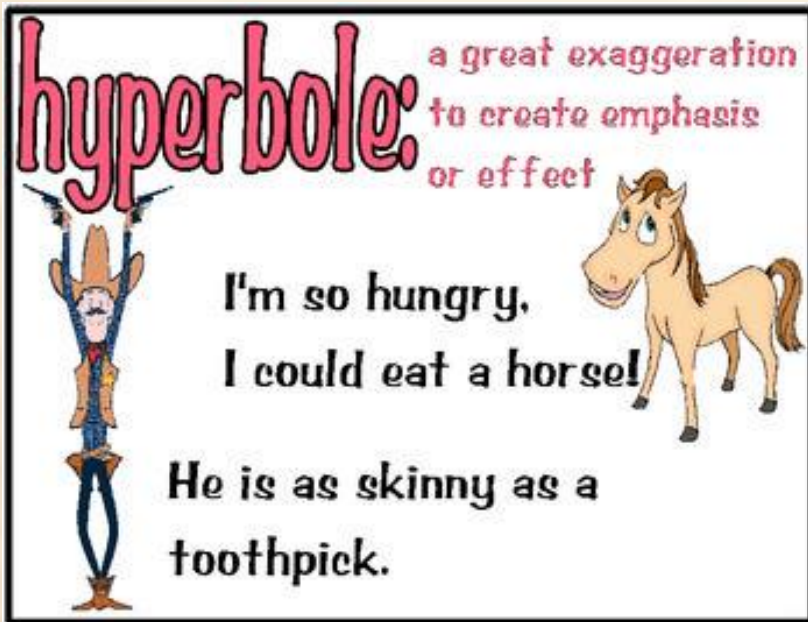
1. Simile: Comparison using “like” or “as”
2. Metaphor: A comparison without “like” or “as”
3. Analogy: comparison of similar feature of two dissimilar things



4. Hyperbole: Exaggeration for emphasis

5. Litotes: Understatement for emphasis

6. Irony: language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect.



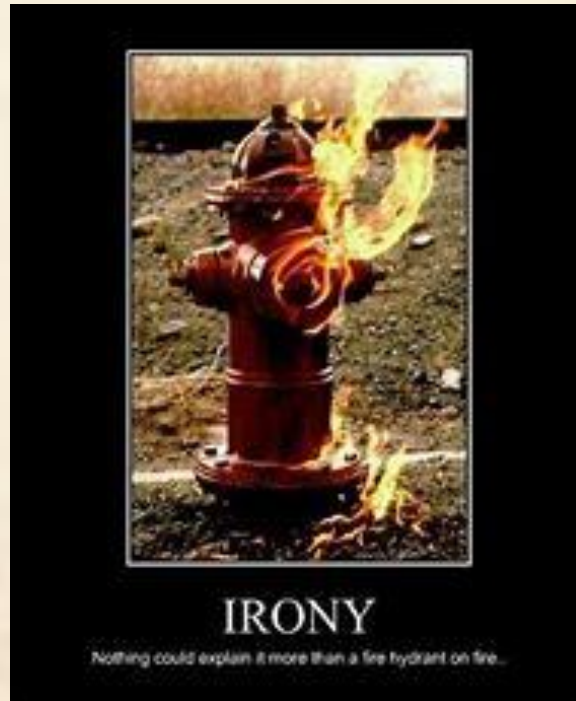
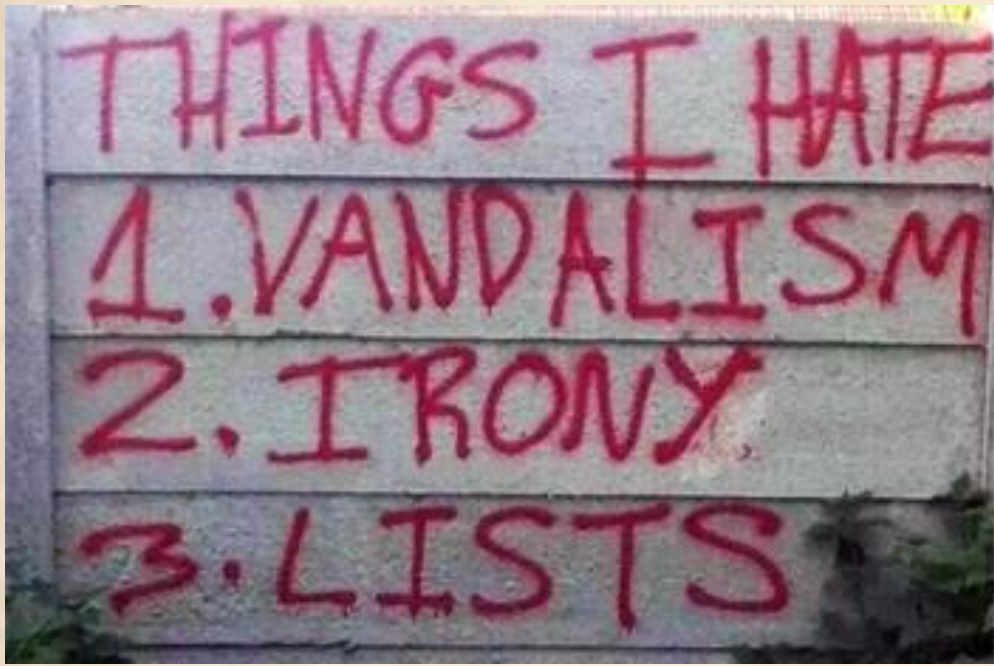


# Irony

Situational Irony - When the actual result is different from what's expected.

Verbal Irony - When what is said is the opposite of what is meant.

Dramatic Irony - When the audience knows something the other characters don't know.



## Dramatic Irony Example



For some reason, nobody could tell that Clark Kent and Superman are the same person. The cape and no glasses change his identity.



7. Alliteration: the repetition of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

8. Personification: the attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something nonhuman, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form.

## Alliteration

The use of the same beginning consonant sound in a line or verse.

Example:

Peter Piper picked a  
peck of pickled peppers.



## 9. Onomatopoeia

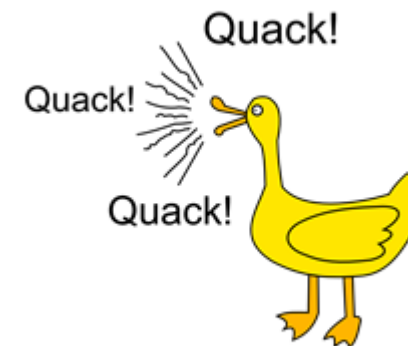
# Onomatopoeia

A word that sounds like the  
noise it makes

The dog knocked  
over the vase with  
a *crash*!



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# Watch for Mixed Metaphors

“a combination of two or more incompatible metaphors, which produces a ridiculous effect (e.g., this tower of strength will forge ahead ).”

