

Lee Brandon
Kelly Brandon

Paragraphs and Essays with Integrated Readings

13TH Edition

The Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing



The ten elements in the acronyms CLUESS and CGPS are essential for effective revising and editing. They can guide you in all writing situations and in reflecting on the results of that writing. The two acronyms can also provide a framework and foundation for peer editing, cooperative projects, and student–instructor conferences.

The boxes in these Brandon Guide charts can be used to support those objectives. One purpose is to initial, or check, boxes as you work on an assignment, making sure you are not overlooking some important aspect of revising and editing. Later, drawing especially from your instructor’s comments on your work, you can pencil in relevant information, such as the matters that need attention and their location in this book.

Completing the boxes will provide you with a history of your progress as a writer and give you a sense of deserved confidence through documented accomplishment.

CLUESS

Revising Chart

Coherence

Language

Unity

Emphasis

Support

Sentences

CGPS

Editing Chart

Capitalization

Grammar

Punctuation

Spelling

The Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing

Revise with **CLUES** (pronounced as “clues” for easy memorization).

Coherence: Connect your ideas.

- Are the ideas clearly related?
- Is there a clear pattern of organization (time, space, or emphasis)?
- Is the pattern supported by words that suggest the basis of that organization (time: *now, then, later*; space: *above, below, up, down*; emphasis: *first, second, last*)?
- Is coherence improved by the use of transitional terms, pronouns, repetition, and a consistent point of view?

Language: Use words appropriate for your purpose and audience.

- Is the general style of language usage appropriate (formal or informal) for the purpose and the intended audience?
- Is the tone (language use showing attitude toward material and audience) appropriate?
- Is the word choice (diction) effective? Are the words precise in conveying meaning? Are they fresh and not overused?

Unity: Stay on your topic.

- Are the thesis and every topic sentence clear and well stated? Do they indicate both subject and focus?
- Are all points of support clearly related to and subordinate to the topic sentence of each paragraph and to the thesis of the essay?

Emphasis: Call attention to your important ideas.

- Are ideas properly placed (especially near the beginning and end) for emphasis?
- Are important words and phrases repeated for emphasis?
- Are there short sentences among long ones to attract attention?

Support: Back up your controlling ideas with evidence and logic.

- Is there adequate material—such as examples, details, quotations, and explanations—to support each topic sentence and thesis?
- Are the points of support placed in the best possible order?

Sentences: Write correct, effective sentences with structural variety.

- Are the sentences varied in length? Are the beginnings of the sentences varied?
- Are the sentences varied in pattern (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex)?

Edit with **CGPS** (pronounced as “see GPS” for easy memorization).

Capitalization

Grammar

Punctuation

Spelling



Writing Process Worksheet

Name _____ Title _____ Due Date _____

Use the back of this page or separate paper if you need more space.

Assignment

In the space below, write whatever you need to know about your assignment, including information about the topic, audience, pattern of writing, length, whether to include a rough draft or revised drafts, and whether your paper must be typed.

Stage One

Explore Freewrite, brainstorm (list), cluster, or take notes as directed by your instructor.

Stage Two

Organize Write a topic sentence or thesis; label the subject and focus parts.

Write an outline or an outline alternative. For reading-based writing, include references and short quotations with page numbers as support in the outline.

Stage Three

Write On separate paper, write and then revise your paragraph or essay as many times as necessary for coherence, language (usage, tone, and diction), unity, emphasis, support, and sentences (**CLU ESS**). Read your work aloud to hear and correct any grammatical errors or awkward-sounding sentences.

Edit any problems in fundamentals, such as capitalization, grammar, punctuation, and spelling (**CGPS**).

Thirteenth Edition

Paragraphs and Essays

With Integrated Readings

Lee Brandon

Kelly Brandon



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***Paragraphs and Essays with Integrated
Readings, Thirteenth Edition***

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Production Service: Cenveo® Publisher
Services

Compositor: Cenveo® Publisher Services

Text Designer: Cenveo® Publisher Services

Cover Designer: Wing-Ip Ngan, Ink Design, Inc.

Cover Image: 145 Wilfried Krecichwost/
Ocean/Corbis

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WCN: 02-300

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2015949967

Student Edition:

ISBN: 978-1-305-65418-1

Loose-leaf Edition:

ISBN: 978-1-305-86593-8

Cengage Learning

20 Channel Center Street
Boston, MA 02210
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Preface



Developed especially for English writing courses one level below freshman composition, *Paragraphs and Essays* has thrived as a textbook since 1968. Its success derives from its emphasis on relentless revision with rigorous editing, integrated reading and writing, fresh and vibrant reading selections, friendly style, and innovative instruction.

Paragraphs and Essays with Integrated Readings, Thirteenth Edition

THE BRANDON BRIDGE

The flexible, adaptable writing strategies and devices described in *Paragraphs and Essays with Integrated Readings* coalesce into a unit of coordinated principles that collectively help students produce well-written statements. These strategies and devices, in essence, serve as a bridge to effective writing. The thirteenth edition features a new icon—the Brandon Bridge—to highlight the five essential features of this transformative instruction: The Writing Process Worksheet, The Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing, The Top 25 Editing Errors, Reading-Based Writing, and Career-Related Writing.

FEATURE ONE: THE WRITING PROCESS WORKSHEET

This form, which walks students through the stages of the writing process, appears on the back of the insert at the front of *Paragraphs and Essays*, on the Instructor Companion Site in Microsoft Word form, and on the Student Companion Site in PDF form. The early chapters of *Paragraphs and Essays* discuss the form in detail, and annotated student examples appear throughout the text. You can ask your students to print or copy the form, or you can download a copy from the Instructor Companion Site and customize it to fit your teaching needs.

FEATURE TWO: THE BRANDON GUIDE FOR REVISING AND EDITING

The Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing includes two acronyms for students to apply in writing and rewriting their paragraphs and essays. The acronym **CLUES**, pronounced *clues* (Coherence, Language, Unity, Emphasis, Support, and Sentences), and the acronym **CGPS**, pronounced *see GPS* (Capitalization, Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling) comprise a comprehensive list of ten of the most important elements in revising and editing. Memorizing the acronyms

and instilling the principles associated with them into the student's intuitive, or automatic, approach to revising and editing are the prime objectives of this feature.

Students work with the paragraph-long, mode-specific exercises located at the end of each of the nine chapters devoted to patterns of writing; apply the elements of the Brandon Guide to their writing; and complete the revising, editing, and correction charts that appear on the inside covers and on the companion sites. Students note problems and progress on the Revising and Editing Charts by using abbreviations and symbols from the Correction Chart. Using the charts enables students to review a history of their progress and guides their work on future assignments. The Brandon Guide to Revising and Editing can also be adapted for use as a rubric for in-class peer editing, for cooperative writing activities, and for instructor use.

FEATURE THREE: THE TOP 25 EDITING ERRORS

The Top 25 Editing Errors provides a systematic approach to eradicating twenty-five of the most commonly marked errors on student papers. The Top 25 list, which appears at the beginning of the Handbook chapter, was compiled by a panel of nine veteran instructors at three large community colleges. This feature is supported by ten easily administered, optional exercises. Answers appear in the Annotated Instructor's Edition and in the Instructor's Resource Manual.

FEATURE FOUR: READING-BASED WRITING

Reading-based writing moves students beyond personal narratives to more analytical expression as they write about what they read. Reading-based writing provides substance for compositions and promotes critical thinking. Students engaged in reading-based writing transition more smoothly into English composition and function better in courses across the curriculum.

The typical reading-based writing assignments in *Paragraphs and Essays* require students to read a source, write an analytical reply, and give credit to the originator(s) for borrowed words and ideas. Specific reading-based writing assignments include summaries, reactions, and two-part responses designed to teach students the difference between summaries and reactions. Annotated examples of the three different kinds of reading-based writing appear throughout the book.

FEATURE FIVE: CAREER-RELATED WRITING

This edition includes five chapters with specific examples of patterns of writing used in the workplace:

- 7:** Descriptive narration becomes an incident report
- 9:** Analysis by division becomes a career review
- 10:** Process analysis becomes a set of directions at a workplace
- 13:** Comparison and contrast becomes a product, performance, or process evaluation
- 15:** Argument becomes a workplace proposal

OTHER FEATURES IN PARAGRAPHS AND ESSAYS

- A detailed statement on the first page of Chapters 7 through 15 explains how the featured pattern can be used in cross-curricular, career-related, and workplace writing.
- Fourteen reading selections are new to this edition, including several that are anthologized for the first time in a textbook.
- All readings were selected for cultural and gender balance.
- A restaurant review is used as a model form of analysis by division.
- Nine cartoons amuse while demonstrating patterns of thought.
- A short story highlights cause and effect in human behavior.
- Many suggested writing topics are provided. They include an abundance of reading-based writing topics phrased as prompts, and additional writing topics and prompts grouped as general, cross-curricular, and career-related.
- An ESL unit included in the text provides definitions, rules, and reference that are of special help to writers who are learning English as a second language.

DISTRIBUTION AND PLACEMENT OF CONTENTS IN BRIEF

PART 1 The Writing Process

- Stages of writing: exploring, organizing, writing
- Revising and editing: the Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing, and the Top 25 Editing Errors
- Paragraphs and essays
- Demonstrations, exercises, assignments

PART 2 Linking Reading and Writing

- Reading techniques: underlining, annotating, outlining, taking notes
- Reading-based writing (the major form of text-based writing): summary, reaction, two-part response
- Giving credit for ideas and quotations: basic documentation
- Demonstrations, exercises, assignments

PART 3 Writing Paragraphs and Essays: Instruction, with Integrated Reading Selections

- Forms of discourse: descriptive narration, exemplification, analysis by division, process analysis, cause and effect, classification, comparison and contrast, definition, argument; with recognition that a single form often provides structure for paragraphs and essays but almost never occurs without the presence of other forms
- Examples of career-related writing, with instruction on writing for the workplace
- The nine chapters devoted to patterns of writing have identical formats: functional cartoons, writing instruction, an exercise in finding patterns in photos, two exercises in practicing patterns, model paragraphs and essays by student and professional writers, a student example of writing in stages, a student example of reading-based writing, writing prompts and topics (reading-based, general, cross-curricular, career-related), and a chapter summary

PART 4 Using Sources

- Finding and evaluating sources
- Documenting sources
- Writing a short research paper in ten steps
- Demonstrations and exercises

PART 5 Handbook

- Top 25 Editing Errors
- Rules for Top 25 Editing Errors
- Nine exercises for Top 25 Editing Errors
- Sentence elements
- Sentence patterns
- Sentence combining
- Sentence rhetoric
- Diction
- Punctuation
- Spelling
- ESL instruction

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Aplia

Aplia™ is interactive homework that helps students master the concepts that matter most. It includes dynamic instruction that helps them achieve success and transfer newfound skills to other classes and beyond. Each comprehensive Aplia problem set corresponds to a chapter in the textbook, allowing students to practice the skills they've just learned in a real-world context. The Aplia course for *Paragraphs and Essays* prominently features CLUESS and CGPS revision and editing processes. Scaffolded questions guide students from easily understandable topics to more complicated ideas, and a variety of question types keep the problems fresh and engaging.

Aplia's Grade It Now technology allows students to take multiple unique attempts of specific exercises to help reinforce concepts. Through Aplia's user-friendly grading and performance interface, you are able to quickly and easily track both individual and class-wide student performance, as well as generate and download detailed reports about your students.

The Aplia Diagnostic Assessment identifies specific strengths and weaknesses, allowing students to focus on the concepts that they most need to address. Students work through concepts step-by-step, first practicing the fundamentals and, then, targeting critical thinking skills that ask them to demonstrate their understanding in context.

MindTap

The MindTap course is a fully online, highly personalized learning experience built upon *Paragraphs and Essays*. MindTap combines student learning tools—

an interactive e-book, additional readings, prebuilt flashcards, activities, assessments, and more—into a singular learning path that guides students through their course. Instructors can personalize the experience by customizing authoritative Cengage Learning content and learning tools with their own content in the Learning Path via apps that integrate into the MindTap framework. Engaging assignments powered by Aplia reinforce key concepts and provide students with the practice they need to build fundamental writing and grammar skills.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

The Annotated Instructor Edition contains immediate answers and teaching tips for exercises and activities. The Instructor's Guide is located on the Instructor Companion Site, accessed at login.cengage.com.

Instructor's Guide

- Tips for new instructors on how to approach the text
- Sample syllabi with suggestions for adaptations for different pedagogies and course lengths
- Answer key to the ten exercises for the Top 25 Editing Errors
- List of readings that are especially effective for reading-based writing
- Reproducible sentence-writing quizzes and answers covering instruction in the Handbook chapter
- Reproducible quizzes on selected readings from Part 3
- Suggestions for effective and time-saving approaches to instruction
- Suggestions for English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction
- Suggestions for teaching basic writers

Instructor Companion Site

The Instructor Companion Site includes these items: A Transition Guide to specify the changes from the previous edition, PowerPoint slides, Instructor's Guide, APA Guide, MLA Guide, Writing Process Worksheet in Word and PDF, Charts page for the Brandon Guide to Revising and Editing, and answers to the nine exercises for the Top 25 Editing Errors.

Student Overview

“Every sentence, paragraph, and essay begins with a single word.”

—A VARIATION ON A FAMILIAR SAYING (LEE BRANDON)

Connecting Thoughts with Written Statements



You will see this bridge icon frequently in *Paragraphs and Essays* because, like any other bridge, this book connects things. As with a well-functioning bridge linking the banks of a mighty river, this book attempts to provide the principles for connecting thoughts with successful written statements. As, in an engineering sense, there are many kinds of bridges to serve many needs, in writing there are many kinds of bridges for converting thoughts to statements. The photo on the cover of this book depicts a simple floating footbridge in the Mekong River delta in Vietnam. Without doubt, that bridge serves its practical purpose well. It is what it needs to be—and probably more, especially if you have a rich imagination and see beauty in the bridge’s colors, textures, and shapes and are inclined to envision lively village folk creatively engaged in the bridge’s construction and use. Much of the same can be said literally and often figuratively and about different needs and circumstances for written expression.

This instruction concerns itself with ways to communicate correctly and effectively in written statements. Some observers will tell you that to become a better

writer you should practice writing—just sit down and write. Others will say that to become a better writer you should study the principles of writing.

Each view is a half-truth. If you practice without having the knowledge or understanding of the principles of writing correctly and effectively, you'll likely get better only within your own limitations. Moreover, if you practice bad habits, they are likely to become more ingrained and therefore more difficult to correct. For example, in musical performance, if you play the piano with only two fingers, you may learn to play a great “Chopsticks,” but Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” may remain well beyond your artistic reach. The same can be said about practicing writing without your knowing, or somehow understanding, the principles of writing well. Of course, if you know the principles of writing well and you do not practice them, the principles will probably not become a functional part of your skills.

The solution is in your hands. You are now gazing at instruction with a well-balanced approach, one that combines sound principles with ample writing practice. The sound-principle part of writing will come from instruction in this text and from your professor’s teaching. The degree of application of the techniques will be your responsibility.

The Three Core Features in the Brandon Bridge

These three features comprise the core instruction in this book:

1. The Brandon Guide for Revising and Editing (with a Self-Evaluation Chart)
2. The Writing Process Worksheet
3. The Top 25 Editing Errors

These core features are collectively comprehensive and, by nature and design, coordinated so they can almost always be used together. Flexible in their principles, they can be used in all college writing assignments.

THE BRANDON GUIDE FOR REVISING AND EDITING

This first feature is introduced in the form of two acronyms:

- **CLUES S** (pronounced “clues” for easy memorization) represents Coherence, Language, Unity, Emphasis, Support, and Sentences for revision, and
- **CGPS** (pronounced “see GPS”) represents Capitalization, Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling for editing.

These ten key elements in the acronyms are essential for effective revising and editing. The two acronyms can provide a foundation for self-evaluation and a framework for peer editing, cooperative projects, and student–instructor conferences.

Self-Evaluation Chart for the Brandon Guide

Just inside the front cover, you will see the Self-Evaluation Chart for you to record problems and progress in revising and editing as you apply the Brandon Guide directly to your writing. On the facing page, you’ll see an illustrated list of the elements of the acronyms: **CLUES S** and **CGPS**.

- Drawing especially on your instructor's comments on your work, you can use the chart to pencil in matters that need your attention, as well as their location in this book.
- For page numbers of solutions to common writing problems, see the Index at the end of the book.
- As you master a persistent problem, you can place a checkmark, or perhaps a star, alongside it to note an accomplished step in learning to write well.
- Recording notes in the columns will provide you with a history of your progress as a writer.
- If you need more writing space, go to www.cengagebrain.com for a printable copy.

Here is a partially completed Self-Evaluation Chart with some brief guidelines for filling out your chart.

CLUES

Revising Chart

Cohere**n**ce

Use transitions, p. 29

Languag**e**

No overused words, pp. 32–33

Un**i**ty

Topic sentence, pp. 33–34

Emph**a**sis

Repeat key words, pp. 34–35

Supp**o**rt

Use examples, pp. 35–37

Sen**t**ences

Vary sentence beginning, p. 38

CGPS

Editing Chart

Cap**i**talization

I'm studying biology, English, and math. pp. 39–41

Gram**m**ar

Pronoun case: between you and me. pp. 41–43

Punctu**a**tion

After she left, I cried. pp. 43–45

Spell**i**ng

It's or its? There or their? Recieve or receive? p. 45

THE WRITING PROCESS WORKSHEET

You will find the Writing Process Worksheet on the back of the insert page at the front of this book. As directed by your instructor, print out a copy of the worksheet (available at www.cengagebrain.com) and record details about each of your assignments, such as the due date, topic, audience, length, and form. Using the worksheet will remind you not to overlook key parts of the stages of the writing process (Explore, Organize, and Write), thereby empowering you to take greater responsibility for the quality of your work.

THE TOP 25 EDITING ERRORS

This book contains a special feature called the Top 25 Editing Errors. A panel of nine veteran English instructors from three colleges contributed to the list, which appears at the beginning of the Handbook chapter. It contains the errors most frequently marked on student papers, along with remedies for those errors. Take a look at that section. If any of the items are head-scratchers for you, it would be worthwhile for you to study the entire unit with care.

General Study Tips

- 1. Be active and systematic in learning.** Take advantage of your instructor's expertise by being an active participant in class—one who takes notes, asks questions, and contributes to discussion.

Become dedicated to systematic learning: determine your needs, decide what to do, and do it. Make learning a part of your everyday thinking and behavior.

- 2. Read widely.** Samuel Johnson, a great English scholar, once said he didn't want to read anything by people who had written more than they had read. William Faulkner, a Nobel Prize winner in literature, said, "Read, read, read. Read everything—trash, classics, good and bad, and see how writers do it." Read to learn technique, to acquire ideas, to be stimulated to write. Especially read to satisfy your curiosity and receive pleasure. If reading is a main component of your course, approach it as systematically as you do writing. Reading-based writing will offer you opportunities to polish your critical-thinking skills as you compose responses to what you read, much as you do in classes across the curriculum.
- 3. Keep a journal.** Keeping a journal may not be required in your particular class; regardless of whether it is required, though, jotting down your observations in a notebook is a good idea. Here are some ideas for daily, or almost daily, journal writing:
 - Summarize, evaluate, or react to reading assignments.
 - Summarize, evaluate, or react to what you see on television and in movies, and to what you read in newspapers, magazines, or online.
 - Describe and narrate situations or events you experience.

- Write about career-related matters you encounter in other courses or on the job.

Your journal entries may read like an intellectual diary, a record of what you are thinking about at certain times. Mainly, keeping a journal will help you understand reading material better, develop more language skills, and think more clearly—as well as become more confident so that you can write more easily. Your entries may also provide subject material for longer, more carefully crafted pieces. Make writing a familiar everyday activity.

- 4. Be positive as you look forward.** At the end of this semester, look back to see specifically what you have mastered and checked off your list on your Self-Evaluation Chart. Recognizing your command of effective and correct writing skills will give you a much deserved sense of accomplishment as you look forward.

Best Wishes,
Lee Brandon
Kelly Brandon

PART 1

THE WRITING PROCESS

Think of writing as swimming. If you were a nonswimmer and you jumped into the water without instructions, at best you would swim awkwardly. At worst you would sink. You may face similar dilemmas in writing. If you choose the sink-or-swim method, hope for hidden talent or good luck. A better choice is the writing process, an approach that all writers use to some degree and with modifications for different writing situations. Whether you call it the flow of writing or the writing process, it is all here.



1

The Writing Process: Stage One

Exploring / Experimenting / Gathering Information

“ Ideas come from everything. ”

—ALFRED HITCHCOCK

CHAPTER CONTENTS



The Writing Process Defined
The Writing Process Worksheet
The Assignment
Your Audience in Personal, Academic, and Career-Related Writing
Stage One Strategies
Writer's Guidelines

The Writing Process Defined

The writing process consists of a set of strategies that will help you proceed from idea or purpose to the final statement of a paragraph or an essay. As presented here, the different strategies move from

Stage One: Exploring / Experimenting / Gathering Information
to

Stage Two: Writing the Controlling Idea / Organizing and Developing Support
to

Stage Three: Writing / Revising / Editing.

Altogether they represent what is called the **writing process**.

The process of writing is **recursive**, which means “going back and forth.” In this respect, writing is like reading. If you do not understand what you have read, you back up and read it again. After you reread the entire passage, you may still go back and reread selectively. The same can be said of your writing. If, for example, you have reached Stage Two and you are working with an outline only to discover that your subject is too broad, you may want to back up and narrow your topic sentence or thesis and then adjust your outline. You may even return to an early cluster of ideas to see how you can use a smaller grouping of them. Revising, in Stage Three, is usually the most recursive part of all. You will go over your material again and again until you are satisfied that you have expressed yourself the best you can.

The Writing Process Worksheet

The blank Writing Process Worksheet, with brief directions for the three stages of the writing process, is designed to be duplicated and completed with each major writing assignment. It gives you clear, consistent guidance and provides your instructor with an easy format for finding and checking information.

The Assignment

Particulars of the assignment, frequently the most neglected parts of a writing project, are often the most important. If you do not know, or later cannot recall, specifically what you are supposed to do, you cannot do satisfactory work. An otherwise excellent composition on a misunderstood assignment may get you a failing grade, a sad situation for both you and your instructor.

As an aid to recalling just what you should write about, the Writing Process Worksheet provides space and guidance for you to note these details: information about the topic, audience, pattern of writing, length of the paper, whether to include a rough draft or revised drafts, whether your paper must be typed, and the date the assignment is due.

At the time your instructor gives that information, it will probably be clear; a few days later, it may not be. By putting your notes on the assignment portion of the worksheet, you remind yourself of what you should do and also indicate to your instructor what you have done.

Your Audience in Personal, Academic, and Career-Related Writing

At the outset of your writing project, you should pause to imagine your likely readers: How much do they know about your topic and how are they related to it? What are their values? Is the purpose of your message mainly to inform, persuade, or entertain your audience? What is the social setting of your message—formal or informal? How well do you and your audience know each other? When you talk, you are likely, consciously or subconsciously, to take those matters into account. The result is that you talk differently to different people for different occasions and purposes. To some extent, you change your speech in tone, vocabulary, and content for family, friendship, work, classroom, party, and public address situations. If you do not acknowledge the immediate social setting you occupy, your communication will suffer. The same can be said of writing. From a casual text message to a close friend, to a thank you letter for a neighbor, to a research paper, to a formal letter of application for your dream job, you need to know your audience, as well as the occasion and purpose of your communication. Good language is what is appropriate language for anything within that range. It should change gracefully as you move through personal, academic, and career-related experiences.

Stage One Strategies

Certain strategies commonly grouped under the heading *prewriting* can help you get started and develop your ideas. These strategies—freewriting, brainstorming, clustering, and gathering information—are very much a part of writing. The understandable desire to skip to the finished statement is what causes the most common student-writer grief: that of not filling the blank sheet or of filling it but not significantly improving on the blankness. The prewriting strategies described in this section will help you attack the blank sheet constructively with imaginative thought, analysis, and experimentation. They can lead to clear, effective communication.

FREEWITING

Freewriting is an exercise that its originator, Peter Elbow, has called “babbling in print.” When you freewrite, you write without stopping, letting your ideas tumble forth. You do not concern yourself unduly with the fundamentals of writing, such as punctuation and spelling. Freewriting is an adventure into your memory and imagination. It is concerned with discovery, invention, and exploration. If you are at a loss for words on your subject, write in a comment such as “I do not know what is coming next” or “blah, blah, blah,” and continue when relevant words come. It is important to keep writing. Freewriting immediately eliminates the blank page and thereby helps you break through an emotional barrier, but that is not the only benefit. The words that you sort through in that idea kit will include some you can use. You can then underline or circle those words and even add notes on the side so that the freewriting continues to grow even after its initial spontaneous expression.

The way you proceed depends on the type of assignment: working with a topic of your choice, working from a restricted list of topics, or working with a prescribed topic.

The *topic of your choice* affords you the greatest freedom of exploration. You would probably select a subject that interests you and freewrite about it, allowing your mind to wander among the many parts of that subject, perhaps mixing fact and fantasy, direct experience, and hearsay. A freewriting about music might uncover areas of special interest and knowledge, such as jazz or folk rock, that you would want to pursue further in freewriting or other prewriting strategies.

Working from a *restricted list* requires a more focused freewriting. With the list, you can, of course, experiment with several topics to discover what is most suitable for you. If, for example, “career choice,” “career preparation,” “career guidance,” and “career prospects” are on the restricted list, and you are career-minded, you would probably select one of those topics and freewrite about it. If it works well for you, you would likely proceed with the next step of your prewriting. If you are not satisfied with what you uncover in freewriting, you would explore another item from the restricted list.

When working with a *prescribed topic*, you should focus on it and try to restrict your freewriting to its boundaries. If your topic specifies a division of a subject area, such as “political involvement of your generation,” then you would tie those key words to your own information and critical thinking. If the topic asks for, let’s say, your reactions to a specific poem, then that poem would give you the framework for your free associations with your own creativity, opinions, and store of experience.

You should learn to use freewriting because it will often serve you well, but you need not use it every time you write. Some very short writing assignments do not call for freewriting. An in-class assignment may not allow time for freewriting, and some writers will find freewriting more useful than others.

Nevertheless, freewriting may become a valuable strategy in your toolbox of techniques. See if it can help you get words on paper, break emotional barriers, generate topics, develop new insights, and explore ideas.

Freewriting can lead to other stages of prewriting and writing, and it can also provide content as you develop your topic.

The following example of freewriting, as well as other writing, revising, and editing examples, is from student Betsy Jackson’s work titled “If I Were a Traffic Cop.” She selected her topic, bad drivers, from a restricted list. If she had been working with a prescribed topic, she might have been told to concentrate on only one aspect of bad drivers, such as the need for driver education, the need for better laws, or the cost of bad driving. Then she would have done some research. However, she had no such limitation and, therefore, thought about bad drivers broadly in a personal context. After her freewriting, she went back over her work looking for an idea that might be limited enough to use as the basis for a paper. Here is what she wrote:

Just driving around on streets and freeways can be a scary experience because of all the bad drivers. Whenever I see them, sometimes I just laugh. Sometimes I get mad. Sometimes I get irritated. Sometimes I get scared. It’s not just the young drivers or the old drivers it’s all kinds. And all types of people no matter what the nationality or the types of vehicles they drive.

All kinds

Drunk drivers

If I were a cop

Tailgaters

Lane changers

Left turners on red

Too fast, too slow

Don't yield

Causes

Effect

Pickup drivers are worse as a group but bad drivers come in all kinds of vehicles. I think someone should do something about them. The worst are the drunk drivers. I don't see them in the morning. But I see them late at night when I'm driving home from work. They should be put away. But a lot of others should be getting serious tickets. Especially the bad ones. Make me a cop—a supercop—a Rambo cop and I'll go after the bad ones. Some of them cause a lot of accidents and get people all mad. Blah. Blah. Blah. Take tailgaters for example. And what about the drivers that go into the emergency lanes on the freeways to pass when there's a jam. And then you've got the lane changers that don't even give signals. And those that just keep going and turn left when the light turns red. Then you've got the ones that drive too fast and too slow. And you've got the ones that don't stop for pedestrians. Blah. Blah. Blah. I guess we all have our pet peeves about bad drivers and everyone would like to be a cop sometimes. I guess if you talked to them some would have reasons. Maybe they're late for work or they are mad about something. Or maybe there's an emergency. Whatever it is, I get concerned when they take my life in their hands.

After her freewriting session, Jackson examined what she had written for possible ideas to develop for a writing assignment. As she recognized those ideas, she underlined important words and phrases and made a few notes in the margins. By reading only the underlined words in her freewriting, you can understand what is important to Jackson; it was not necessary for her to underline whole sentences.

In addition to putting some words on that dreaded blank sheet of paper, Jackson discovered that she had quite a lot to say about drivers and that she had selected a favorable topic to develop. The entire process took no more than five minutes. Had she found only a few ideas or no promising ideas at all, she might have freewritten on another topic. Although in going back over her work she saw some errors, especially in wording and sentence structure, she did not correct them because the purpose of freewriting is discovery, not revising or editing. Jackson was confident that she could continue with the process of writing a paper as she followed her flow of thought.

EXERCISE 1 Freewriting

Try freewriting on a broad topic such as one of the following:

An event that was important to you in your youth

A concert, a movie, or a television program

The ways you use your computer

Drug use—causes, effects, a friend with a problem

Gang membership—causes, effects, an experience

The benefits of using social media

Ways of disciplining children

Why a person is a hero or role model to you

A great or terrible party

A bad or good day at school

Why a college education is important

Following the example in Jackson's freewriting, underline and annotate the phrases that may lead to ideas you could explore further.

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming features important words and phrases that relate in various ways to your subject area or your specific topic. Brainstorming includes two basic forms: (1) asking and answering questions and (2) listing. These two forms may overlap. For some assignments, writers go directly from listing to outlining or, occasionally, to the rough draft.

Big Six Questions

One effective way to get started is to ask the big six questions about your subject: *Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?* Then let your mind run free as you jot down answers in single entries or lists. Some of the big six questions may not fit, and some may be more important than others, depending on the purposes of your writing. For example, if you were writing about the causes of a situation, the *Why?* question could be more important than the others. If you were concerned with how to do something, the *How?* question would predominate. If you were writing in response to a reading selection, you would confine your thinking to questions appropriately related to the content of that reading selection.

Whatever your focus for the questions is, the result is likely to be numerous ideas that will provide information for continued exploration and development of your topic. Thus your pool of information for writing widens and deepens.

Jackson continued with the topic of bad drivers, and her topic tightened to focus on particular areas.

Who? Bad drivers; me as a cop
 What? Driving badly, recklessly, unsafely; a cop's job
 Where? On every roadway
 When? All the time

- Why? Hurried, disrespectful, self-centered, sick, addiction, hostile, irresponsible
- How? Lane-changing, driving illegally in emergency lane, not signaling, passing on the shoulder, tailgating, turning left on red, rolling stop, speeding, driving while intoxicated

Notice that each question is answered in this example, but with some topics some questions may not fit. As Jackson addressed the *Why?* and *How?* questions, her brainstorming produced long lists, suggesting that those areas were strong possibilities for the focus of her paper.

Listing

Simply making a list of words and phrases related to natural divisions of your topic is another effective way to brainstorm, especially if you have a defined topic and a storehouse of information. This strategy is favored by many writers. Being concerned with the bad behavior of drivers, Jackson could have settled on her list under *how*, circled three or four entries for a tentative framework for her short paper, and proceeded to consider each in more depth.

Knowing from the outset that she was concerned mainly with the behavior of drivers, Jackson might have gone directly to making a list indicating what drivers do or how they drive. She then might have selected perhaps four ideas from this list for her framework and circled them for future reference.

Changing lanes unsafely

Driving illegally in the emergency lane

Not signaling

Passing on the shoulder

Tailgating

Turning left on red

Turning right on red without stop

Rolling stop

Speeding

Driving too slow in fast lane

Driving while intoxicated

Driving with handheld cell phone for speaking or texting

Driving while reading road map

Driving a large truck in car lanes

Dumping trash from car

Even if you do not have a focused topic, you may find a somewhat random listing useful, merely writing phrases as they occur to you. This exploratory activity is similar to freewriting. After you have established such a list, you can sort and group the phrases as you generate your topic and find its natural divisions. Feel free to accept, reject, or insert phrases.