

Short Essay Writing Course Book

iCoToBa

愛知県立大学 iCoToBa (多言語学習センター)

Contents

Introduction	1
Lesson 1: Getting to Know Each Other	2
Lesson 2: The Question	4
Lesson 3: Planning	9
Lesson 4: Structure	12
Lesson 5: The Body	16
Lesson 6: Better Sentences	21
Lesson 7: The Conclusion.....	29
Lesson 8: Bringing it all Together	33
Lesson 9: Form & Punctuation.....	35
Lesson 10: Hedging	42
Lesson 11: Register	46
Lesson 12: Editing	49
Lesson 13: Feedback & Wrap-up	51
Appendices	52

Introduction

About the course

The Short Essay Writing course is operated through Aichi Prefectural University's multilingual learning centre (iCoToBa) as an extra-curricular class. The course is designed to help students to develop their critical thinking and English academic writing skills and gain practice composing short essays on a wide range of topics.

Rather than focusing on grammatical form, or on composition at the sentence level, this course seeks to help students to critically examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of a written piece as a whole. The course takes a process-writing approach, based on the three steps of pre-writing & planning, writing, and revision & editing. At the pre-writing level students share and develop ideas through brainstorming and discussion. They then draw up simple essay plans to help them focus and organise their ideas. After writing their essays, students draw on peer and teacher feedback as well as their own observations to redraft their essays.

Specifically, the course aims to help students to:

1. gain an understanding of appropriate composition structure
2. develop critical thinking skills and be able to write in a logical, well-argued manner
3. develop a process-writing habit including the ability to self-edit
4. become familiar with set phrases and vocabulary used in academic writing

About this book

This book is essentially a teacher's resource. It provides a comprehensive course, comprising thirteen lessons designed to be taught in the order in which they are provided. Each lesson plan includes a summary, objectives, a 90-minute lesson plan, and copiable class handouts. Additional teacher resources are listed in the appendices.

The course has been designed for use together with an in-house portfolio system, which allows submission and evaluation of written work online. All tasks can however be completed using regular e-mail and word processing software, or by manual typed or handwritten submissions.

All activities in this book were designed to be carried out in English. It may be beneficial in some instances however, to allow students to complete discussion or planning exercises in their native language.

Lesson 1: Getting to Know Each Other

This course will require students to work closely together to develop arguments and to peer-edit. It is essential then, to build good relationships and a comfortable class atmosphere in the early stages of the course. This introductory lesson aims to allow students to begin getting to know each other, and provides low-risk opportunities to begin actively using written and spoken English.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) get to know each other.
- 2) discuss expectations and goals.
- 3) understand schedule and course style.
- 4) consider differences between American and British English.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
25	Warm-up Brief teacher introduction. Students introduce themselves in pairs and discuss the questions on the handout. Share answers as a whole class.	handout	Build relationships & share goals.
10	Course Outline Look at syllabus together. Discuss assessment requirements, submission guidelines etc.	syllabus	Understand course details.
30	Your English Discuss briefly what types of English students are most familiar with. Do a fun 20-question quiz to informally see whether students tend to use more British or American English (see appendices for suggested quizzes). Share final results as a group. Do they match student expectations?	handout quiz	Consider differences between British & American English.
25	Group Writing Fun Each student starts with a blank piece of paper. Have them write down a name and then fold over the top of the page to conceal what they have written. Pass the paper to the left. The next student writes what the subject did. Repeat the fold and pass, giving students directions to ensure that the end result flows like a story (how they did it, where, when, why). Have the last student unfold the story and read it to the group.	scrap paper	Show that writing can be fun.

Short Essay Writing

Name: _____

Lesson 1: Getting to Know Each Other

Warm up

Do you often write in English? What types of texts?

In what situations do you expect to need to write reports in English?

What do you know about academic writing?

What are your strengths in writing essays? Weaknesses?

What specific writing tasks/styles are you keen to develop?

What do you expect to learn in this class?

Your English

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 11. |
| 2. | 12. |
| 3. | 13. |
| 4. | 14. |
| 5. | 15. |
| 6. | 16. |
| 7. | 17. |
| 8. | 18. |
| 9. | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |

Lesson 2: The Question

Students often respond to an essay question by writing about the topic it refers to, without clearly answering the actual question. This class helps students to break down question parts and identify exactly what they must do in order to accurately and appropriately answer an essay question.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) understand the differences between typical essay types.
- 2) identify the key parts of a question.
- 3) practice planning essays to accurately respond to a question.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
10	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships.
10	Essay Questions Students brainstorm common instruction words in essay questions (think TOEFL, IELTS etc.). Share ideas.		Review & pool current knowledge.
15	Question Words Look at question words on the handout. Students attempt to match them with the best meanings. Check answers together.	handout	Pay attention to the question.
25	Key Question Parts Use the handout to consider the importance of understanding the question and how to identify question parts. Do a few examples together. See appendices for example essay questions.	handout	Be able to identify the parts of a question.
10	Starting Your Answer Use example to demonstrate the process of identifying question parts and planning an answer.	handout	Understand process.
20	Task Students identify the parts of the question and then devise their own plans (10 min.). Share and discuss in pairs.	handout	Practice planning a response to a question.

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 2: The Question

Name: _____

We are starting right at the beginning today, with the question. If you misunderstand the question, you risk writing an essay that is interesting to read, but totally inappropriate! Reading the question carefully is super important.

Here are some common instruction words:

analyse	compare	consider	contrast
discuss	explain	illustrate	summarise

Match each instruction word with the best definition below.

- _____ Look carefully at the idea and all the parts it consists of. Your answer should be logical, methodical and organised.
- _____ Give a detailed and exact explanation of the idea. Depending on the topic, your answer may need to include reasons.
- _____ Use examples to show ideas clearly. Give the information briefly and clearly.
- _____ Compare two items and point out the differences between them.
- _____ Write the main points (not details) about the subject. Your answer should refer to all of the available information but be brief.
- _____ Set items next to each other and show their similarities and differences. Your answer should be objective and balanced.
- _____ Describe the idea and give your thoughts about the subject.
- _____ Explain the idea in general and then with more detail, including supportive information and examples. Your answer should look at the argument from both sides, and give a conclusion.

Key Question Parts

There are three things you should make sure you understand in the question:

1. Topic – What is the question about, generally?
2. Focus – Which part of the above topic is the question asking about?
3. Instruction or question – What do you actually have to do in your answer?

Sometimes you will not be given a question, but rather a general topic. In order to bring focus and structure to your essay, it is important to decide before you start exactly what the point of your essay will be. To do this, you should make your own question.

Starting Your Answer

After you are clear on what you have to do, you can start to think about your main answer and what reasons or examples to include. Take a look at the example below.

Example

Question:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
A teacher's ability to relate well with students is more important than high-level knowledge of the subject being taught.
Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Key Question Parts

Topic: teachers

Focus: relationship with students vs. subject knowledge

Instruction or question: agree or disagree and say why with examples

Starting your answer

Main point: I agree

Ideas:

- If teachers can't relate to the students well then they can't pass on their knowledge in a useful way.
- People who have too much subject knowledge sometimes forget how to say things in a way that normal people can understand.
- Understanding the basics is more important than knowing lots and lots of details about the subject.
- Students will be more willing to listen and to ask questions if they have a good rapport with the teacher.

Task

1. Look at the question below. Identify the topic, focus and instructions in the question.

Women are better parents than men. Discuss.

Topic:

Focus:

Instruction or question:

2. Write down your main point and some ideas of what you would write in an essay to answer this question. Very rough ideas are fine at this stage. Just write anything you can think of, even if you know it is not completely clear. Write in a list style and do not worry about perfect sentences.

Main point:

Ideas:

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 2: The Question

ANSWER SHEET

<u>analyse</u>	Look carefully at the idea and all the parts it consists of. Your answer should be logical, methodical and organised.
<u>explain</u>	Give a detailed and exact explanation of the idea. Depending on the topic, your answer may need to include reasons.
<u>illustrate</u>	Use examples to show ideas clearly. Give the information briefly and clearly.
<u>contrast</u>	Compare two items and point out the differences between them.
<u>summarise</u>	Write the main points (not details) about the subject. Your answer should refer to all of the available information but be brief.
<u>compare</u>	Set items next to each other and show their similarities and differences. Your answer should be objective and balanced.
<u>consider</u>	Describe the idea and give your thoughts about the subject.
<u>discuss</u>	Explain the idea in general and then with more detail, including supportive information and examples. Your answer should look at the argument from both sides, and give a conclusion.

Task

Topic: parents

Focus: women vs. men

Instruction or question: discuss

Lesson 3: Planning

An important part of process-writing is planning. In this class students are encouraged to consider their argument as a whole and make sure it effectively answers the essay question before beginning to write. This class will introduce various planning and brainstorming styles to help students find planning styles that suit them.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) learn some new ways to plan essays.
- 2) practice using various planning styles to find which style suits.
- 3) understand the importance of good planning and structure.

Teaching Plan

ime	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	<p>Warm-up</p> <p>Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.</p>		Build relationships & get into "English" mode.
15	<p>Brainstorm</p> <p>Students consider their essay writing process using the following questions to guide pair discussion:</p> <p><i>What is your Japanese essay writing process like?</i></p> <p><i>Do you plan? Do you write in one go? Do you write in parts?</i></p> <p><i>Do you usually start to write your essays well in advance of the deadline or just before it?</i></p> <p><i>Do you write better under pressure?</i></p> <p><i>How about for English essays?</i></p> <p><i>If you plan your essays, how do you do that?</i></p> <p>Share some answers as a class.</p>		Consider current essay writing practice.
15	<p>Planning Styles</p> <p>Use handout to explain the five different planning styles.</p>	handout	Introduce planning techniques.
30	<p>Planning Time</p> <p>Students write plans for two essay questions using two of the planning styles introduced today.</p>	handout	Try out techniques.
25	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Students share their plans and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each planning style and which they preferred.</p>		Compare different techniques.

Short Essay Writing

Name: _____

Lesson 3: Planning

Planning is one of the most important parts of writing a good essay in English. Even if you have limited time, always plan. It is easy to spot an unplanned essay.

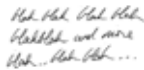
There are many different ways to brainstorm and plan your essay. Today we will look at five styles.

1. Mind-map



In a mind-map you write the subject in the middle, and then use lines out from the centre to show your ideas. Write your ideas on the lines. Ideas then branch into smaller parts with more lines, like tree roots.

2. Freewriting



Freewriting is just like it sounds...free! Set a timer and let yourself write down anything that comes into your head in that time. Empty your head onto the paper. Don't stop writing! If you have no ideas, then write that! After you are finished, read back over what you wrote and highlight ideas that could be useful for your essay.

3. Tree diagram



This is a hierarchical style. Start with big ideas, then break them into smaller parts (reasons etc.) and even smaller parts (specific stories or examples).

4. Clustering



Clustering is like mind-mapping, but you write your ideas in circles, and don't worry so much about how the ideas connect together.

5. Venn diagram



This is useful for comparing two things. Draw two overlapping circles. Write one thing in each circle, then brainstorm and write everything the two things have in common in the middle part, and things that are different in the outside parts of the circles.

Task

Brainstorm essay plans for two of the questions below using two different styles from today's lesson. You can choose which styles to use, but please try at least one way that is new for you.

Questions:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

A problem shared is a problem solved.

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

2. Do you prefer watching movies at the cinema or at home? Why?

3. Which do you feel is more important in your life: security, or freedom and independence? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Lesson 4: Structure

Building on from planning, we move to a sequence of classes targeting essay structure, beginning with the introduction. Students often tend to use simplistic formulaic essay introductions which add little to their arguments. In this class we will look at the main components of an introduction, and practice composing effective original introductions.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) understand the basic structure of a good essay.
- 2) know the parts and purposes of the introduction.
- 3) practice composing effective introductions.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships & get into "English" mode.
15	Pair Discussion <i>What do you know about the main parts of an English essay?</i> <i>What do you do in each part?</i> Students discuss in pairs, then use handout to explain basic essay structure.	handout	Revise and learn about basic essay structure.
20	Preparation Students go through the planning process: identify the question parts and then brainstorm/plan answer ideas for 8 minutes. Share ideas in pairs. This prepares them for the next activity.	handout	Practice question analysis & planning.
20	Introduction Structure Students work in pairs to put the introduction paragraphs in order. Check answers together. The correct answer is 4-2-3-1.	handout	Identify appropriate flow in introduction.
30	Introduction Students work individually to write introductions for the essays they brainstormed for last week. Some students will need more time so completion as a homework assignment is recommended.		Practice writing introductions.

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 4: Structure

Name: _____

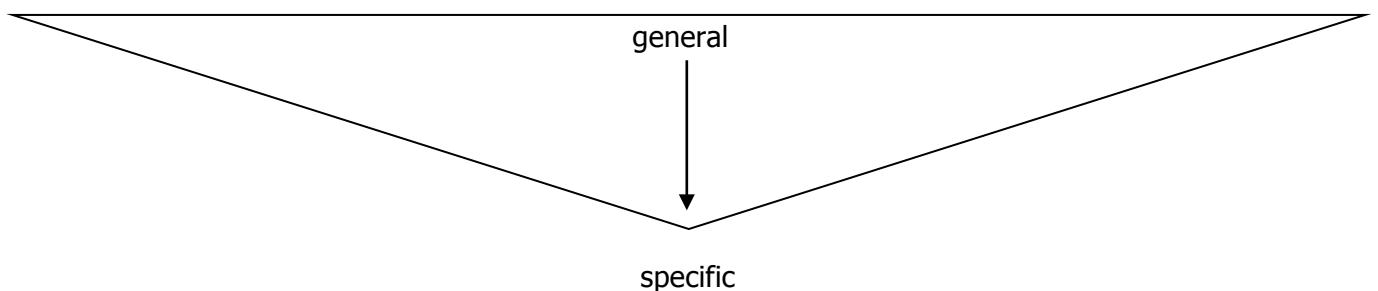
There are three main parts in an essay. I'm sure you've heard about them, but do you understand the purpose of each part? Take a look at the table below. It introduces what you should try to do in the introduction, body and conclusion of your essay.

Part		Purpose
Introduction	Background	Introduce the topic.
	Thesis	Explain the focus and the writer's position.
	Essay map	Tell the reader what this essay will do.
Body	Key points, details & evidence	Present information in support of the thesis.
Conclusion	Summary	Remind the reader of the main ideas and how they lead to the thesis.
	Advice	Highlight the best action to take in light of the thesis.

+ cover page + references

Today we will focus on the introduction. Sometimes the introduction can be the most difficult part of the essay. You essentially have to sum up your main ideas before you explain them, so you may even end up completely rewriting the introduction after you have finished the rest of the essay.

A useful image to keep in mind when you write the introduction is this:



Preparation

1. Identify the parts of this question:

Foreign language instruction should begin in kindergarten. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to develop your essay.

Topic: _____

Focus: _____

Instruction or question: _____

2. Brainstorm for eight minutes. Use any style you like (freewriting, tree diagram etc.).

Introduction Structure

Here is an example introduction for the essay topic you just thought about. It is mixed up. Think about the triangle shape, and re-order these paragraphs to form a logical introduction.

1. This essay explains the advantages of early English education for learner ear-training and natural fluency development, and in the preparation of learners to thrive in an increasingly globalised world. With careful planning and appropriate attention to teaching methods, early-education language programs can be of great value, and should be made available from kindergarten.
2. The Japanese government has recently introduced a new education policy whereby all students will study English from elementary school rather than beginning in junior high school.
3. If early exposure is linked to successful acquisition though, surely foreign language instruction from kindergarten will give these learners the best chance of developing advanced English language skills.
4. Research into second language acquisition has long shown that the earlier in life a learner is exposed to a second language, the more likely he is to succeed in acquiring it.

___ → ___ → ___ → ___

Task

Choose ONE of the plans you wrote last class. Here are the questions again:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
A problem shared is a problem solved.
Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
2. Do you prefer watching movies at the cinema or at home? Why?
3. Which do you feel is more important in your life: security, or freedom and independence? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Write the introduction for an essay about the question you chose.

Lesson 5: The Body

This class aims to develop students' ability to think logically and critically to formulate sound arguments. Students learn about the importance of supporting information and practice using different types of evidence to support and strengthen their arguments.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) understand the basic structure of a good essay.
- 2) practice identifying key arguments in an essay.
- 3) learn how to use supporting evidence.
- 4) practice planning and writing effective arguments.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
15	Introduction Review In pairs, exchange introductions from last class. Students identify the thesis, background and essay map in the introduction they receive. Discuss strengths/weaknesses they notice. If the introductions have already been submitted, you can also pass back teacher comments and give students some time to read them and ask questions.	intros from last class	Continue to consider what makes a good introduction.
10	Brainstorm What goes in the body? Brainstorm as a group, then look at the handout together.	handout	Review essay parts & share ideas.
10	Tree Diagram Students work in pairs to identify the two main reasons in the example essay, and complete the tree diagram with the details and the examples that correlate to them. Check answers together.	handout	Understand key arguments and supporting evidence.
10	Evidence Look at the three types of evidence together, then students complete practice identifying each. Check answers together.	handout	Consider how to support arguments.
40	Task Students edit the introductions they wrote last week and compose the main body for the essay they have begun. Some students will need more time so completion as a homework assignment is recommended.	handout	Practice writing body arguments.

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 5: The Body

Name: _____

The body holds the key points to explain your thesis, and supporting information. In general, you should use a separate paragraph for each key point. (In longer essays you will need more than one paragraph for each point.) Look at the example:

Example

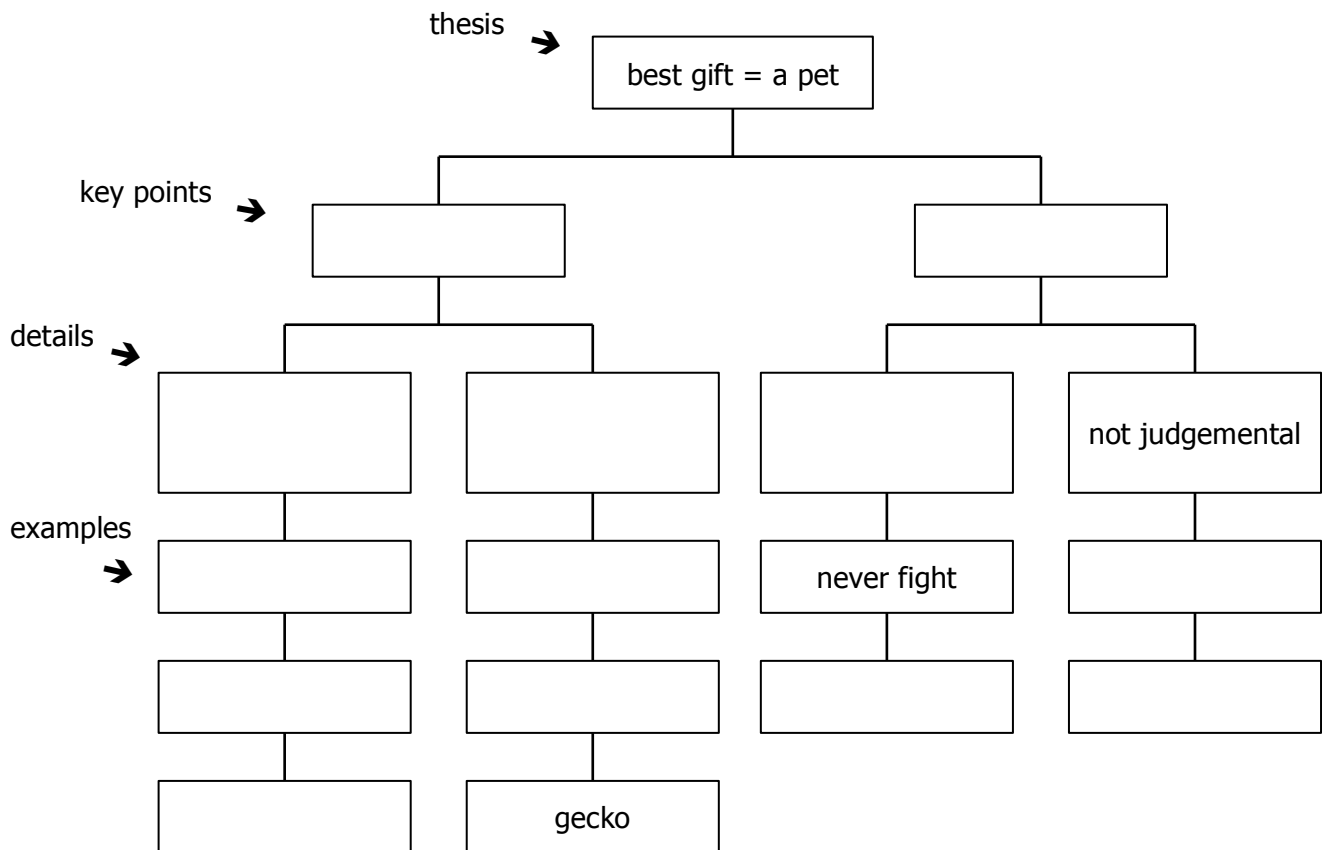
intro { There are many great gifts that can be given to a child. I believe that the best gift to give a child is a pet. I feel this way for two main reasons. First, a pet can be very educational. Second, a pet can be a good friend to a young child. For these reasons, I feel that there is no better gift for a child than a pet.

KP1 { A pet is a very educational gift. Having a pet teaches children responsibility. A pet has to be fed every day and be given a chance to exercise. A pet owner also has to observe the health of their pet and take action if it becomes sick. Practicing this kind of responsibility will make a child more mature. Moreover, a pet can help teach a child about the stages of life. Pets grow much faster than humans and a young child can learn a lot by observing how his pet grows up. I had a pet gecko as a child and watching it grow from a baby to a full-sized adult taught me a lot and got me really interested in biology and nature.

KP2 { I also feel that a pet makes a great friend. It is good for children to have pets because pets are never judgmental. A child might have a bad day at school or he might get in a fight with his friends, but he will never fight with his pet. It will love him unconditionally. Furthermore, pets can prevent children from being lonely. These days parents are often too busy to spend time with their children. They often leave their kids home alone. This might leave some kids feeling lonely, but those with pets will never feel alone.

Adapted from <http://www.toeflresources.com/index.php?id=toefl-independent-writing-section&lang=en>

Here is the tree-style essay plan for the above essay. Write in the key points, details & examples to complete the diagram.



Evidence

It is important to include evidence for your reasons to make them stronger. There are three main types of evidence:

- ① Statistics & Facts
Published facts and numbers. These need to be referenced.
- ② Examples
These can be examples from your own life or more general examples and may need referencing.
- ③ Quotations
This is using the words of a credible professional. You must use quotation marks (") and reference.

Read these three examples of evidence. Which type of evidence is being used in each paragraph?

- a) Many students have trouble using punctuation correctly. For example, Johnson et. al (2009) report that students often use commas incorrectly and mix up colons and semi-colons.
- b) Punctuation plays an important role in meaning construction and its misuse can make a text very difficult to understand. The Academic Writing Foundation (2007, p.65) argued that amongst second language learners “many problems in meaning making arise from simple errors in punctuation use”.
- c) The Academic Writing Foundation (2007, p.66) found that more than 80% of student essays had punctuation errors that impacted upon meaning.

Task

Edit your introduction and write the main body for the essay you began last week (the questions are below). You do not have to write a conclusion yet. Plan your essay before you start writing! Include two main points, and two examples for each point.

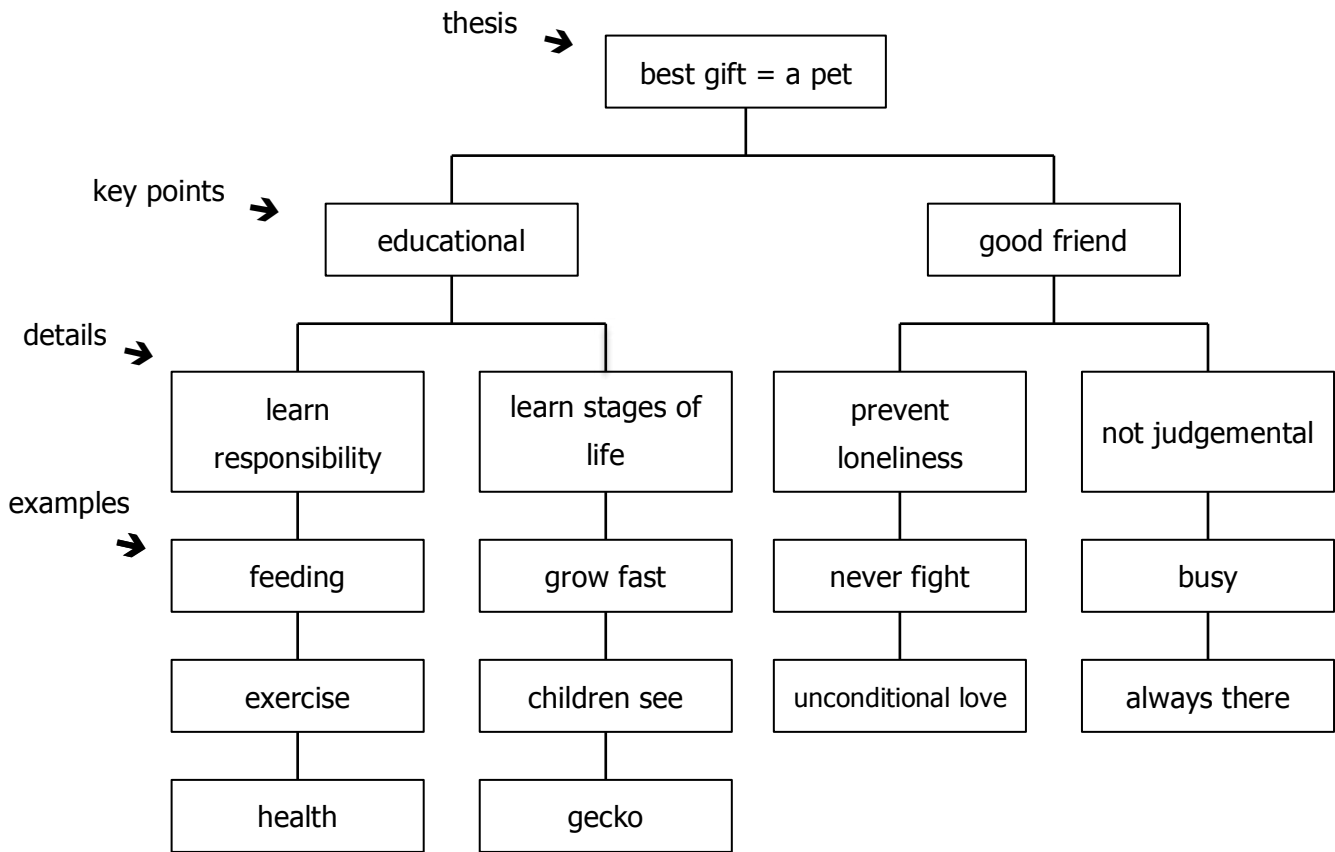
1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

A problem shared is a problem solved.

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

2. Do you prefer watching movies at the cinema or at home? Why?

3. Which do you feel is more important in your life: security, or freedom and independence? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.



Evidence

- a) example
- b) quotation
- c) statistic

Lesson 6: Better Sentences

In this class we practice constructing longer sentences without overcomplicating them, and using transitions effectively to promote the overall flow of an essay. Students will identify transitions in a piece of writing and practice using them to improve the flow of a piece of writing.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) be able to connect short sentences.
- 2) learn some new expressions for transition and emphasis.
- 3) better understand the use of transitions in English academic writing.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	<p>Warm-up</p> <p>Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.</p>		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
15	<p>General Feedback</p> <p>Feedback on essays submitted last week. Hand back comments and give students time to absorb them and ask questions.</p>	essays	Consolidate last week's material.
15	<p>Building Better Sentences</p> <p>Explain using the handout, then students practice and share in pairs. Check answers together.</p>	handout	Build stronger sentences.
15	<p>Transitions & Emphasis</p> <p>Look at the transitions on the handout. Read them. Students identify words they know and can use, have heard but are not confident with, and those they don't know. Compare in pairs. Take questions but recommend students start with the words they know and then incorporate others little by little with the help of a good grammar dictionary.</p>	handout	Become better at using transitions.
10	<p>Transitions in Academic Writing</p> <p>Look at the example and identify transition words and emphasis words together. Discuss. Point out the placement of transitions (generally not as sentence starters).</p>	handout	See transitions in context.
30	<p>Assignment</p> <p>Students work in pairs to add emphasis or transitions to improve the flow of the paragraph without changing meaning. Share results.</p>	handout	Practice using today's language.

Short Essay Writing

Name: _____

Lesson 6: Better Sentences

In academic writing, many students try to use longer sentences and end up using over-complicated sentence structures, or fail to link parts of a sentence together naturally. Here is a brief practice exercise. Make one good sentence for each question including all of the information.

- ex. a) Toyota is a well-known company. b) They make cars.
c) They are a Japanese company. d) Toyota sales were up ten percent last year.

→ Toyota, the well-known Japanese car company, had a ten percent increase in sales last year.

If you decide to use more than one adjective before a noun it is important to think about the order of the adjectives. Here is a basic order to remember:

1. opinion or judgment (beautiful, ugly, easy, fast, interesting..)
2. size (small, tall, short, big..)
3. age (young, old, new, historic, ancient..)
4. shape (round, square, rectangular..)
5. colour (red, black, green, purple..)
6. nationality (French, Asian, American, Canadian, Japanese..)
7. material (wooden, metallic, plastic, glass, paper..)
8. purpose or qualifier (foldout sofa, fishing boat, racing car..)

eg. Her beautiful long brown hair lifted gently in the breeze.

opinion size colour

Task

Combine these small sentences to make one coherent sentence.

1. a) There are books. b) The books are rare.
c) The books are in the library.

-
2. a) The flag is Mexican. b) The flag is red.
c) The flag is white. d) The flag is green.
-

Transitions and Emphasis

Transitions link your ideas together logically. They show readers the connection you want them to see between pieces of information. Emphasis also guides readers, by helping them to focus on what you think is important. Here are some examples of language for different types of transitions and emphasis:

Adding information	Contrasting	Sequence / Cause	Emphasis
furthermore	although	first	notably
moreover	conversely	second	most importantly
likewise	irrespective	third	in fact
additionally	nevertheless	thus	essentially
in addition	notwithstanding	therefore	certainly
similarly	on the contrary	hence	most of all
as well	on the one hand	then	primarily
also	despite	next	most significantly
in the same way	however	before	particularly
equally important	though	accordingly	especially
besides	whereas	as a result	undoubtedly
further	yet	since	above all
another	still	because	sure
at the same time	rather	due to	actually
too	in contrast	previously	indeed
	while	meanwhile	
	in spite of	subsequently	

There are many possibilities! It is good to use a variety, but start with words you know, and always check how to use new words before you put them in your essay.

A word of caution: Many Japanese learners of English tend to overuse transitions, or to try and find English equivalents for Japanese transitions. The two writing styles are very different, and so is the use of transitions. Read your work aloud and think about the flow to help you decide whether transitions are necessary. Your writing can sometimes be stronger if you begin sentences (especially at the start of a new paragraph) without transitions.

Task

Here is an example short essay question and answer. Underline the transitions and emphasis words.

Question:

Do you agree with the following statement? *Grades encourage students to learn.*

Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Many different factors encourage students to study, and thus to learn. Some people say that grades are not useful for encouraging students to learn, while others believe that grades are a good motivator in pushing students to try harder. I agree with the second opinion because competing for grades helps students learn more and because grades help students measure themselves compared to a standard.

Competing for grades with your classmates makes you study harder and learn more. If your grade is lower than average that is a sign that you are not studying hard enough and that should be a motivation to try harder. I'm sure no one wants to be last in the class, so low grades are certainly a motivator to study. On the other hand, if you have marks that are higher than average, that means that you are doing a good job and you should continue doing it, which is also motivating.

Scores themselves though, are not the only thing that encourage students in a graded learning situation. Learning just to get a mark is of debatable usefulness; it is just a number on a piece of paper after all. If we look beyond those numbers to what they actually mean though, grades are what allow students to measure their knowledge. Tests (and test scores) enable students to identify their weaker points, so they know what they should work harder on. At the same time, they are able to see the positive side of progress they are making. Success, too, is an effective motivator.

We can see then, that grades do encourage students to study harder, and thus to learn. Marks are a good motivator because they help students to compare themselves with others and to measure their personal knowledge.

Re-write this paragraph using transitions and emphasis as appropriate to make the writing more connected and improve the flow.

Transitions are important. They are important in academic writing. They allow writers to connect the main ideas in an essay. They make the writing more fluent and less choppy. They provide the reader with directions for how to piece together your ideas into a logically coherent argument. They make your essay stronger. They make your essay more likely to convince the reader that your ideas are correct. Many students do not use effective transitions. Their essays come across as disconnected. Writers should always be aware of the need to connect both sentences and paragraphs together.

Lesson 6: Better Sentences

Many different factors encourage students to study, and thus to learn. Some people say that grades are not useful for encouraging students to learn, while others believe that grades are a good motivator in pushing students to try harder. I agree with the second opinion because competing for grades helps students learn more and because grades help students measure themselves compared to a standard.

Competing for grades with your classmates makes you study harder and learn more. If your grade is lower than average that is a sign that you are not studying hard enough and that should be a motivation to try harder. I'm sure no one wants to be last in the class, so low grades are certainly a motivator to study. On the other hand, if you have marks that are higher than average, that means that you are doing a good job and you should continue doing it, which is also motivating.

Scores themselves though, are not the only thing that encourage students in a graded learning situation. Learning just to get a mark is of debatable usefulness; it is just a number on a piece of paper after all. If we look beyond those numbers to what they actually mean though, grades are what allow students to measure their knowledge. Tests (and test scores) enable students to identify their weaker points, so they know what they should work harder on. At the same time, they are able to see the positive side of progress they are making. Success, too, is an effective motivator.

We can see then, that grades do encourage students to study harder, and thus to learn. Marks are a good motivator because they help students to compare themselves with others and to measure their personal knowledge.

___ transition

=== emphasis

Lesson 7: The Conclusion

Many students struggle to end their essays appropriately, and either finish abruptly or simply repeat the introduction. This class focuses on how to summarise the main points in an essay without being repetitive, and how to tie arguments in with the introduction to strengthen the essay thesis.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) learn how to recognise good and bad conclusions.
- 2) practice writing conclusions.
- 3) bring together structural topics covered so far to revise and conclude an essay.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	<p>Warm-up</p> <p>Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.</p>		Build relationships & get into "English mode".
5	<p>Revise</p> <p><i>What are the three parts of an essay? What should you include in an introduction? Body? Conclusion?</i> Discuss with students.</p>		Review previous material.
25	<p>The Conclusion</p> <p>Use handout to go through the elements in a conclusion. Students check the "do not" list and then work in pairs to identify problems with example conclusions. Look at dos and the example of a better conclusion together.</p>	handout	Learn components of strong conclusions.
55	<p>Writing Time</p> <p>Students revise their Lesson 5 essay, edit and write a conclusion. You may like to collect these in class or allow students to complete them as homework.</p>	essays	Consolidate topics covered so far and use to self-edit.

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 7: The Conclusion

Name: _____

Part		Purpose
Introduction	Background	Introduce the topic.
	Thesis	Explain the focus and the writer's position.
	Essay map	Tell the reader what this essay will do.
Body	Key points, details & evidence	Present information in support of the thesis.
Conclusion	Summary	Remind the reader of the main ideas and how they lead to the thesis.
	Advice	Highlight the best action to take in light of the thesis.

The Conclusion

It's your last chance! This is where you reinforce your arguments, summarise your ideas and convince the reader that you are right. This is where you show them how your findings relate to their real life, after they put the paper down. This is your final chance to make a good impression, and finish strong!

Do not:

- Begin with overused phrases such as "in conclusion", "in summary", or "in closing". These are fine in speeches, but sound rather trite and simplistic in writing.
- Introduce new ideas in the conclusion
- Simply rephrase the thesis
- Make emotional appeals
- Include evidence that should be in the body
- Change the thesis

Task

Look again at the short essay from Lesson 5. The question was: "What is the best gift to give to a child?" Here are some examples of different conclusions for that essay. All of them have problems. Look at the "do not" list above, and try to find out what the problem is for each conclusion.

- a) In conclusion, as I have shown, pets are the best gift to give to children.
- b) Pets are educational and make good friends. They can be expensive, but the cost is worth it in the end. I think that pets are the best present to give to a child.
- c) Pets are the light in a dark world for some children. Children who are lonely, waiting for their parents to come home, can find solace in their pets. Children who have been bullied at school can return home to weep into their pets' fur and be comforted. Without pets, this world would be a bleak place for children. Pets are more than just a great gift, they are a life-saving gift.
- d) Pets are a great gift to give to children. Cats are an especially good choice, as they require little time to take care of, and are relatively clean animals. They are surely the best gift a child can receive.

So how do you make a strong conclusion? Below are some suggestions. The length of your report will affect the number of items you include in your conclusion.

Do:

- Return to the themes in the introduction. If you asked a question in the introduction, answer it.
- Include a brief summary of your main points, but don't simply repeat them. Show how it all comes together to support your argument.
- Propose recommendations, or questions for further research (if applicable).
- Point out implications of what your report has shown. How is your information relevant or important in the real world?

Here is an example of a simple but solid conclusion for the same essay as above.

A pet is the very best gift to give to a child. This is because pets are very educational, and they are great company. In these times when young people are increasingly introverted and parents are spending more time away from home, a pet is an invaluable friend and teacher. There really is no better gift that a child can receive than a pet.

- a) In conclusion, as I have shown, pets are the best gift to give to children.
- b) Pets are educational and make good friends. They can be expensive, but the cost is worth it in the end. I think that pets are the best present to give to a child.
- c) Pets are the light in a dark world for some children. Children who are lonely, waiting for their parents to come home, can find solace in their pets. Children who have been bullied at school can return home to weep into their pets' fur and be comforted. Without pets, this world would be a bleak place for children. Pets are more than just a great gift, they are a life-saving gift.
- d) Pets are a great gift to give to children. Cats are an especially good choice, as they require little time to take care of, and are relatively clean animals. They are surely the best gift a child can receive.

- a) overused phrase (in conclusion) & simply rephrasing the thesis
- b) new information (cost)
- c) emotional response
- d) changed thesis

Lesson 8: Bringing it all Together

This class is a chance to pause and absorb all the material covered so far. Students are encouraged to follow the process of identifying the question parts, brainstorming, planning and writing for a new essay topic. This essay will be revisited in future classes as we develop self-editing skills.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) revise and consolidate information learned so far.
- 2) practice writing a complete essay with appropriate structure and solid logic.
- 3) create a first-draft to be used as a basis for self- and peer-editing in future classes.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
85	Write Use the handout to explain today's task. Go through instructions and questions briefly. Require each student to begin with a planning stage and to discuss plans with the teacher before writing. Most students will need to complete this as a homework assignment. You can have students write essays directly on computers, or handwrite in class and type later.	handout	Use all the skills covered so far to create an original essay.

if possible use a computer lab for this class

Short Essay Writing

Name: _____

Lesson 8: Bringing it all Together

Write your first full essay. Plan your essay before you start writing to help you write a logical essay with a clear introduction, strong arguments, and a solid conclusion. Remember to check your understanding of the question carefully and make sure you answer it in your essay.

- Type your essay.
- Font: Tahoma
- Font Size: 11
- Spacing: Double space
- Include your name and the essay question.
- Include "Lesson 8" and your name in the title when you save.

Choose ONE of the following questions to answer in your essay:

1. *People pay too much attention to the less important things in life and fail to see the larger issues.* Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Use specific reasons and details to explain your opinion.
2. What are some important qualities of a good school teacher? Use specific details and examples to explain why these qualities are important.
3. It has been said that "*not everything that is learned is contained in books.*" Compare and contrast knowledge gained from experience with knowledge gained from books. In your opinion, which source is more important? Why?
4. In general, people are living longer now. Discuss the causes of this phenomenon. Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay.
5. What are the important qualities of a good son or daughter? Have these qualities changed or remained the same over time in your culture? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

There is no set word limit for this essay but you need to provide at least three main arguments to support your answer and examples or other evidence to back up your reasons. Focus on writing an essay that you are happy with and proud of rather than counting words.

We will use this essay in future classes to analyse your strengths and weaknesses and to practice self-editing and peer-editing.

Lesson 9: Form & Punctuation

Different institutions, departments and professors have different ideas about essay format but do not necessarily give students details about what they require. This class introduces one simple style, and encourages students to confirm the requirements of their specific situations. This class will also look at the types of punctuation most commonly used in English academic writing and how to use them.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) become familiar with various report formats.
- 2) develop an understanding of appropriate punctuation.
- 3) improve their punctuation skills through practice.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
15	Formatting <i>What formatting style does your department require? Font? Referencing? Margins? Sections?</i> Students discuss. Share briefly as a class. Also consider differences when writing for other purposes. Look at the information on the handout. Brainstorm ways to check (peer reading, spell check, Word grammar check, reading aloud, dictionary checks, internet checks for unknown punctuation).	handout	Consider importance of format.
25	Spelling Work through the exercises and check together.	handout	Recognise common misspellings.
10	Punctuation Overview main punctuation types on handout.	handout	Remind students of common punctuation.
35	Punctuation Practice Complete activities on the sheet and go through answers together.	handout	Students improve understanding of English punctuation.

* essay comments from Lesson 8 essays will be given next week when we self-edit*

Short Essay Writing

Name: _____

Lesson 9: Form & Punctuation

Formats

Different institutions require different report formats. Most universities use official format guidelines that are used around the world (eg. APA Style <http://www.apastyle.org/>), but sometimes an institution might modify a format for their own use. It is important to check.

In general:

- Align lines on the left side of the page.
- Leave an empty line between paragraphs, or indent the start of the new paragraph.
- Use 1.5 or 2 line spacing.
- Use 11 or 12 point font.
- Number your pages (not including cover page if you have one).
- Use bold, italics, underline etc. sparingly.
- Do not capitalise entire words.
- Stay away from expressive punctuation.
- Do not use contractions.

Of course, it is also vital that you check and double-check the spelling, grammar, capitalisation and punctuation of your report. Here are some practice activities looking at common spelling errors.

Spelling Practice

Some of the words in parentheses require the addition of the letter *e*; others are correct. Write the correct spelling of the word on the line.

1. Gus is (tru-ly) sorry for keeping you awake last night. _____
2. We were criticized (sever-ly) by the sewing circle. _____
3. The shed was (complet-ly) demolished. _____
4. The Simpsons are (argu-ing) again. _____
5. Mr. White is (judg-ing) the essay contest. _____

Some of the words require the addition of *ie*; others require *ei*. Write the correct spelling.

1. Paint the (c--ling) before you paint the walls. _____
2. Gus has been (rec--ving) threatening e-mails. _____
3. I paid almost five dollars for that (p--ce) of pie. _____
4. I don't (bel--ve) in coincidence. _____
5. The guests brought (th--r) (fr—ends) to the wedding. _____

Some of the words require the addition of *i*; others require *y*. Write the correct spelling.

1. Have you (tr-ed) the dessert yet? _____
2. The baby (cr-ed) throughout the church service. _____
3. (Lonel-ness) was never a problem for Henry. _____
4. She (fl-es) to New York tomorrow. _____
5. I have always (rel-ed) on my friends. _____

Complete each word with the letter *a*, *e*, or *i*.

1. I have to submit my (ess-y) today. _____
2. English (gramm-r) is difficult. _____
3. Examples that are not related to the topic are (irrel-v-nt). _____
4. We put the puppies in (sep-rate) rooms. _____
5. Henry is an (independ-nt) thinker. _____

Some of these words require the doubling of a consonant; others are correct.

1. The sun was (shin-ing) brightly. _____
2. The experiment was (control-ed) by a madman. _____
3. The movie is (begin-ing). _____
4. She keeps (forget-ing) to call me. _____
5. The bunny went (hop-ing) down the path. _____

Some of these words require the addition of one or more letters; others are correct.

1. Caley (su-prise) me. _____
2. You are (prob-ly) going to be late. _____
3. We must work together to improve the (enviro-ment). _____
4. My dad works for the (gover-ment). _____
5. The waitress (recom-ended) the chicken. _____

spelling practice from <http://grammar.about.com/od/spelling/a/revexspell.htm>

Punctuation Marks

Punctuation can be tricky in English. Reading your work aloud is very helpful in deciding where to put punctuation. If you pause when you are reading, it is probably a good position for a comma or a period. Here are some simple guidelines for common punctuation:

	Name	Use ~
.	period full stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● at the end of a sentence● after an abbreviation Never use two periods together (..) or after question marks (?.)
,	comma	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● to separate words or groups of three or more● between adjectives where 'and' could be inserted● to show a short break or pause in a complete sentence
?	question mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● after a question
:	colon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● before a list
;	semicolon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● to connect two clauses when the second part gives extra information about the first
'	apostrophe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● to show possession● in contractions (informal writing only)
“”	quotation marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● before and after the exact words someone said or wrote
()	parentheses brackets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● to add information not necessary to make the sentence complete
-	dash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● like parentheses in informal writing Use one or two dashes depending on where in the sentence the information comes.
-	hyphen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● to join two words in a compound word or number

Punctuation Practice I – Commas

Write the missing commas into these sentences:

1. There was no question that John's painting a huge colorful and ugly mural was the worst entry in the art exhibit.
2. Werner von Braun Willy Ley and Edward Teller noted authorities in the field of rocket development have done much to guide the missile program of the United States.
3. Mr. Cready's ability to say the wrong thing at the wrong time is I believe amazing.
4. Running around the house the dog was abruptly stopped by a fence.
5. *Glamour* the woman's fashion magazine recently incorporated with *Charm* another fashion journal.

Punctuation Practice II - semicolons, colons, dashes, quotation marks, italics (use an underline), and parentheses.

Add in the missing punctuation:

1. The men in question Harold Keene, Jim Peterson, and Gerald Greene deserve awards.
2. Several countries participated in the airlift Italy, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg.
3. Only one course was open to us surrender, said the ex-major, and we did.
4. In last week's New Yorker, one of my favorite magazines, I enjoyed reading Leland's article How Not to Go Camping.
5. Yes, Jim said, I'll be home by ten.
6. Arriving on the 8 10 plane were Liz Brooks, my old roommate her husband and Tim, their son.
7. He used the phrase you know so often that I finally said No, I don't know.
8. The automobile dealer handled three makes of cars Volkswagens, Porsches, and Mercedes Benz.
9. Though Phil said he would arrive on the 9 19 flight, he came instead on the 10 36 flight.
10. Whoever thought said Helen that Jack would be elected class president?

punctuation practice from <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/exercises/3/5/16/>

Short Essay Writing

ANSWER SHEET 1

Lesson 9: Form & Punctuation

Some of the words in parentheses require the addition of the letter *e*; others are correct. Write the correct spelling of the word on the line.

1. Gus is (tru-ly) sorry for keeping you awake last night. truly
2. We were criticized (sever-ly) by the sewing circle. severely
3. The shed was (complet-ly) demolished. completely
4. The Simpsons are (argu-ing) again. arguing
5. Mr. White is (judg-ing) the essay contest. judging

Some of the words require the addition of *ie*; others require *ei*. Write the correct spelling.

1. Paint the (c--ling) before you paint the walls. ceiling
2. Gus has been (rec--ving) threatening e-mails. receiving
3. I paid almost five dollars for that (p--ce) of pie. piece
4. I don't (bel--ve) in coincidence. believe
5. The guests brought (th--r) (fr—ends) to the wedding. their friends

Some of the words require the addition of *i*; others require *y*. Write the correct spelling.

1. Have you (tr-ed) the dessert yet? tried
2. The baby (cr-ed) throughout the church service. cried
3. (Lonel-ness) was never a problem for Henry. loneliness
4. She (fl-es) to New York tomorrow. flies
5. I have always (rel-ed) on my friends. relied

Complete each word with the letter *a*, *e*, or *i*.

1. I have to submit my (ess-y) today. essay
2. English (gramm-r) is difficult. grammar
3. Examples that are not related to the topic are (irrel-v-nt). irrelevant
4. We put the puppies in (sep-rate) rooms. separate
5. Henry is an (independ-nt) thinker. independent

Some of these words require the doubling of a consonant; others are correct.

1. The sun was (shin-ing) brightly. shining
2. The experiment was (control-ed) by a madman. controlled
3. The movie is (begin-ing). beginning
4. She keeps (forget-ing) to call me. forgetting
5. The bunny went (hop-ing) down the path. hopping

Lesson 9: Form & Punctuation

Some of these words require the addition of one or more letters; others are correct.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Caley (su-prise) me. | <u>surprised</u> |
| 2. You are (prob-ly) going to be late. | <u>probably</u> |
| 3. We must work together to improve the (enviro-ment). | <u>environment</u> |
| 4. My dad works for the (gover-ment). | <u>government</u> |
| 5. The waitress (recom-ended) the chicken. | <u>recommended</u> |

spelling practice from <http://grammar.about.com/od/spelling/a/revexspell.htm>

Punctuation Practice I – Commas

Write the missing commas into these sentences:

1. There was no question that John's painting, a huge, colorful, and ugly mural, was the worst entry in the art exhibit.
2. Werner von Braun, Willy Ley, and Edward Teller, noted authorities in the field of rocket development, have done much to guide the missile program of the United States.
3. Mr. Cready's ability to say the wrong thing at the wrong time is, I believe, amazing.
4. Running around the house, the dog was abruptly stopped by a fence.
5. *Glamour*, the woman's fashion magazine, recently incorporated with *Charm*, another fashion journal.

Punctuation Practice II - semicolons, colons, dashes, quotation marks, italics (use an underline), and parentheses.

Add in the missing punctuation:

1. The men in question (Harold Keene, Jim Peterson, and Gerald Greene) deserve awards.
2. Several countries participated in the airlift: Italy, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg.
3. "Only one course was open to us: surrender", said the ex-major, "and we did".
4. In last week's *New Yorker*, one of my favorite magazines, I enjoyed reading Leland's article "How Not to Go Camping."
5. "Yes," Jim said, "I'll be home by ten."
6. Arriving on the 8:10 plane were Liz Brooks, my old roommate; her husband; and Tim, their son.
7. He used the phrase "you know" so often that I finally said "No, I don't know."
8. The automobile dealer handled three makes of cars: Volkswagens, Porsches, and Mercedes Benz.
9. Though Phil said he would arrive on the 9:19 flight, he came instead on the 10:36 flight.
10. "Whoever thought," said Helen, "that Jack would be elected class president?"

Lesson 10: Hedging

This class focuses on using precise and objective language in academic writing. We look at hedging techniques to help students craft statements that are strong and persuasive but still realistic and believable.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) understand the importance of believable accurate statements.
- 2) be able to use hedging techniques to modify strong statements.
- 3) analyse their own writing and employ hedging tools as necessary to modify it.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
15	Precision & Objectivity Consider the difference between facts and opinions together, then students work to identify opinions and facts in the sample paragraph.	handout	Understand difference between opinions and facts.
10	Hedging Use handout to explain what hedging is and why it is important. Before looking at the second page, have students brainstorm ways to modify the statement "Japanese students do not study".	handout	Understand need for hedging and brainstorm how to do it.
20	Techniques Go through the different ways to hedge on the handout.	handout	Teach some hedging tools.
40	Self-edit Students read through their essays from Lesson 8 and identify places where hedging may be necessary. Where PC access is available, have students edit their essays in Word using track-changes (teach this if necessary). Finally, give students a commented version of their essays (teacher comments) pointing out places where more or less hedging is necessary. Students finish editing their essays at home.	essays & comments	Students re-read their own work with their new understanding of hedging and attempt to edit appropriately.

if possible use a computer lab for this class

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 10: Hedging

Name: _____

Precision & Objectivity

This week's lesson is about finding the balance between strong persuasive sentences, and sentences that are just too much.

In academic writing, you are encouraged to give your own ideas, but you have to support your ideas with solid facts. It is important to be clear about what is a fact and what is an opinion.

Look at this paragraph. Underline facts with a straight line. Underline opinions with a wavy line.

Hong Kong is a place of industry, beauty and culture. More than 200 billion dollars worth of goods pass through Hong Kong every year, making it one of Asia's largest ports. With its own stock market and with at least three globally strategic international banks, Hong Kong is also a very important financial centre. To the fifteen million visitors who pass through Hong Kong every year, however, Hong Kong is probably better remembered for its beauty, and its unique mix of East and West.

<http://www2.elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/icoso/reading/language-in-context/reading-skills2/index.html>

It is important to make sure that the opinions in your writing are supported by solid facts. Sometimes it is necessary to use hedging to make sure that your facts are totally accurate. Hedging is also useful to tailor your opinion to exactly match the supporting facts.

So what is hedging? Well, look at this statement:

"Japanese students do not study."

Do you believe this? Are you perhaps thinking something like "not all Japanese students are the same" or "I study, and I am a Japanese student"?

We can use hedging to soften this statement so that it is more accurate and believable. There are many different options.

Hedging Tools

Verbs

suggest	indicate	estimate	assume
appear	seem	may	could
believe	perceive	tend	propose

ex. Evidence suggests that Japanese students do not study.

Adverbs

rather	slightly	somewhat	a little
often	probably	possibly	perhaps
apparently	arguably		

ex. Japanese students often do not study.

Adjectives

likely	probable	possible	uncertain
unlikely	many	numerous	some

ex. Many Japanese students do not study.

Modifiers

tend	for the most part	to some extent	the majority of
apart from	with the exception of	excluding	

ex. Japanese students tend not to study.

Conditionals

if	when	in the situation	should you
as long as	unless	provided that	whenever

ex. Japanese students do not study unless they have to.

Hong Kong is a place of industry, beauty and culture. More than 200 billion dollars worth of goods pass through Hong Kong every year, making it one of Asia's largest ports. With its own stock market and with at least three globally strategic international banks, Hong Kong is also a very important financial centre. To the fifteen million visitors who pass through Hong Kong every year, however, Hong Kong is probably better remembered for its beauty, and its unique mix of East and West.

<http://www2.elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/icoso/reading/language-in-context/reading-skills2/index.html>

Lesson 11: Register

It can be difficult for students to adjust their language to the more formal academic register when writing essays. This class simplifies the issue of academic register by providing a list of rules to use as a checklist when self-editing.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) learn simple rules for academic language.
- 2) practice editing expressions for appropriate written academic register.
- 3) analyse register in their own writing and edit as necessary.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
10	Discuss <i>What differences are there between written and spoken language? How about between casual written language and formal written language/academic language?</i> Students discuss in pairs, then as a class.	handout	Share ideas.
15	Register Go through the checklist together.	handout	Learn/review basic "rules" for academic register.
20	Practice Students practice recognising and editing phrasal verbs and conversational language using more formal expressions. Students work in pairs or individually to complete the practice exercises on the handout and check as a group.	handout	Practice substituting two-word verbs.
35	Self-edit Students access their most recent essay drafts (which include edits from last week, and perhaps teacher comments on edits) and use the checklist to check their work. Re-draft, again using track-changes.	essays	Continue to practice self-editing.
5	Preparation Next week we will peer-edit. Check with students whether they would prefer to do this in the form of anonymous written comments or face-to-face discussion? Have students write preference on paper and hand-in.		Prepare for next class.

if possible use a computer lab for this class

Short Essay Writing
Lesson 11: Register

Name: _____

Register

Academic writing has a different tone to spoken or casual written language. Here are some things to be careful of:

- Avoid phrasal verbs (two-word verbs like "turn on" or "go up").
- Do not use idioms.
- Most common verb tenses should be present and past.
- Avoid contractions (words with apostrophes like don't, didn't, can't).
- Keep sentences clear and concise.
- Do not be too assertive. (Use hedging tools to keep statements precise.)
- Never begin a sentence with "And" "But" or "Because".
- Try to use formal language (avoid very simple or casual-sounding words like "do", "get", "have", "really").
- Avoid vague words (like "stuff", "things", "a bit", "kind of").
- Do not start a sentence with a number.
- Avoid vague or personal pronouns. (The rules here are changing and the use of "I" or "we" is becoming more acceptable. It is best to avoid "they" or "you" as these sound overly casual.)

Practice

Change the underlined parts to make these sentences sound more formal and academic.

1. This will cut down the amount of drug required and so the cost of treatment.
2. There's been quite a lot of interest in how background noise affects our ability to concentrate.
3. The cost of life has gone up in Western society.
4. But, 45,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed every year, making it the number 1 common cancer in the UK.
5. In the past five years, they did studies which looked at the effect of music on learning.
6. The aggregate of outstanding balances went up and down quite violently.
8. Dieters often feel that they should totally get rid of high-fat and high-sugar foods.
9. Export figures won't get better until the economy gets better.
10. Jones (2008) says that huge problems showed up after implementation of the new policy.

Practice

Change the underlined parts to make these sentences sound more formal and academic.

1. This will cut down the amount of drug required and so the cost of treatment.

reduce

2. There's been quite a lot of interest in how background noise affects our ability to concentrate.

There has, considerable

3. The cost of life has gone up in Western society.

risen

4. But, 45,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed every year, making it the number 1 common cancer in the UK.

However, most

5. In the past five years, they did studies which looked at the effect of music on learning.

researchers, examined

6. The aggregate of outstanding balances went up and down quite violently.

fluctuated

7. Dieters often feel that they should totally get rid of high-fat and high-sugar foods.

avoid

8. Export figures won't get better until the economy gets better.

will not, improve, revives

9. Jones (2008) says that huge problems showed up after implementation of the new policy.

states, significant, appeared

Lesson 12: Editing

Peer- and self-editing are valuable tools which students tend to underuse. This class aims to teach students to read both their own work and that of others critically, and to give them experience both giving and receiving constructive criticism.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) practice objective reading and constructive criticism.
- 2) apply their understanding of structure, register, form etc. to edit a piece of writing.
- 3) consider criticism and decide how to act on it to re-draft their essays.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
10	Feedback Give comments on student self-editing so far. Has it been effective? Superficial? etc. Today will be the final opportunity to re-draft essays, which will need to be submitted this week.		Give feedback.
15	Check-list Go through checklist. This should not be new information now but check understanding of everything.	handout	Revise all material covered so far.
30	Peer Edit Students exchange essays and provide each other with constructive criticism. Depending on class preferences (ascertained last week), this could be written (give out anonymous essays randomly) or face-to-face (pair up students). Encourage constructive criticism but also emphasise that comments are not to be taken personally!	handout	Practice reading critically and giving constructive criticism.
30	Self-edit Students consider comments they were given (and can consult with the teacher). Begin a final re-draft. The final essay will need to be submitted for homework.	essays	Continue to practice self-editing.

if possible use a computer lab for this class

Short Essay Writing

Name: _____

Lesson 12: Editing

Proof-reading

Do you usually proof-read your essays? You should. It is easy to make small errors when you are writing, and sometimes even the whole structure of an essay can look a bit strange one day later.

In a test situation it may not be possible to make big changes to your writing, but in take-home assignments it is always possible. Do not be afraid to make huge changes if they result in a better piece of writing. You will feel happier with yourself in the end.

Here is a checklist to help you look at writing objectively.

Essay Checklist	
	Have I answered the question and done everything it asked?
	Does my introduction contain a thesis, background and essay map?
	Are my main arguments clear?
	Do I use examples or other evidence to support my arguments?
	Do I use transitional phrases where necessary?
	Are my sentences appropriate lengths?
	Does my conclusion summarise my arguments and show how they support my thesis?
	Have I used academic language (no phrasal verbs, idioms, abbreviations)?
	Have I used grammar that I am comfortable with?
	Are my spelling and punctuation correct? (Look for red or green underlining in Word.)
	Are my statements balanced and accurate?

Lesson 13: Feedback & Wrap-up

The final class is an opportunity for detailed individual essay feedback from the teacher, and a chance to gather student feedback on the course.

Lesson Objectives

Students will ~

- 1) receive individual feedback on their final essays.
- 2) reflect on their development over the duration of this course.
- 3) provide feedback to improve future courses.

Teaching Plan

Time	Activity	Materials	Aim
5	Warm-up Students introduce themselves in pairs and warm up with some light conversation. See appendices for suggested warm-up conversation starters.		Build relationships and get into "English mode".
30	Feedback Hand back final essays and detailed comments. Allow students time to read through the comments and corrections, then take individual questions. Provide general feedback to the whole group.	essays & comments	Provide final feedback.
20	Student Feedback Talk about the course. What were its strengths and weaknesses? What areas do the students feel they have improved in? What weaknesses have they identified?	surveys	Get feedback from students about course.
30	Grab Bag Fun writing activity to finish with. Prepare a selection of small pieces of paper with individual English word on (you may like to include some academic language from this class and some other funny words). Each student selects 5 words and then has to write a paragraph incorporating all the words. Share the paragraphs.	handout	Writing is fun!

Alternatively if there is not a lot of feedback to give to students, a post-course TOEFL-style timed essay could be useful to allow students to bring together all they have learned

Appendices

British/American English Quizzes

<https://www.usingenglish.com/files/pdf/how-british-is-your-english-questionnaire-and-speaking.pdf>

<https://www.blogthings.com/isyourenglishbritishoramERICANquiz/>

<http://www.gameswithwords.org/WhichEnglish/>

Warm-up Conversation Starters

How was your weekend?

What did you have for breakfast this morning?

What is your most difficult class this semester?

What are you interested in these days?

How are your classes going at the moment?

Do you have a part-time job?

What time did you get up this morning?

What do you enjoy watching on TV these days?

What do you like to do to relax?

Did you bring lunch today?

Have you been shopping recently? What did you buy?

Are there any foods that you dislike?

Do you prefer hot weather or cold?

What was the last book you read?

Can you drive?

Sample Essay Questions

<http://www.toeflresources.com/index.php?id=sample-toefl-essays>

<http://www.goodlucktoefl.com/toefl-writing-topics.html>

<https://blog.udemy.com/toefl-writing-topics/>

<https://www.learn4good.com/languages/toefl/writingtopics.htm>

<http://ieltsliz.com/100-ielts-essay-questions/>

<http://www.dcielts.com/ielts-essays/sample-ielts-essay-questions/>

<http://www.proofreadingservices.com/blogs/esl/11846089-22-engaging-esl-essay-topics-you-can-use-to-improve-your-writing-skills>

執筆者

坂本 ファーン (iCoToBa 英語担当)

Short Essay Writing Course Book

2017 年 1 月発行

発行：愛知県立大学 iCoToBa (多言語学習センター)
〒480-1198 愛知県長久手市茨ヶ廻間 1522-3 E 棟 2 階
E-mail: icotoba@for.aichi-pu.ac.jp
<http://www.for.aichi-pu.ac.jp/icotoba/>

本教材は、愛知県立大学グローバル人材育成推進事業の
成果の一部として刊行された。

印刷 株式会社 あるむ

