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# Business Communication

**MBAAE101**

**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION**



Accredited with NAAC **A** Grade

**12-B Status from UGC**

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATION  
(MBAAE101)**

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## Unit 01: Listening- Understanding Vocabulary and Context

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Keywords

Self Assessment

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### Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- Describe different types of listening
- Discuss the importance of effective listening
- Know the requisites of effective listening
- Identify different ways to be an effective listener

### Introduction

Receiving and responding to spoken (and occasionally unspoken) messages is the active activity of listening. It is a subject that is studied in the realm of language arts as well as in the discipline of conversation analysis. Listening entails more than simply hearing what the other person has to say. Listening, according to poet AliceDuer Miller, "is having a strong, personal interest in what is being conveyed to us." "You can listen as if you're listening to a blank wall or as if you're listening to a magnificent auditorium where every sound comes back deeper and richer."

#### *Listening Elements and Levels*

Four elements are mentioned by author Marvin Gottlieb:

Attention: -The ability to focus on both visual and verbal inputs is known as attention.

Hearing: - The physiological act of 'opening the gates to your ears' is known as hearing.

Understanding: -Understanding entails attaching meaning to the messages that have been received.

Remembering: -"Remembering" is defined as "the act of preserving important information."

("Managing Group Process." Praeger, 2003)

## 1.1 Types of Listening

Listening has the following types:

1. Attentive listening: It involves paying attention on the words that are being spoken rather than understanding the head and heart of the person speaking. Attentive listening is said to an effective listening.



Example: you are sitting in class and actively participating in the discussion.

2. Pretending listening: It means pretending through facial expressions that communicated message is listened. Here, nothing like listening takes place, just hearing is there.



Example: you are sitting in a class and just pretending to listen to the lecture.

3. Selective listening: It means not taking the message as it is, but adding or deducting according to one's own whims and wishes i.e., selecting the 'desired' part and ignoring the 'undesired' part of the message.

This type of listening leads to strengthen one's own beliefs and restrains further learning. It usually happens in selective listening that the listener tries to identify himself with the situation either partially or totally and attempts to find his autobiography in the lives of others.

4. Empathic listening: It involves listening not only through ears but also through eyes and heart. It is listening intently and intensively to understand the person fully, deeply both emotionally as well as intellectually. Some people feel that empathic listening is risky as it means becoming open and vulnerable to other person's influence, while other feel that empathy for the speaker is an essential requirement of effective listening.

5. Listening for mutual creativity: It is a higher form of listening. The listening to inspire mutual creativity is responsible for many breakthroughs in the world. Listening for mutual creativity is rooted in two questions. What do you most want? And how can I help you get what you most want? To listen in total support of other people, to be for their goals and aspirations in your own body, mind and spirit - may well be the greatest gift you can give your fellow human beings.

This listening is synergistic in nature. The terms 'synergy' means that whole is greater than sum of its parts. Listening for creativity not only smoothes but accelerates the understanding process through communion of hearts and minds. This listening relieves the persons from stress and strain, soothes their hearts and helps them to bring the idea lying in the crust of their subconscious minds to the conscious surface. Thus, it leads to mutual creativity.

6. Intuitive listening: Intuitive listening, like listening for mutual creativity, is a higher form of listening. It means listening through intuitive mind by silencing the other internal dialogues going simultaneously.

## 1.2 Process of Listening

Like reading, listening is basically a mental process. It encompasses three broad stages:

1. Selection: Because one hears much more than one listens to, selection of the listening message initiates the process that selection involves a deliberate mental act.



Example: Think of how one functions in a room crowded with conversational groups. An individual hears all the sounds around him, but he selectively listens to only the few people in his immediate circle. Once an individual speaks, the listeners will not listen to the whole subject matter. They will listen selectively.

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*Unit 01: Listening-Understand Vocabulary and Context*

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2. Reception: Once one selects the sound to which one will listen, the next stage is reception. The complicated hearing mechanism picks up the chosen sound waves and transfers them to the brain. Hearing ability is a critical part of the process.

3. Symbol: Meaning manipulation: The most complicated part of listening requires one's mind to take the internal message symbols, interpret them, and convert them into meanings for them. As one can create symbol meanings that are right for him, neither the written nor the spoken words have any inherent meaning. Comprehension and retention are important in listening. However, one usually cannot re-listen from the same speaker as one can re-read. Therefore, the danger of misunderstanding and forgetting is even greater in listening than in reading. The typical listener cannot remember half of what he or she just heard, and can recall only one-fourth of it a short time later. This is a biological phenomenon and is inherent in every listener.

### **1.3 Personal Characteristics and Listening**

One may find oneself in the situation of talking to another person and suddenly becoming aware that the other person is not listening. Not a very good feeling, is it? The fact is that we have no fundamental hearing deficiency. Still, we do not listen very well. How can we become better listeners? Very little effort has been made to probe into this area. Several researchers have examined the potential relationships between effective listening and other individual characteristics. The researches in the area suggest several conclusions:

1. Sex: researches have shown that females comprehend slightly less from lectures than do males. The discrepancy is probably caused by the manner of testing. In general, it is not inherent in sex differences. Hence, sex of an individual does not affect listening ability.

2. Personality characteristics: No marked relationship between comprehension of subject matter and personality characteristics exists. Physique has no relation with listening. In other words, a good listener does not possess a certain type of personality.

3. Verbal competence: Verbal competence is an important part of listening comprehension. An adequate vocabulary aids listening and word retention. Without having adequate verbal competence, listening comprehension will be lower. In fact, the effective use of words, through both listening and speaking, is a definite business and social asset. The comprehension of the listener will increase if verbal competence is high.

4. Note taking: As most listeners concentrate more on taking notes, note taking does not have a noticeable effect on listening comprehension and retention. However, if one listens carefully and synthesizes, he will probably perform better in all walks of life.

5. Intelligence: Intelligence can be a determining factor in listening (oral) comprehension, but it is not the only element that affects oral proficiency. Intelligence alone does not produce listening skills. Other aspects are also important.

6. Scholastic excellence: Moderately positive correlations exist between listening ability and cumulative grade average. Such findings indicate that those who listen well get higher grades or better marks. This is quite natural also. Furthermore, because listening and reading have similar correlations with grade point average, it is reasonable to conclude that scholastic excellence depends equally upon oral and reading skills. Listening enhances scholarship and this in turn, gives better grade.

7. Motivation: A listener's comprehension improves if there is interest in the topic before the speech, if interest is created during the speech, or if the listener is to be tested after the speech. Interest in the speech may be developed at any point of time by motivation. Comprehension is also determined by the intensity of the listener's emotional reaction to what is being said. Finally, a listener's level of understanding is influenced by various methods of creating an anticipatory mindset. If the speaker introduces his points by stating that it is going to be critical, the listeners are more apt to remember his criticism. The speaker has created, in the minds of his audience, a mindset to anticipate criticism. This enhances his ability to listen. Hence, motivation in terms of mindset, interest and attitudes may improve listening proficiency.

8. Hearing ability: Many think that those who suffer some hearing loss are not good listeners. Actually, just the opposite is true. Researchers have substantiated that those with moderate hearing loss usually are better listeners than those who have normal hearing. They realize that this ability, whatsoever they are having, must be exploited fully.

9. Usage: Writing skills and, to a lesser extent, speaking skills, improve with use, but this is not necessarily with listening. Instructions and practice in effective listening are needed for listening improvement. Listening is a skill that cannot be learnt easily. All of us can become better listeners and better teachers of listening skills by constant practice and recognizing the importance of listening.

10. Organizational and structural ability: Listening comprehension is directly related to the ability to organize and structure a message. Unorganized or unstructured matter takes more time in comprehension. The better organized the message is, the higher the comprehension will be. This is true of speakers as well as listeners.

11. Distractions in environment: Environmental factors also influence comprehension. Good listeners will learn to allow for or adjust to distracting elements, such as poor lighting or extraneous noises, poor ventilation, distance from the speaker, or other environmental shortcomings that the listener cannot control. Good listeners have the ability to overcome a distracting environment.

### 1.4 Matching Phrases and Words with Definitions

Two adjacent lists of related words, phrases, pictures, or symbols form a matching question. At least one item from each list is paired with an item from the other list. Matching is a type of multiple-choice question in which more than one option can be correct. Multiple select (check all that apply) is a form of matching in which one of the lists (or the stem) contains only one item. After listening to the track, you are supposed to match the phrases or the definitions.



Task: Match the following words/phrases given column

| A |           | B |                    |
|---|-----------|---|--------------------|
| a | essential | 1 | big and strong     |
| b | hefty     | 2 | demand force fully |
| c | insist    | 3 | important          |
| d | miffed    | 4 | annoyed            |

(a)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | b | c | d |
| 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 |

(b)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | b | c | d |
| 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 |

(c)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | b | c | d |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 |

(d)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | b | c | d |
| 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

## 1.5 Taking Notes and Completing them

Know common abbreviated words and use them.

Rephrase what you are hearing, which speeds up your note taking. On an ongoing basis, work on improving your vocabulary. So you never have to think about which words to use when taking notes.

After the lecture or speaker event, rewrite your notes, which gives you the opportunity to review them. You'll remember more of what the lecturer said. This moves the information into your long-term memory.

Lecture notes are an essential part of a successful student's life, whether it is high school or university level. Notes are of no use if they are not well organized and difficult to read. One of the most popular ways of taking notes is by using the Cornell method. In this method, you need to divide the paper into three sections.

It is important that you create all three sections because each section has its own purpose in the Cornell method.

Once you have divided your paper into three sections, you are ready to take notes. While taking notes, you need to remember the 'R's of note taking.

1. Record: During the lecture, record your notes in the note-taking section. You should (practically you can't) not try to write down every single word of the lecture, but try to capture the main points. At this time, grammar, punctuation and spelling are not relevant, as long as the notes are readable later. There are a number of symbols and abbreviations that are commonly used while taking notes. You can also develop your own shorthand or abbreviations for your notes. You can create a key for your abbreviations so that you don't forget them. By time and repeated usage you will be able to remember the common abbreviations.



Example: Some commonly used abbreviations and symbols

|       |                     |
|-------|---------------------|
| &     | and                 |
| %     | percentage          |
| b4    | before              |
| govt. | government          |
| w/o   | without             |
| ASAP  | as soon as possible |
| ur    | your                |

|     |           |
|-----|-----------|
| Cld | could     |
| edu | education |

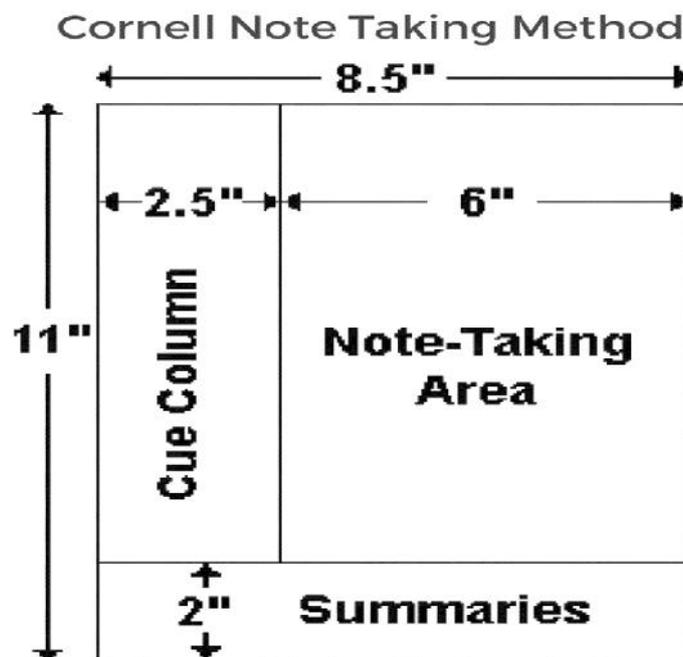
2. Reduce: After the lecture, reduce your notes to main keywords. These are cues to help you remember the information, and they are written in the 2.5-inch section to the left of the notes. The cue section is also a good place to note any questions that you have as you go over your notes.

3. Recapitulate: The summary of your notes goes in the 2-inch space at the bottom of the page. Summarise each page of notes at the bottom of that page. You can also summarise the entire lecture on the last page of the notes for that lecture. Most lists place recapitulation as the last step in the 6 R's, but it is best to write your summary after you write your cues in the left-hand column. Writing it immediately ensures that the information is still fresh in your mind, which helps you create a more accurate summary.

4. Recite: Recite the information. Saying it out loud can help to reinforce the learning process. Ideally, you can cover up the note-taking section and use the cue section to jog your memory when reciting.

5. Reflect: Think about your notes and the information that you have just learned. Consider how the information can be applied, and how it fits with what you already know. Figure out the significance of the information, and why knowing it is important.

6. Review: Review your notes frequently so that you don't forget the information. It is advisable to set aside time several days each week to review and recite your notes. If you do this, you will not have to worry much before the exam.



### 1.6 Understanding Phrases and Expressions in Context

Despite learning a lot of words, you will still encounter some that you do not know. Even in your first language you may not always know the meaning of every word that you hear and need to guess. This skill of guessing is even more necessary when you are listening to a foreign or second language (and while doing the Listening). There are two main ways we can make this process of guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words easier:

- 1 analysing how the word is written by decoding information from different parts of the word
- 2 examining the context (surrounding words/ideas) to figure out what the word might mean.

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Decoding words:-When you are confronted by unknown words, it is sometimes possible to guess their meaning by examining how the word has been put together. First, we need to decide which part of speech the word is: that is, whether the word is a noun, verb, adjective, adverb, etc. Then, by analysing the letters at the beginning or end of the word, we can make an educated guess what the word might mean.



Let's look at an example: agronomy

We can work out that this is probably a noun, as the -omy ending is similar to other nouns, such as economy or taxonomy. The first three letters, agr-, are also a clue. We might guess that this word is related to agriculture. So, our educated guess is that this noun is something to do with growing or raising farm products. Indeed, the Macquarie Dictionary defines agronomy as follows: (noun) the applied aspects of both soil science and the several plant sciences, often limited to applied plant sciences dealing with crops. Many words in English share common stems of words (called prefixes) or word endings (called suffixes) that help us decode meaning. For example, the prefix pre- is used with nouns, verbs and adjectives, and means 'before'. It is found with words like precaution and preliminary.

### Guessing meaning from context

Another way to guess the meaning of an unknown word is to look at the context of the word. This means analysing the surrounding words or ideas, and using logic and common knowledge to figure out what the word may mean.



Example:-I bought an old radio made out of bakelite.

Poor listeners may hear the word bakelite and say to themselves 'I don't know what that word means', panic, and stop listening. More effective listeners hear the word, quickly judge the context, say to themselves 'I guess it means some kind of material', and calmly keep listening.

Recognising meaning through pronunciation: - In order to understand what people are saying in the Listening, you need to be able to comprehend the way that speakers pronounce things in English. This includes the ability to:

- recognise individual words
- recognise content words
- catch the sentence focus
- understand the status of information.

There are a number of possible reasons why listeners might miss words:

English speakers do not pronounce all of the syllables of words equally clearly and strongly. They give main (primary) stress to only one of the syllables in each word.



For example, the main stress in 'international' is on the third of its five syllables: international.

Speakers of English often contract (shorten) words when they speak. For example, they may contract it will stop to it'll stop and did not go to didn't go. In informal speech, contraction is common and sometimes a word almost disappears completely



(For example, in Have you seen it? the beginning of have may disappear, and the v may join you so that it sounds like Vyou seen it?).

English speakers often reduce unstressed or weak syllables to a very short sound that is commonly called the schwa. This sound [ə] is found in the first syllable of words such as ago and o'clock and the last syllable of teacher and centre. The schwa is the most common sound in English.

When some sounds occur side by side, they may change. For example, in Did you go? the second d joins the y to create a new j sound resulting in Di-jou go?

## **1.7 Requirements of Effective Listening**

The following are critical thinking skills useful for effective listening:

1. Perceiving: Abilities to listen and observe, to compare and contrast observations so as to organize and interpret them come under perceiving. Further, it is important to understand how one's own point of view and its influence on perceptions also is included in it.
2. Arranging: Ability to group one's perceptions, classify them, discover patterns in them, and place them in order of importance come under arranging.
3. Reasoning: Abilities to make decisions, exercise judgments, arrive at conclusions from specific examples, and recognize specific examples or draw specific conclusions relate to reasoning.
4. Inferring: Abilities to recognize underlying assumptions, to make generalizations, to understand cause-effect relationships, and to make predictions comes under inquiring.
5. Inquiring: Ability to ask questions about and to analyze meanings of perceptions, including determining what is relevant and whether something is a fact or opinion come under inquiring.

## **1.8 Traits of a Good Listener**

A good listener:

1. Waits for the opportunities: ask "what's in it for me?"
2. Judges content skips over delivery, errors.
3. Doesn't judge until comprehension complete?
4. Listens for central themes
5. Takes fewer notes and uses four to five different systems, depending on the speaker
6. Works hard, exhibits active body state
7. Fights or avoids distractions, tolerates bad habits, knows how to concentrate.
8. Uses heavier material as exercise of the mind
9. Interprets emotion laden words; does not get hung up of them.
10. Challenge, anticipates, mentally summarize, weighs the evidence, listens between the lines to tone of voice.

## **1.9 Improving your General Listening**

If you need to learn more new vocabulary" guess the meaning of unknown words more efficiently or understand spoken pronunciation better, the suggestions below will help you. It is important to immerse yourself in spoken English to improve your general listening skills. Listen to one or more of the following sources daily.

Radio:-Find local and national English-language radio stations that feature interviews or talkback (where listeners telephone the station to give their views on current issues). International English-language radio stations, such as the BBC World Service, Voice of America, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation or Radio Australia, provide live streaming and podcasts through their websites.

Television:-Watch English-language television as much as possible. Look for material that features conversations (for example, soap operas, talk shows) and announcements or presentations (for example, news or current affairs programs, documentaries). Record these programs to watch again so you can analyse the language the presenters use.

DVDs/Videos :-Use DVDs or videos (for example, films, documentaries) to practise listening to extended examples of spoken English. Try to get material with a variety of accents - not just Hollywood movies in American English. Display the subtitles if you are having trouble understanding what you hear, but don't leave the subtitles on for extended periods (you will be doing more reading than listening). Stop and replay scenes to catch what you missed the first time around.

**Summary**

Listening is not the simple ability to decode information. It is a two-way exchange in which both parties involved must always be receptive to the thoughts, ideas, and emotions of the other. Z

There are different types of listening. They are: Attentive listening, pretending listening, emphatic, selective, intuitive and listening for mutual creativity.

The process of listening consists of three steps: Selection, reception and symbol.

Listening is a major ingredient of the communication process, and the lack of this skill is primarily responsible for many of the problems we experience with people.

Effective listening is one of the critical skills related to effective communication. It requires more than merely hearing the speaker. It requires grasping and understanding.

A good listener listens to understand what is meant, not to get ready to reply, contradict, or refute. This is extremely important as a general attitude. Active listening is understanding without judgment. It is more than listening to the content of the message, it is also trying to understand what is behind the content.

**Keywords**

- Attentive Listening: The practice of paying close attention to a speaker
- Empathic listening: A way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding and trust.
- Hearing: The faculty of perceiving sounds
- Intuitive Listening: Involves the recognition of symbolic communication, metaphors, dreams, induction, nonverbal emotional communications etc.
- Listening: Make an effort to hear something
- Selective Listening: The act of listening to only the things a person wants to hear

**SelfAssessment**

1. Which of the following are reasons active listening is a must have skill?
  - A. Listening to One Another Generates New Ideas
  - B. Listening makes you feel boring
  - C. Listening creates Conflict
  - D. Listening makes you weak
  
2. Which of the following are listening techniques to become a better listener?
  - A. Gender
  - B. Paying attention
  - C. Judgement
  - D. Lack of Manners and Etiquette
  
3. Hearing what someone says, identifying key points and/or arguments and solidifying your opinion. Which Listening Style is this?
  - A. Appreciative
  - B. Critical
  - C. Relationship
  - D. Discriminative

4. One of the most important skills to have when dealing with people. Also known as therapeutic or empathetic listening. Which Listening Style is this?
  - A. Appreciative Listening
  - B. Critical Listening
  - C. Relationship Listening
  - D. Discriminative Listening
  
5. Listening to Enjoy. Which Listening Style is this?
  - A. Appreciative Listening
  - B. Critical Listening
  - C. Relationship Listening
  - D. Discriminative Listening
  
6. Looking for underlying message; picking up on body language, tone changes and volume to really understand what the speaker thinks. Which Listening Style is this?
  - A. Appreciative Listening
  - B. Critical Listening
  - C. Relationship Listening
  - D. Discriminative Listening
  
7. Which of the following is a sign of active listening?
  - A. paraphrasing, or summarizing what someone has said
  - B. interrupting, or talking over someone
  - C. changing the subject
  - D. being totally silent while someone else talks
  
8. Which posture best shows that a person is actively listening?
  - A. layabout
  - B. slug
  - C. sitting up straight
  - D. standing with your back to the speaker
  
9. When you're actively listening, you should look \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. at the ground
  - B. at the speaker
  - C. out the window
  - D. at a page of notes
  
10. Which of the following is a verbal cue you can use to show you're actively listening?
  - A. Saying nothing
  - B. interrupting
  - C. humming a song
  - D. asking a follow-up question

Unit 01: Listening-Understand Vocabulary and Context

11. Liz is giving presentation on Financial Crisis faced by Economy.If you are actively Listening you might
- Interrupt in between and share your opinion
  - Raise your hand in middle of the presentation and ask your question
  - Remain busy in your phone
  - Raise your hand at the end of the presentation and ask your question
12. One of the good trait of Listener is
- To give opinion in between
  - Wait for the turn to give opinion
  - Day dream about the topic
  - None of these
13. It's good idea to write abbreviation while making notes
- Yes
  - No
  - Sometimes
  - Never
14. If you are listening, you are being \_\_\_\_\_.
- rude
  - annoying
  - unkind
  - respectful
15. ....Listening is of no use.
- Active Listening
  - Empathetic Listening
  - Pretended Listening
  - Critical Listening

**Answers for SelfAssessment**

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A  | 2. B  | 3. B  | 4. C  | 5. A  |
| 6. D  | 7. A  | 8. C  | 9. B  | 10. A |
| 11. D | 12. B | 13. A | 14. D | 15. C |

**Review Questions**

- How is listening different from hearing? Explain with the help of examples.
- Discuss different types of listening. Give example for each.
- Explain the process of listening with the help of an example.
- Is effective listening related to personality or sex of an individual? Justify your answer.

5. "Listening is a skill that cannot be learnt easily". Substantiate.
6. "Listening is a major ingredient of the communication process". Discuss.
7. Discuss the requisites of effective listening.



### **Further Readings**

1. 12 Strategies That Help Improve your Listening Comprehension in English (talktocanada.com)
2. Strategies for How to Improve English Listening Skills (thoughtco.com)
3. Types of Listening Skills with Examples (thebalancecareers.com)

## Unit 02: Listening for Details

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Objectives

Introduction

- 2.1 Why Note-Taking is important?
- 2.2 Methods of Taking-Notes
- 2.3 So when should I use mind mapping
- 2.4 Writing Meeting Notes
- 2.5 Taking Notes Makes You More Productive
- 2.6 Steps for Effective Note Making

Summary

Keywords

Self Assessment

Answers for Self Assessment

Review Questions

Further Readings

### Objectives

- Assess the importance of note taking
- Dramatically accelerate your learning capacity
- Instantly see connections and links between different subjects
- Develop effective brainstorming techniques
- Discuss the Cornell method
- Outline method and Mapping method of note taking
- Assess the relevance of note making
- Discuss the steps in effective note making
- Explain the methods of note making

### Introduction

Listening for detail is a style of listening wherein we cannot afford to miss anything since we do not know exactly what information from the listening passage will be required to finish the task. This word is occasionally mistaken with listening for particular information, which is used when we do not need to grasp everything that is said, but only a small portion of it.

When we are listening for detail Note taking plays an integral role. Note taking is the practice of recording information captured from a transient source, such as an oral discussion at a meeting, or a lecture. Note taking is an important skill for students, especially at the college level. Unless you have an extraordinary memory, effective note taking will help you throughout your college and professional careers. You can increase your comprehension and retention of information through accurate and meaningful note taking. Nonetheless, the key to good note taking habits is effective and active listening. A good note taker is one who listens to what is being communicated carefully and critically. Note making is an advanced writing skill, which has acquired importance of late due to knowledge explosion. There is a need to remember at least the main points of any given subject. Making notes is a complex activity, which combines several skills like reading,

writing, understanding, presenting and summarizing. We take notes to reduce the source material, like a chapter of a textbook or an article, to a minimum, while still being able to follow the key points of an argument. Making notes helps you in retaining what you have read in much better manner. It also helps in your revision.

## 2.1 Why Note-Taking is important?

Note taking is without a doubt one of the most important and essential tools in a student's life. Note-Taking is important because:

1. It is essential for providing you with the necessary evidence to inform and develop your argument.
2. It assists you in concentrating on and understanding the information you are reading by helping you to summarize the ideas and arguments in the text
3. It allows you to focus on the points relevant to your purpose
4. Well-organized notes make the writing process much more efficient
5. Notes developed using an active and critical approach will also allow you to refine your argument before you begin writing.

## 2.2 Methods of Taking-Notes

Note taking is useful only when it is done properly. When you wish to acquire learning in the right manner, you need to be sure that you are concentrating on proper techniques in note taking. It is important to ensure that you are following the right methods in taking notes so as to not miss out on the important details and also to follow the lessons well. Perhaps the simplest method of note taking is the sentence method. You can write every new fact, thought or any piece of information in a new sentence. This way your notes will look slightly more organized than paragraph. However, it can sometimes become difficult to differentiate between major and minor facts. So, it is advisable that students use different fonts or different style (say, simple writing for major points and italics for minor points) so that they can easily figure the main and minor points.

### *Outline Method*

The outline method of note taking starts on the left-hand side of the paper. The most important points are placed at the left edge of the paper. Less important points, which are typically ideas that support the main points, are indented to the right. Each set of less important points is indented more to the right. It is easy to see, at a glance, the level of importance of the different ideas because of the distance between them and the major points.

An alternate form, which requires a little more thought, is to start with minor points to the left and indenting as points get more important. The alternate outline form is best used in lectures where minor ideas are used to build up to the most important ideas.

With either form, indentation is enough to show the importance of the ideas and the relationship between them. If you would like something more concrete, however, you can opt for using dashes, bullets or a Roman numeral and letter combination for further emphasis. For the sake of speed and being able to focus on the lecture, you may want to consider adding the marks after class when you review your notes.

As the name suggests, the Outline method is an outline of the material, divided into Main topics, SubTopics, and details. Outline notes look something like this:

First main topic \_\_\_\_\_

A. Subtopic \_\_\_\_\_

1. Detail \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Detail \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## B. Subtopic \_\_\_\_\_

The outline method of note taking has several advantages. The outline method not only shows the content and main points of the lecture, but also shows the relationship between points. With an outline, it is easy to identify the main points of the information, and reviewing can be as simple as turning main points into questions. In addition, the outline is set up so simply that it takes very little, if any, editing for notes to be easily understood.

A major benefit of the outline method is the ability to focus on the lecture. Outlining does not require speed or great detail in the writing, both of which take away from your ability to listen to what is said. Outlining does require that you pay enough attention to the lecture to be able to outline the key ideas, which can help you retain more of the information.

There are some disadvantages to the outlining method. The outline method can be difficult to use in science and mathematical courses because those courses need more of an ability to show sequential relationships than outlining offers. Courses with fast-paced lectures may also be difficult to outline, partially because outlining requires the note-taker to think about organization.

**Mapping Method**

Mapping is a visual system of condensing material to show relationships and importance. A map is a diagram of the major points, with their significant sub-points, that support a topic. The purpose of mapping as an organizing strategy is to improve memory by grouping material in a highly visual way. The map provides a quick reference for over-viewing a lecture or a textbook chapter.

The following steps describe the procedure to use in mapping:

Draw a circle or a box in the middle of a page and write the subject or topic of the material or lecture in it.

Decide the main ideas that support the subject and write them on the lines radiating from the central circle or box.

Decide the significant details and write them on lines attached to each main idea. The number of details you include will depend on the material and your purpose.

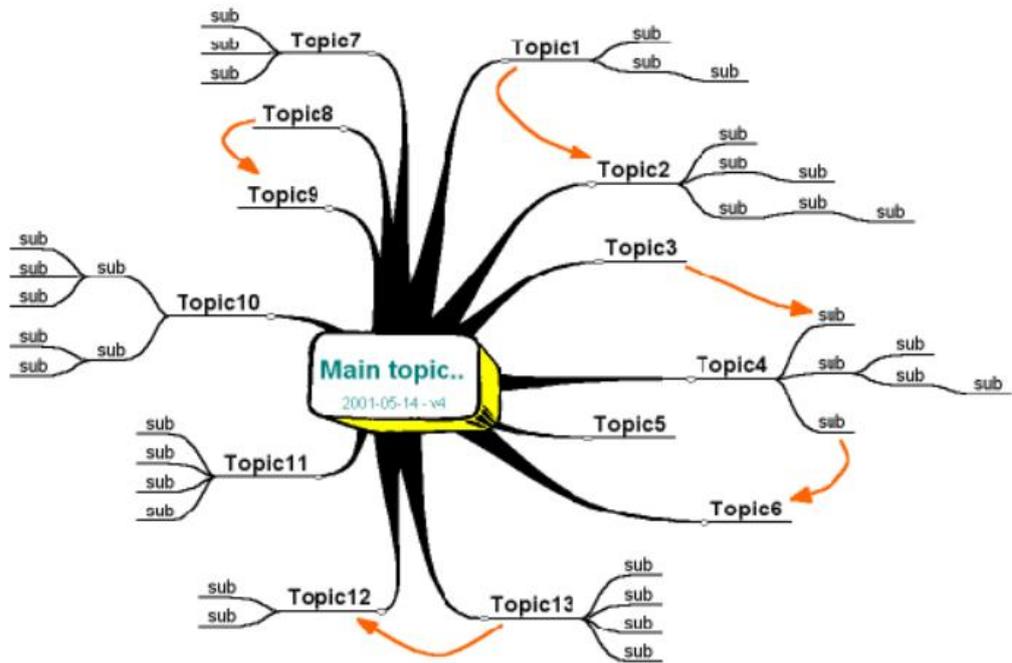
Maps are not restricted to any one pattern, but can be formed in a variety of creative shapes like:-

- **Pictures** What you see, you will remember! Your mind has an enormous capacity to remember pictures and images. The brain constantly takes "photos" of your life and stores these in a gigantic photo album inside your head. This is very critical for mind mapping since it is much easier to remember a picture than long lines of pure text.
- **Headlines** It is far more easy to remember single words, short phrases, and striking headlines, than to remember pure text. This is quite self-explanatory - you could try to quote this entire chapter through hundreds of hours of studying - and surely fail anyway. Or you could simply write down a headline for each important point, and still remember 95% of the important information.
- **Connection** Your consciousness always analyzes how things are connected. A lot of the brain's work is based on association, and it automatically links different subjects together to create a system that it can understand. It is important to let your brainwork the way it wants and help it, instead of forcing it to take a certain direction. Your brain will be much happier, and it will reward you with knowledge and the power to remember.



Here is an example of Mind Mapping

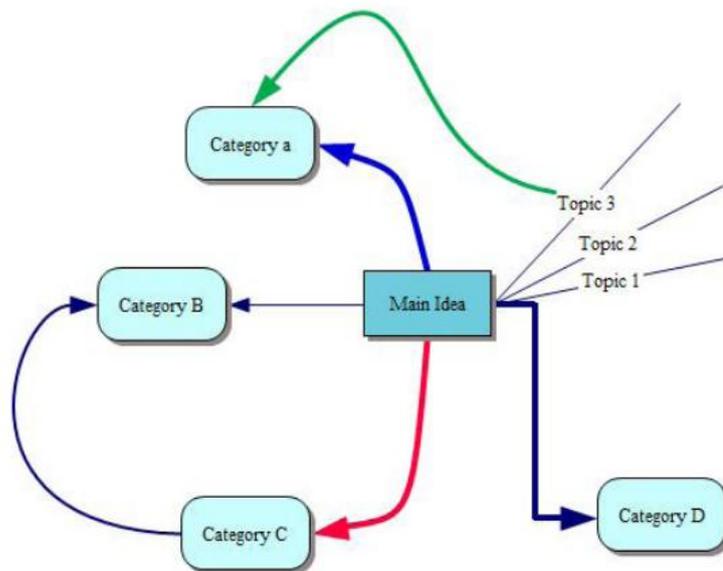
You see here that everything is very systematic and structured. There are no lines crossing each other, and the entire mind map is very easy to understand and follow. Each line proceeds directly to the specific headline it is linked to.



You see here that everything is very systematic and structured. There are no lines crossing each other, and the entire mind map is very easy to understand and follow. Each line proceeds directly to the specific headline it is linked to.



Example:



You can see here that there are different kinds of lines connecting the topics. Some are drawn as arches, some are arrows pointing to the subject, some are straight lines with an angle. By using the lines properly, you have the freedom to place the topics virtually anywhere you like, and still link the entire mind map together to create a clean and easy to understand structure. And by the way, looking at a mind map should be a pleasure, so if you are gifted with artistic talents you already have a head start! So as you can see in the above example, even in the most basic of mind maps, how you organize the lines plays a critical part when it comes to creating a clear overview.

### 2.3 So when should I use mind mapping

whenever you want to get things done faster, more effectively, and with better end results.



Here are a few examples:

1. When you want to speed up your learning If you want to be able to absorb knowledge faster, this is the tool to use.
2. When developing new ideas I always use mind mapping to assist me when I need to develop ideas quickly. It becomes so easy to come up with new ideas and to understand the big picture, and it really speeds up the process.
3. When you want to work with other people If you want an easy way to illustrate a complex idea, or when you suspect that your colleagues might not be following you, mind mapping helps. For example, if you want to present a new concept to your company - create a mind map and ask your colleagues to do the same. Then compare. You will often find that effective new solutions appear with surprisingly little work.
4. When you need to understand a complicated system It can sometimes be hard to see the big picture when there are thousands of factors to keep in mind. But with a mind map, you already have everything structured, and you don't risk being distracted by the individual components. This makes it easy for you to get an overview of the entire project.
5. And thousands of other situations... ..that I can think of - just use your imagination.

## 2.4 Writing Meeting Notes

At some point your seniors may ask you to take minutes at a meeting. This task is not reserved for secretaries only. Any person who attends a meeting may be asked to do this. Since the minutes will serve as an official record of what took place during the meeting, you must be very accurate and organised. While taking minutes in a meeting the writer should be very attentive and excellent listener.

One who takes minutes should keep the following points in mind:

1. Before the Meeting, you should
  - (a) Decide how you will take notes, i.e. pen and paper, laptop computer, or tape recorder. If you choose pen and paper, you must make sure you have plenty of papers (or a diary or notebook) and at least a couple of pens in working order.
  - (b) Use the meeting agenda to formulate an outline.
2. During the Meeting, you should
  - (a) Pass around an attendance sheet as soon as the meeting is called to order.
  - (b) Get a list of committee members and make sure you know who is who.
  - (c) Note the time the meeting begins.
  - (d) Not try to write down every single comment made by the speaker, just put down the main ideas.
  - (e) Write down motions, who made them, and the results of votes, if any but there is no need to write down who seconded a motion.
  - (f) Also make note of any motions to be voted on at future meetings.
  - (g) Also note the ending time of the meeting.
3. After the Meeting, you should
  - (a) Transfer all the information noted to a system/ laptop as soon as possible after the meeting, while everything is still fresh in your mind.
  - (b) Highlight the name of organization, name of committee, type of meeting (daily, weekly, monthly, annual, or special), and purpose of meeting.
  - (c) Proofread the minutes carefully before submitting them.

## **2.5 Taking Notes Makes You More Productive**

We make notes to:

1. Have a personal record of material
2. Assist understanding of material
3. Identify key points of the text
4. Help you retain what was said or what you read
5. Record pointers/reminders for further work, e.g. references
6. Remind you of things to do

## **2.6 Steps for Effective Note Making**

The steps for effective note taking are as follows:

Step 1: You must be certain about the purpose of taking the notes.

Step 2: You must read the article or passage from which you have to make notes very carefully. You must read it with full concentration. You may read it twice (or even more times) if you have any doubts. After you are confident that you understand the text, you should select what you think are the main points and highlight them. Ideally, the key points should include names, dates, technical terms, arguments for/against, etc. You must keep a dictionary along so that you can look up for any words you do not understand.

Step 3: After you have identified the main points, you can now you can make notes. The idea should be to summarise the text in most effective manner. You should be brief, but not so brief that your notes do not make any sense. You may/should use headings and subheadings to divide parts of your notes where appropriate.

### ***Sequential or Linear Note-Making***

This traditional approach typically involves making notes in the form of lists or phrases.

Notes of this type can be made for different purposes and can include more or less detail, as required, or to highlight points. The main features of good sequential notes are:

1. Key words and phrases
2. Headings
3. Sub-headings
4. Conciseness
5. Underlined or highlighted key points
6. Margins or written on every other line to allow space for comments or future additional notes
7. Inclusion of diagrams, flow charts and colors (if appropriate)
8. Suitable layout

**Heading / Title of the Topic**

1. **Sub – heading 1**
  1. **i. Point 1**
  1. **ii. Sub sub-heading**
    1. **ii. a. Sub point 1**
    1. **ii. b. sub point 2**
  1. **iii. Point 2**
2. **Sub – heading 2**
  2. **i. Point 1**
  2. **ii. Sub sub-heading**
    2. **ii. a. Sub point 1**
    2. **ii. b. sub point 2**
  2. **iii. Point 2**

**Key**  
**Gov.** – government  
**Info.** – Information



Task: Problem: A person really wants to remember the information the speaker is providing. What should he need to do?

Listen for non – verbal clues

Listen for verbal clues

Write down the important details

None of the above

Problem: Why is it important to take notes?

Helps you remember

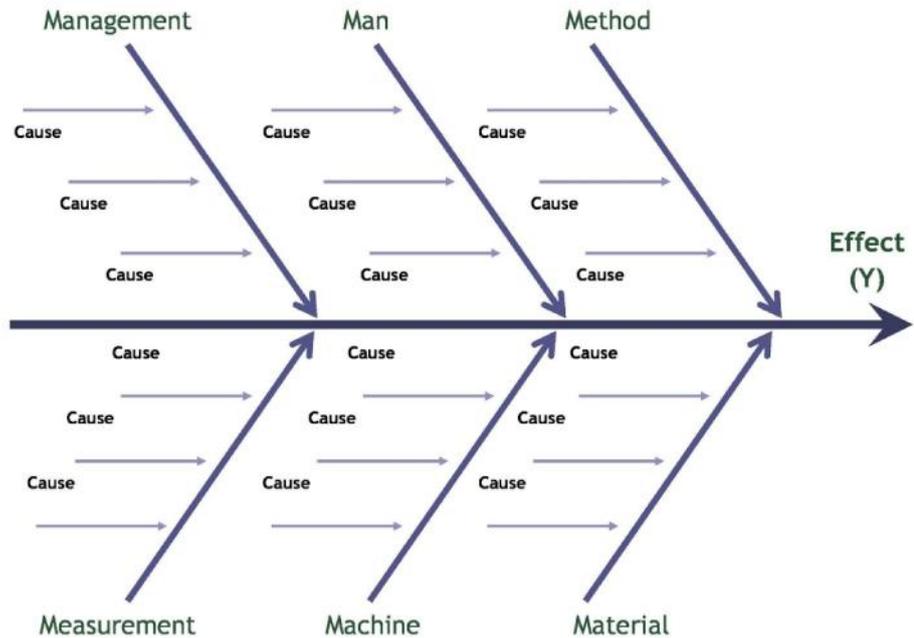
Improves your concentration level

Helps you prepare for tests

All of the above

### ***Fishbone Diagram***

Fishbone diagrams, or 'Ishikawa diagrams', named after Professor Kaoru Ishikawa, the originator, are useful for analysis to identify and illustrate cause and effect issues in any situation. The problem is identified (tip of arrow) and 'side bones' are added, as appropriate, to build up a structure perceived to be contributing to the 'effect'.



These diagrams are now used regularly in quality management and are particularly useful for group analysis and discussion of a problem, as shown above. However, they are also useful as an individual form of note making, especially if you need to build a note picture of a cause-and-effect situation in preparation for writing an assignment or handling an exam question.

**Effective Note Making**

Your note making technique and presentation should be such that you do not need to waste time re-writing them. Following are some points that should be kept in mind while making notes:

Making notes means that you do not have to write fully expressed sentences: they must however be in your own words and clear enough for you to be able to read them when you come back to them.

Do not simply copy out of textbooks: put the notes into your own words. To be able to do this, you will have to ensure full understanding of the topic. This understanding makes for effective learning.

Although you can copy out direct quotations from the text, you should keep these to minimum: where you feel a quotation is particularly apt, or where it expresses an idea so clearly that you could not put it better yourself, even in note form, only then you should quote verbatim.

Leave lot of space in between major points: this will let you add points later and will make it quicker and easier to re-read your notes.

Always review your notes: fill in gaps, sort out misunderstandings, and make summaries of topics to enhance your understanding of the material.

Note Making vs Note Taking

The major point of difference between note taking and note making are highlighted in the table below

| Note Taking   | Note Making  |
|---|--|
| The process of writing or recording what you hear in a descriptive way.<br>This is the first stage of producing effective | An advanced process that involves reviewing, synthesizing, connecting ideas from the lecture or reading and presenting the information in a readable, creative way; and in a way that will |

notes.

remain in your mind.



Task: Problem: Provide a suitable title and make a note of the paragraph in any format.

RLM Banking Group Full-year net profit at RLM fell by 9.5%. The bank is still considering the terms of its merger with Credit Farnon, which is estimated to lead to cost savings of around \$550m. It is hoped that this will fend off likely approaches from JC Coombs, the US bank. The group's share price experienced a dramatic fall at the beginning of the year and then flat lined. It has recently rallied in response to the merger talks but many analysts are dubious about the durability of this upturn.

B Wellon Foods Wellon Foods have increased their revenue from £265m to £294m, resulting in an operating profit of £3.9m. This success is partly due to the high profile advertising, including promotion of high-energy drinks by a number of celebrities but the company's finances have also been boosted following the favorable outcome of a legal dispute over tax. Plans are going ahead to launch a test service to allow shoppers to order food on the Internet for home delivery.

## Summary

- Note taking is an important skill for students, especially at the college level. Unless you have an extraordinary memory, effective note taking will help you throughout your college and professional careers.
- Note taking assists you in concentrating on and understanding the information, you are reading by helping you to summarize the ideas and arguments in the text.
- It is important to ensure that you are following the right methods in taking notes to not miss the important details and to follow the lessons well. Popular methods of note taking include sentence method, Cornell method, outline method and mapping method.
- Note taking skills is also helpful for professionals. Note taking skills helps them in taking the minutes properly and in an organized way.
- Making notes is a complex activity, which combines several skills like reading, writing, understanding, presenting and summarizing.
- Effective note taking and making methods are those that best encourage the process of review and recall of what has been learned, and encourage integration of your own perspectives, comments and reflections.

## Keywords

- Fishbone Diagram: The problem is identified (tip of arrow) and 'side bones' are added, as appropriate, to build up a structure perceived to be contributing to the 'effect'.
- Indentation: The blank space between a margin and the beginning of an indented line.
- Linear Note Making: Traditional approach that typically involves making notes in the form of lists or phrases Mapping: A visual system of condensing material to show relationships and importance.
- Mind-mapping: It involves making notes with patterns and by using images Minutes: A summarized record of the proceedings at a meeting.
- Note Making: An advanced process that involves reviewing, synthesizing, connecting ideas from the lecture or reading and presenting the information in a readable, creative way
- Note Taking: Practice of recording information captured from a transient source, such as an oral discussion at a meeting, or a lecture.

- Recapitulate: Summarise Sentence Method of Note Taking: Writing each point separately in a different sentences

### **SelfAssessment**

1. In Cornell method of note taking, a student divides the paper into..... sections.
  - A. 1
  - B. 2
  - C. 3
  - D. 4
  
2. Which practice is NOT recommended for taking notes?
  - A. Use only full sentences
  - B. add essential
  - C. edit your notes later
  - D. follow any method of note taking
  
3. In mind mapping, what goes in the center circle?
  - A. the name of the topic
  - B. the most important details
  - C. the source of the notes
  - D. the date the notes are taken
  
4. The teacher includes the information below in her presentation. Choose the best way to make a note to remember it.

Hawaii is the most recent of the 50 states in the United States. It became a state in 1959. It is the only state that is made up entirely of islands.

  - A. Hawaii-most recent state, 1959. all islands
  - B. Hawaii is the most recent state to join the United Sates. It jointed in 1959. It's the only state that is all islands
  - C. Hawaii joined in 1959
  - D. Hawaii on of the 50 united states 1959
  
5. How does the outlining method compare to mind mapping?
  - A. outlining allows more room for your thoughts and ideas
  - B. outlining focuses on questions and answers
  - C. outlining provides a clearer connection among ideas
  - D. Outlining is more formal and structured.
  
6. When taking notes, abbreviations and symbols \_\_\_\_\_
  - A. should be avoided
  - B. allow you to take notes faster
  - C. should only; be used in technical subjects
  - D. are an essential part of mind mapping
  
7. In a mind map, details are

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*Unit 02: Listening for Details*

- A. further from the center than subtopics
  - B. in the center
  - C. between the center and subtopics
  - D. not important
8. Note taking is the art of
- A. writing something useful.
  - B. writing something useless.
  - C. writing something boring.
  - D. writing something interesting.
9. You should develop your \_\_\_\_\_ when taking notes.
- A. own topic
  - B. own system
  - C. collaborative strategy
  - D. collaborative file
10. Which of the following are note taking methods?
- A. Cornell
  - B. Mind mapping
  - C. Outline
  - D. All of the above
11. ....method of note taking does not require speed or great detail in writing.
- A. Cornell
  - B. Outline
  - C. Mind mapping
  - D. None of these
12. Purpose of ..... is to improve memory by grouping material in a highly visual way
- A. Cornell
  - B. Mapping
  - C. Outlining
  - D. All of the above
13. The notes taken in a business meeting are called.....
- A. Agenda
  - B. Minutes
  - C. Memo
  - D. Notice
14. A good note taker has to be a good .....
- A. Listener
  - B. Interpreter
  - C. Writer

D. Speaker

15. While making notes, the attempt should be to make them as brief as possible

A. True

B. False

C. Not sure

D. Partially true

### **Answers for Self Assessment**

1. C            2. A            3. A            4. A            5. D

6. B            7. A            8. A            9. C            10. D

11. B           12. B           13. B           14. A           15. B

### **Review Questions**

1. "The key to good note taking habits is effective and active listening." Comment.
2. "Note taking enables you to acquire learning in the right manner." Discuss.
3. "Notes are of no use if they are not well organized and difficult to read." Substantiate.
4. Draw a specimen of a page to explain the Cornell method of note taking.
5. Explain the 6 'R's of note taking.



### **Further Readings**

A.N. Kapoor, Business Correspondence and Communication Skills, S.Chand.

Bovee, Thill, Schatzman, Business Communication Today, 7th Edition, Pearson Education.

Herta A Murphy, Herbert Writing Hildebrandt, Jane P Thomas, Effective Business Communication, 7th Edition, Mcgraw Hill. Shirley Taylor, Communication for Business, Pearson Education. Online li



### **Web Links**

[http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Note\\_taking](http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Note_taking)

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/notes.html>

<http://www.canyons.edu/committees/leap/team1/15tips/tip2.asp>

[www.rajeduboard.nic.in/books/XI/11072/Chapter9.pdf](http://www.rajeduboard.nic.in/books/XI/11072/Chapter9.pdf)

[www.pdtogo.com/files/making%20notes.pdf](http://www.pdtogo.com/files/making%20notes.pdf)

**Unit 03: Tenses, Clauses and Transitional Words or Phrases****CONTENTS**

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**Objectives**

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- Delineate the difference between defining and non-defining relative clauses
- Understand the usage of 'as' and 'like'
- Identify and correct pronoun problems
- Apprehend the position of Adverbs in sentences

**Introduction**

It is critical to learn appropriate grammar since it is the language that allows us to communicate successfully about language. Grammar refers to the words and word groupings that make up sentences in practically any language, not only English. Even as youngsters, we are capable of putting phrases together. Knowing grammar, on the other hand, is being able to discuss how sentences are constructed, as well as the many sorts of words and word groupings that make up sentences. Understanding grammar gives a glimpse into the human mind and our incredibly complicated mental aptitude for knowing and learning a given language in this way. Grammar is usually associated with faults and accuracy. Keep in mind, however, that understanding grammar also aids us in comprehending what makes phrases and paragraphs clear, fascinating, enjoyable, and accurate.

**3.1 Usage of Relative and Non-Relative Clauses**

There are two types of relative clauses:

- defining relative clauses: provide necessary information for comprehension of the sentence. The relative must comprehend the sentence.
- non-defining relative clauses: provide EXTRA information. The statement still makes sense without the relative clause.

### **Defining relative clauses**

Look at this sentence: The man who lives next door works in a school.

'who lives next door' is a defining relative clause. It tells us which man we are talking about. Without this information, we wouldn't know who the man is.

Look at some more examples: Be cautious! There's the cat that bit my sister.

The concert that we saw last week was awful.

This is the dress I bought in the sales.

With defining relative clauses we can use who or that to talk about people.

She's the lady who cuts my hair.

She's the lady that cuts my hair.

And we can use which or that to talk about things.

The cat that bit my sister.

The cat which bit my sister.

It is also sometimes possible to omit the relative pronoun.

This is the dress that I bought in the sales.

This is the dress which I bought in the sales.

This is the dress I bought in the sales.

In this sentence 'dress' is the object of the verb (buy). 'I' is the subject. When the relative pronoun is the object, it can be omitted.

Look at some more examples: The concert we saw last week was awful.

The concert THAT we saw last week was awful.

The friend I was travelling with spoke Spanish.

The friend WHO I was travelling with spoke Spanish.

### **Non-defining relative clauses**

Look at this sentence: My grandmother, who is 90, goes for walk every day.

'who is 90' is a non-defining relative clause. It adds extra information to the sentence.

If we take the clause out of the sentence, the sentence still has the same meaning.

Look at some more examples:

The film, which stars Tom Cruise, is released on Christmas.

The bike, which can reach speeds of over 100km/ph, costs over 1lakhs.

Non defining relative clauses can use most relative pronouns: who, which, whose, where, etc,) but they CAN'T use 'that' and the relative pronoun CAN NEVER be omitted.

The film, which stars Tom Cruise, is released on Christmas.

The film, that stars Tom Cruise, is released on Christmas.

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*Unit 03: Tenses, Clauses and Transitional Words or Phrases*

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They are more often used in written English than in spoken English.

You can tell that a clause is non-defining because it is SEPARATED BY COMMAS.

### 3.2 Pronoun Problems

Pronouns are helpful as noun substitutions, but a badly selected pronoun can obfuscate a sentence's meaning. The following are examples of common pronoun errors:

#### *Referencing a Pronoun That Isn't Clear*

A pronoun must be used in conjunction with a specific noun (the antecedent). Confusion arises from ambiguous pronoun references.



For example, today's financial crises vary from those of the past in that they have broader global ramifications. (Which problems, today's or yesterday's, have more serious consequences?)

If there's a chance of ambiguity, employ a noun: One significant distinction between today's financial crises and those of the past is that today's crises have a wider global influence.

#### **Pronoun with a Vague Subject**

Pronouns like *it*, *there*, and *this* are frequently used as weak subjects. Only use a pronoun as the subject if the antecedent is obvious.

For example, before granting Emperor Henry IV an audience, Pope Gregory VII made him wait three days in the winter at Canossa. It was an act of symbolism. (What exactly does "it" relate to? Is it fair to make the emperor wait? Is it worth it to wait? Is it possible that the audience will be granted? Who is the target audience? (Do you mean the complete sentence?)

#### *Error in the Agreement*

A pronoun's gender and number must match those of its antecedent. The use of the plural pronoun *they* to refer to a singular word is a common mistake.

Polygamy was permitted under the initial state constitution. [Constitution (single) is referred to by them (plural).]

REVISED: Polygamy was permitted under the original state constitution.

Using a plural noun and pronoun is generally preferable to using a singular noun and pronoun. It's important to remember that indefinite pronouns like *each* and *every one* are singular.

Each student, for example, must meet with their adviser. (Incorrect: plural pronoun, singular noun)

Each student, for example, must meet with his or her adviser. (Correct, but inconvenient)

Students must meet with their advisers. REVISED: Students must meet with their advisors. (plural noun and pronoun are valid)

### 3.3 Usage of As or Like

In case you are comparing clauses (a clause is a part of a sentence that contains a subject and a verb), you must use 'as'. On the other hand, 'like' is used when the comparison only includes a subject.



Example:

Usage of 'Like': "Mohina cooks like her mother."

Usage of 'As': "Mohina cooks as her mother does."



Example for incorrect usage: "Mohina cooks like her mother does."

The last sentence is incorrect as a verb; i.e. 'does' cannot be used when we use like.



Example:

Incorrect: Nina and Tina, as their mother Hena, are extremely short.

Correct: Nina and Tina, like their mother Hena, are extremely short.

#### Like versus As: Key Learning

An easy way to differentiate between 'like' and 'as' is to simply remember to use 'like' when no verb follows.



For example: Mohina sleeps like a baby. (If the clause that comes next includes a verb, then you should use 'as'.)



For example: Mohina sleeps as if she were a child.

### 3.4 Future Time Clauses

A time clause tells when something will happen. A time clause is always a dependent clause. A future time clause talks about when a future event will happen.

#### Using time clauses in the future

Future time clauses inform us when something will happen in the future. However, another future event must occur first in order for the future event to occur. Consider the following sentence:

He'll play golf when the sun shines. First, the sun must shine. He'll play golf when it happens. The future time clause is when the sun comes out. The dependent clause (the future time clause) is expressed in the simple present. The independent sentence, or main clause, is written in the simple future.

#### Future time clause-initiating words

When, after, as soon as, before, till, are some typical terms used to begin future time clauses. The main clause may appear before or after the future time clause. The meaning is the same in both cases. We place a comma (,) between the future time clause and the main sentence when it appears first. We don't do it when it's last. Remember to write the future time clause in the simple present, no matter where you put it. In the simple future, write the main phrase. Take a look at the samples below:

When I finish the cleaning, I'll go shopping.

I'll go shopping when I finish the cleaning.

After we eat dinner, we'll go for a walk.

We'll go for walk after we eat dinner.

### 3.5 Usage of Tenses

|                           | PRESENT  | PAST   | FUTURE   |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>INDEFINITE</b>         | <b>Verb+s/es</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He goes to school.</li> <li>• They go to school.</li> <li>• He does his work well.</li> <li>• They do their work well.</li> </ul>  | <b>Verb+ed or an irregular form</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He/They went to school.</li> <li>• He/They did his work well.</li> <li>• He spent his holidays well.</li> </ul>   | <b>Auxiliary verb+first form of verb</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He will go to school.</li> <li>• I shall go to school.</li> <li>• He will do his work well.</li> <li>• They will do their work well.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>CONTINUOUS</b>         | <b>Auxiliary verb (is/am/are)+verb+ing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is going to school.</li> <li>• They are going to school.</li> <li>• I am going to school.</li> </ul>  | <b>Auxiliary verb (was/were)+verb+ing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He was going to school.</li> <li>• They were going to school.</li> <li>• I was going to school.</li> </ul>  | <b>Auxiliary verb (will be/shall be)+verb+ing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He will be going to school.</li> <li>• They will be going to school.</li> <li>• I shall be going to school.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>PERFECT</b>            | <b>Auxiliary verb (has/have)+past participle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He has gone to school.</li> <li>• They have gone to school.</li> <li>• I have done my work well.</li> </ul>  | <b>Auxiliary verb (had)+past participle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He had gone to school.</li> <li>• They had gone to school.</li> <li>• I had done my work well.</li> </ul>   | <b>Auxiliary verb (will have/shall have)+past participle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He will have gone to school.</li> <li>• They will have gone to school.</li> <li>• I shall have done my work well.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>PERFECT CONTINUOUS</b> | <b>Auxiliary verb (has been/have been)+verb+ing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He has been going to school since he was three.</li> <li>• They have been going to school for past 8 years.</li> <li>• I have been doing my work well all along.</li> </ul> | <b>Auxiliary verb (had been)+verb+ing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He had been going to school since he was three.</li> <li>• They had been going to school for past 8 years.</li> <li>• I had been doing my work well all along.</li> </ul> | <b>Auxiliary verb (will have been/shall have been)+verb+ing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He will have been going to school for 3 years by the time he will be 6.</li> <li>• I shall have been doing my work well all along till next few years.</li> </ul> |

### 3.6 Infinitives

An infinitive is a verb that may be used as a noun, adjective, or adverb to indicate a thought, the purpose of an object or activity, or to respond to the questions who, what, and why.

An infinitive generally starts with the word "to" and ends with the verb's base form.



Examples of infinitives include to read, to run, to jump, to play, to sing, to laugh, to cry, to eat, and to go.

Infinitives are verbs, but they don't operate as verbs; instead, they're utilised as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.

I really need to buy something.

In this sentence, the verb is "need."

Who or what do I need? The infinitive "to buy"

"To buy" is the direct object of "need" because it receives the action.

This is an example of an infinitive being used as a noun.

We can't play Ludo until we find a dice to throw.

What is the purpose of the infinitive "to throw" in this sentence?

It describes the noun "dice." We don't need just any dice, we need a dice "to throw."

Here, the infinitive is used as an adjective.

Maria left the trip early to recover from illness.

The infinitive in this example is "to recover."

What is the purpose of "to recover" in this sentence?

It gives us more information about why Maria left the trip early. It modifies the verb "left."

In this example, the infinitive functions as an adverb.

### 3.7 Reference Devices

What is the definition of referencing?

The relationship between a grammatical unit (typically a pronoun) and another grammatical unit (usually a noun or noun phrase) is known as reference. The antecedent is the noun or noun phrase to which a pronoun refers.

- **This/these** Used to refer to objects or ideas that are near in place or time
- **That/those** Used to refer to objects that are more remote in place or time.
- **The former/the latter/ respectively**

Used when you have written about two subjects or ideas that you wish to refer to again (if you used it or he the subject you are referring to may not be clear)

The former is the first mentioned

The latter is the second

- **Respectively** is used to refer to two items in the order in which they were written
- **Who** Refers only to people
- **Which** Refers to things or ideas
- **That** Refers to people, things or ideas
- **One/ones** Can be used to substitute for a noun that you have previously mentioned
- **Such** Refers to things or people of a similar type to ones that you have mentioned previously.

### 3.8 Position of Adverbs

Adverbs are words that describe verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, or clauses. Adverbs often answer the questions "How?" and "In what way?" For example:

Liza dances beautifully.

In what way does Liza sing? Beautifully.

Kiana runs very fast.

How fast does Kiana run? Very fast.

I occasionally practice speaking French.

How frequently do I practice? Occasionally.

The position of adverbs in the sentence depends on what type of adverb it is. Here are some general guidelines for knowing the position of adverbs:

- Do Not Place An Adverb Between A Verb And Its Object.

In the following sentence, painted is the verb, and the wall is the object. Carefully is the adverb.

She carefully painted the wall. = Correct

She painted the car carefully. = Correct

She painted carefully the car. = Incorrect

Here's another example. In this sentence, write is the verb, a diary is the object, and sometimes is the adverb.

I sometimes write a diary before bed. = Correct

Sometimes I write a diary before bed. = Correct

I write a diary before bed sometimes. = OK, but informal

I write sometimes a diary before bed. = Incorrect

- There Are Three Normal Positions For Adverbs.

FRONT POSITION: AT THE BEGINNING OF A CLAUSE

Suddenly the phone rang.

Fortunately, nobody was injured.

Maybe I'll go for a walk.

MID-POSITION: NEXT TO THE MAIN VERB

I always exercise before work.

They have completely forgotten about our appointment.

He was probably late for the interview.

She slowly began to recover from her illness.

END-POSITION: AT THE END OF A CLAUSE

You speak English well.

Please sit there.

They ate dinner quietly.

### 3.9 Transitional Markers

A transitional marker is a word or phrase that is put at or near the start of a sentence to show how it relates to the previous sentence. Avoid including unneeded 'however, "moreover,' and 'consequently' in your writing. However, you must be as cautious in learning these signals and use them when they provide clarity.

Here is a list of many of the common transitional words and phrases:

#### TO INDICATE ADDITION

Again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first, further, furthermore, in addition, last, moreover, next, second, too

#### TO INDICATE CAUSE AND EFFECT

Accordingly, as a result, consequently, hence, in short, otherwise, then, therefore, thus, truly

#### TO INDICATE COMPARISON

In a like manner, likewise, similarly

#### TO INDICATE CONCESSION

After all, although this may be true, at the same time, even though, I admit, naturally, of course

#### TO INDICATE CONTRAST

After all, although true, and yet, at the same time, but, for all that, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, still, yet

#### TO INDICATE SPECIAL FEATURES OR EXAMPLES



For examples, for instance, incidentally, indeed, in fact, in other words, in particular, specifically, that is, to illustrate

#### TO INDICATE SUMMARY

In brief, in conclusion, in short, on the whole, to conclude, to summarize, to sum up

### Overuse of Transitional Markers

As important as transitional markers are, they should not be overused.

Example: Studying for exams is challenging. However, there are strategies that can make the process easier. For example, organize each topic in a folder. Next, create outlines for each topic. In addition, organize all notes and test papers separately.

Almost every sentence in this sample contains transition words and phrases. This tends to annoy your readers, and the usage of transitions at the start of so many sentences is tedious to read. Less is more in this scenario.

Revised Example: Studying for exams is challenging. However, there are strategies that can make the process easier that includes organize each topic in a folder, create outlines for each topic, organize all notes and test papers separately.

#### Incorrect Use of Transitional Markers

Incorrect use of transitional markers creates confusion. The meaning and function of transitional markers should clearly be known before using them

Example: Guavas are good for health. However, they keep us energetic. [Incorrect]

---

**Unit 03: Tenses, Clauses and Transitional Words or Phrases**

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Guavas are good for health. In addition, they keep us energetic [Correct]

Fill in the blank spaces with the correct transitional marker



Lab Exercise: As a result, First, In addition, Similarly, However, In sum

1. The test was difficult. \_\_\_\_\_, we all passed.
2. My dog loves to play with balls. \_\_\_\_\_, it likes to sleep on the mat.
3. The organisation is laying off staff. \_\_\_\_\_, it is closing its branch on hillway Road.
4. The winter has been exceptionally cold; \_\_\_\_\_, we couldn't go tracking as much as we wanted to.
5. Baking dishes is not that difficult. \_\_\_\_\_, you should get everything you need ready.
6. \_\_\_\_\_, the above essay show that there is a strong link between sadness and depression.

### **Summary**

Defining and non-defining clauses should be used carefully.

Pay attention to the rules of pronoun for number agreement and gender agreement. If you have a generic antecedent, make it plural to avoid having to choose between he and she or he and she.

The distinction between the terms "use" and "like" is minor. Because 'like' is a preposition and 'as' is a conjunction, the basic point of contention for the usage of these two words is that 'like' is a preposition and 'as' is a conjunction. This is frequently overlooked, and 'like' is frequently used as a conjunction.

The link between a syntactic unit (typically a pronoun) that refers to (or stands in for) another grammatical unit is known as reference in English grammar (usually a noun or noun phrase). The antecedent is the noun or noun phrase to which a pronoun refers.

Transition words are very important for the readability of your text as it adds smooth transition from one sentence to another one.

### **Keywords**

- Continuous: Form of tenses that indicates an ongoing action
- Indefinite: The simplest form of any tense
- Perfect: Form of tenses that indicates a completed action

### **Self Assessment**

1. Reshma is the one who helped me with my studies.
  - A. Defining
  - B. Non-defining
  
2. We use this pronoun to give information about people.
  - A. WHO
  - B. WHICH
  - C. WHOSE
  - D. WHERE
  
3. This relative clause gives essential information about the person/ thing/possession/place.
  - A. Defining Relative Clause.

- B. Non-defining Relative Clause.  
C. Subject Relative Clause  
D. Standard Relative Clause.
4. This relative clause gives additional information about the person/thing/possession/place.  
A. Defining Relative Clause.  
B. Non-defining Relative Clause.  
C. Additional Relative Clause  
D. Standard Relative Clause.
5. The phone rang while I \_\_\_\_\_ dinner.  
A. had  
B. was having  
C. am having  
D. will have
6. In which of the following sentences 'for' is not used appropriately.  
A. We have been playing for the last 1 hour.  
B. She had been living in Toronto for 10 years now.  
C. Anisha has been living here for 2010.  
D. Kanika had been working in this company for a month.
7. The teacher told the students that they would have to pick themselves up in the next half.  
A. NO CHANGE  
B. themselves  
C. yourselves  
D. oneselves
8. What's the new shopping mall \_\_\_\_\_  
A. like  
B. As  
C. Both are possible  
D. Neither of them is possible
9. She's got a part-time job \_\_\_\_\_ a waiter  
A. Like  
B. As  
C. Both are possible  
D. Neither of them is possible
10. \_\_\_\_\_ sure of what will happen.  
A. you can obviously be never  
B. Obviously, you can never be  
C. Obviously, you can be never  
D. None of these
11. Please, \_\_\_\_\_

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- A. drive carefully your bike tomorrow  
 B. drive your bike carefully tomorrow  
 C. tomorrow drive carefully your bike  
 D. None of these
12. They (to be) late for office if they (not to go) out at once.  
 A. will be, won't go  
 B. will be, don't go  
 C. are, don 't go  
 D. are, won't go
13. If she (to come) at seven, he (not to see) the movie.  
 A. will come, won't see  
 B. come, don't see  
 C. will come, don't see  
 D. come, won't see
14. If she (not to ring)me up tonight, I (to send) him a letter.  
 A. won't ring, will send  
 B. won't ring, send  
 C. doesn't ring, will send  
 D. doesn't ring, send
15. He probably (not to read) the magazine until I (to ask) her.  
 A. won't read, ask  
 B. doesn't read, will ask  
 C. won't read, will ask  
 D. doesn't read, ask

**Answers for Self Assessment**

1. A      2. A      3. A      4. B      5. B  
 6. C      7. A      8. A      9. B      10. C  
 11. B      12. B      13. D      14. C      15. A

**Review Questions**

1. Distinguish between defining and non-defining relative clauses along with examples?
2. Make five sentences each using 'as' and 'like'.
3. What are references devices and give examples?
4. What are adverbs and discuss the positon of adverbs in sentences along with examples?
5. Distinguish between the usage of Simple Present and Simple past?



### **Further Reading**

English Aptitude Test on Tenses - Examtime Quiz



### **Web Links**

<https://7esl.com/infinitives/>

<https://test-english.com/grammar-points/b1/defining-and-non-defining-relative-clauses>

<https://englishonlinetests.com/first-conditional-and-future-time-clauses>

## Unit 04: Sentences

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### Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- Understand different types of sentences and its usage
- Delineate the importance of emphasizing and different ways of doing it
- Combine different simple sentences to make them compound or complex sentences
- Apply different conditional sentences as per requirement

### Introduction

The greatest autonomous unit of grammar is the sentence, which starts with a capital letter and finishes with a period, question mark, or exclamation point. The term "sentence" comes from the Latin word "sentere," which means "to feel." "Sentential" is the adjective version of the term. A word or combination of words that represents a full concept and contains a subject and a verb is typically (and poorly) characterised as a sentence.

Definitions and Observations on Sentences

"I am trying to say it all in one sentence, between one Cap and one period."

According to William Faulkner in a letter to Malcolm Cowley

"The term 'sentence' is used to describe a variety of different sorts of units. It is the highest grammatical unit, consisting of one independent sentence or two or more connected clauses. It is the unit that begins with a capital letter and concludes with a full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark, both orthographically and rhetorically."

## 4.1 Sentence Construction

In English grammar, there are three methods to form a sentence, while the word order normally remains the same. Learning to employ all three structures will boost the complexity and intrigue of your work. So, let's take a closer look at the details below:

A simple sentence is a sentence formed using one simple clause.



Example:

Dada loves parrots.

A compound sentence is made up of two or more main clauses that are connected by a coordinating conjunction.



Example:

Dada loves parrots but Anna loves dogs.

A complex sentence is one in which one main clause is joined by a subordinating conjunction to one or more subordinating clauses.



Example:

Although Dada likes parrots, she thinks dogs are better.

## 4.2 Types of Sentences

In English grammar, there are four sorts of sentences, each of which can be produced in either a positive or negative manner.

A declarative sentence is one that makes a claim. Declarative sentences in English grammar have the subject + verb + object/complement/adjunct structure.

Example:

Dada loves Parrots. He doesn't like dogs.

A query is sometimes known as an interrogative statement. Interrogative phrases contain an inverted word order and usually conclude with a question mark (unless in indirect speech). Auxiliary verb + subject + verb + object/complement/adjunct is a common pattern in English

grammar questions.  Example:

Does Dada prefer parrots or dogs?

An imperative sentence is one in which the imperative mood is used to express an order or directive. We employ the basic form of the verb in this circumstance, and the subject is frequently omitted. The pattern for imperatives is verb + object/complement/adjunct.



Example:

Don't pat the cow.

To indicate a strong opinion, use an exclamatory statement. They are followed by an exclamation mark in written English. The following three word orders are common in exclamatory sentences:



Example:

What a lovely kitten you have!

what + noun + subject + verb

How pretty your calf is!

how + adjective + subject + verb

Isn't she beautiful!

auxiliary/modal verb + subject + verb (interrogative word order)

### 4.3 Cleft Sentences

A cleft is a construction in English grammar in which a sentence element is moved from its normal position into a separate clause to give it more emphasis. A cleft is also known as a cleft clause, a cleft sentence, or a cleft construction.

"A cleft sentence is a sentence that is cleft (split) so as to put the focus on one part of it. The cleft sentence is introduced by *it*, which is followed by a verb phrase whose main verb is generally *be*. The focused part comes next, and then the rest of the sentence is introduced by a relative pronoun, relative determiner, or relative adverb.

If we take the sentence *Albert felt a severe pain after dinner*, two possible cleft sentences formed from it are

It was *Albert* who felt a severe pain after dinner

It was *after dinner* that *Albert* felt a sharp pain."



For example, the simple declarative sentence, "*Jasmine went to the concert yesterday.*"

If you would want to emphasize one element or another, the sentence could be rewritten in several different ways:

It was *Jasmine* who went to the concert yesterday.

It was *to the concert* that *Jasmine* went yesterday.

It was *yesterday* that *Jasmine* went to the concert.

English has many different varieties of cleft constructions, but the two major types are *it*-clefts and *wh*-clefts. *Wh*-clefts use "*wh*" words, which is most often "*what*" in the construction. However, *why*, *where*, *how*, etc. are also possibilities.



Examples and Observations

#### It-Clefts

It was only last week that I decided to go back to office.

"It was my mother who sent Kith out to Exhibition.

It was my sister who had beautiful eyes and golden hair."

IT + BE + PHRASE + DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSE

Cleft sentences (also called *it*-clefts) result from changing the normal sentence pattern to emphasise a particular piece of information. The emphasis in the resulting cleft sentence is on the phrase after *it + be*.



Catharis invented the unique match in 1852.

We can transform this sentence in different ways depending on which part of it we want to bring into focus:

It was *Catharis* who/that invented the unique match in 1852.

It was *the unique match* which/that/(-) *Catharis* invented in 1852.

It was *1852* when *Catharis* invented the unique match.

---

In the clauses that follow it + be + phrase, we can use the same relative pronouns (who, whom, whose, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why) that we normally use in defining relative clauses.

However, if we bring a whole adverbial phrase into focus, we use that:



It was in 1852 that Catharis invented the unique match.

If we use a personal pronoun after it + be, it will be in the object form:

It was him who invented the unique match in 1852.

It is also possible to expand the phrase in focus with a non-defining relative clause:

It was Catharis who was a German chemist, that invented the unique match in 1852.

### Wh-Clefts

What clause + be verb + emphasized word or phrase



"What I needed was off from my work

What I need is something to eat.

"Strange, but what I really wanted was a break from my hectic schedule

### Inferential cleft

An inferential cleft can help clarify something when it might be wrongly assumed.

The structure is usually two consecutive it-that sentences.

The first is negative, but then the second clause makes the clarification.



It's not that I'm mean with people. It's that I choose them wisely.

You can also add just to the clarifying clause.

It's not as if he doesn't want to get settled. It's just that he would like to enjoy his life.

### Reversed wh-cleft

In this cleft form, it reverses the standard form and moves the what clause to the second clause in a sentence.



He wanted to buy a new phone.

A new phone is what he wanted to buy.

He wanted to find a new place to live.

A new place to live is what he wanted to find.

### There-cleft

When you use this form, it takes the empty subject word, there to start the first clause.

It most commonly emphasizes the object of a simple sentence.



Maryiana wants to buy a new house.

There's a new apartment that Maryiana wants to buy.

I want to read the new Sherlock's novel.

There's a new Sherlock's novel that I want to read.

### If-because cleft

In this form, you can create a reason for an action.



He wants to leave home to be self-dependent.

If he wants to leave home, it's because he wants to be self-dependent.

Janey uses social media to earn money.

If Janey uses social media, it's because she wants to earn money.

## 4.4 Synthesis of Sentences

Combination of two or more Simple sentences into a single Simple sentence

Synthesis is the opposite of Analysis and means the combination of a number of simple sentences into one new sentence-Simple, Compound or Complex.

**The following are the chief ways of combining two or more Simple sentences into one Simple sentence:-**

**(i) By using a Participle.**



Keath jumped up. He ran away.

Jumping up, he ran away.

**(ii) By using a Noun or a Phrase in Apposition.**



This is my best friend. His name is Raman.

This is my best friend Raman.

**(iii) By using a Preposition with a Noun or Gerund.**



The moon rose. Their journey was not ended.

The moon rose before the end of their journey.

**(iv) By using the Nominative Absolute Construction.**



The saints arrived. The disciples dispersed.

The saints having arrived, the disciples dispersed.

**(v) By using an Infinitive.**



She has some responsibilities. She must fulfill them.

She has some responsibilities to fulfill.

**(vi) By using an Adverb or an Adverbial Phrase.**



He deserved to succeed. He failed.

He failed undeservedly.

#### Combination of two or more Simple Sentences into a single Compound sentence

Simple sentences may be combined to form Compound sentences by the use of Coordinative Conjunctions.



Night came on. The room grew dark.

Night came on and the room grew dark.

He is a nutcase. He is a knave.

He is a nutcase and a knave.

[Or]

He is both a nutcase and a knave.

#### Combination of two or more Simple sentences into a single Complex sentence

##### Subordinate Clause a Noun Clause



In the following examples the Subordinate clause is a Noun clause :-

They are drunk. That aggravates their offence.

That they are drunk aggravates their offence.

She will be late. That is sure.

It is sure that she will be late.

##### Subordinate Clause an Adjective Clause



In the following examples the Subordinate clause is an Adjective clause:

An ox once met a fox. The ox had never seen a fox before.

An ox who had never seen a fox before met him.

##### Subordinate Clause an Adverb Clause

In the following examples the Subordinate clause is an Adverb clause:-



Crista died in 1984. Bristy thereafter became Prime Minister.

When Crista died in 1984, Bristy became Prime Minister.

## 4.5 Complex Sentences

One independent clause and at least one dependent clause are united by a subordinating conjunction in a complicated sentence. One of the four fundamental types of sentences in the English language is complex sentences.

At least three elements are required for complex sentences:

Clause that is self-contained-Independent Clause

Conjunction with a subordinating function

Clauses that are dependent on another clause or clauses-Dependent clause

**Clause.** A clause might be a complete sentence or only a portion of one. A subject and a predicate make form a sentence. "I know" is an example of a sentence, comprising the subject "I" and the predicate "know." Clauses are divided into two categories: dependent and independent clauses.

**Independent clause.** An independent clause can make sense by itself.

For example, "This boy is silly." is an independent clause.

**Dependent clause.** A dependent clause that cannot make sense by itself.

Examples of dependent clauses are "When they grow up,"

"Since the last time I met you,"

"After we had finished doing the dusting,"

and "Now that she finished her schooling."

Do you notice that all the examples start with a word or phrase like since, after, and now that? These are called subordinating conjunctions.

**Conjunction.** A conjunction links two clauses together. And, but, and or are the most common conjunctions, but there are many, many more.

**Coordinating conjunction.** A coordinating conjunction links two independent clauses. The coordinating conjunction is in italics in the following examples:



"I love cakes, but I hate pancakes."

"Should I stay, or should I go?"

"We went to market, and then we came home."

**Subordinating conjunction.** A subordinating conjunction links a dependent clause to an independent clause. The subordinating conjunction is in italics in the following examples:



"When I grow up, I want to be a teacher."

"A lot has changed since the last time I met you."

"After we had finished doing the dusting, we decided to go for a long drive."

"What will she do now that she has finished college?"

## 4.6 Conditional Sentences

Conditional sentences explain a situation or a consequence that is contingent on the occurrence of a preceding event. "If" one thing occurs, "then" another will occur. It simply means that one thing is required for something else to occur or exist.

Conditional sentences explain a situation or a consequence that is contingent on the occurrence of a preceding event. "If" one thing occurs, "then" another will occur. It simply means that one thing is required for something else to occur or exist.

### Zero Conditional Sentences

In a zero conditional sentence, the result is certain. Type 0 conditionals, often known as zero conditionals, describe circumstances in which one thing always leads to the next. Something else will happen if one thing happens.

Although zero conditionals are sometimes referred to as factual conditionals, they are not true assertions. "I get tanned in hot weather," for example, is a factual statement, not a conditional. A zero conditional sentence is "If it's hot, I get sunburned."

The first portion of a zero conditional comprises a simple present tense "if" or "when" phrase. The next section, likewise in simple present, outlines what happens as a natural outcome. This is significant since the simple present is used to express a habitual or consistent behaviour.



Zero conditional sentence examples include:

If you study hard, you get good marks.

You get a good job, when you complete your studies with good grades.

If it snow, I feel unwell.

My girlfriend smiles when I give her surprise.

### First Conditional Sentences

It's time for initial conditionals when a situation isn't totally definite. First conditionals (also known as Type 1 conditionals) state that an outcome is not guaranteed, but that one condition will very certainly lead to another. First conditionals, unlike zero conditionals, only employ "if" clauses rather than "when" clauses.

A first conditional has a different tense for each clause. Although the "if" clause remains in the basic present tense, the result clause now employs the future "will + verb" form.



For example:

I will answer if he asks question.

If I play hard, I'll get position in team.

If the situation remains good, our future will flourish.

You will succeed in life, if you're diligent in your work.

### Second Conditional Sentences

It's time for initial conditionals when a situation isn't totally definite. First conditionals (also known as Type 1 conditionals) state that an outcome is not guaranteed, but that one condition will very certainly lead to another. First conditionals, unlike zero conditionals, only employ "if" clauses rather than "when" clauses.

A first conditional has a different tense for each clause. Although the "if" clause remains in the basic present tense, the result clause now employs the future "will + verb" form.



For example:

I would answer if he asked question.

If the situation remained good, our future would flourish.

### Third Conditional Sentences

Third conditionals, also known as Type 3 conditional phrases, relate to a situation that is impossible to achieve. These occurrences are difficult to modify since they have already occurred. If that condition were to hold true, the described outcome would be very likely. Like second conditionals, third conditionals often use "were" instead of "was," but are not subjunctive.

This type of conditional sentence indicates that "if" something would have happened, something else could have followed. The "if" clause in third conditionals is in the past perfect verb tense because it has already happened. The result clause still uses "would," but adds "have" for the perfect conditional verb tense "would have + verb."



Let's take a look at some examples:

I would have helped if I'd known you were in problem.

If Ronnie had studied, he would have passed the exam.

My husband wouldn't have bought the house if he had seen the broken doors.

## 4.7 Alternatives to if

**Although IF** is the most common word used in conditional clauses, which is why they are frequently referred to as IF-clauses, other expressions may be used:

**Accepting [that]:** Accepting that Lilly has had a breakdown, she doesn't necessarily present a risk.

The situation, that Lilly has had a breakdown, is already known to the speaker, and probably the listener; it is an accepted truth, a factual conditional. IF would imply [slight] uncertainty that the information can be regarded as definite, a degree of uncertainty not present with accepting that. The whole conditional clause can be replaced by some other expression with IF: if [that is] so, if that is the case; or without IF: that being so, in that case. A range of tenses and modals is possible:

**Given [that]:** Given that she has a doctorate, won't she expect more than we can offer?



The situation, that she has a doctorate, is also known to the speaker, and probably the listener, though there may be an implication that there is [slight] uncertainty that the information can be regarded as definite. Once again, IF would perhaps imply a greater degree of uncertainty than given that.

**Assuming:** Assuming that Liza lose tomorrow, the manager will be looking for a new offer.

Here we are moving from the realm of accepted truth towards a future predictive situation, though assuming carries a greater degree of certainty of the realisation of the situation than IF.

**Supposing:** What will you do supposing he breaks you?

Supposing suggests an act of imagination, often implying some reservation on the part of the speaker. It is not normally used with factual or counterfactual conditionals.

**As/so long as:** I would let her have the apartment as/so long as she got rid of that animal.

These often suggest some condition imposed by the speaker. Like supposing, they are not normally used with factual or counterfactual conditionals.



**Providing/provided [that], on condition that:** I'll take you to the concert, providing you finish your assignment in time.

The principal promised me the position on condition that I took on the school skit.

**Unless:** Unless is frequently presented as an alternative to IF...NOT



I'm going to market tomorrow if it doesn't rain.

I'm going to market tomorrow unless it rains.

## Summary

- Cleft sentences, like other grammar forms like inversion, can help you add a bit more diversity to your writing.
- It is nearly always simpler to understand a straightforward declarative phrase than a convoluted split sentence.
- The conditional mood informs the reader that an action may or may not take place, depending on the circumstances. Changing the mood of your sentence is a great way to show your reader that an outcome is conditional, as well as a fun way to spice up your writing.
- Alternatives to if are the conjunctions that can be used in a conditional sentence instead of if.

- Those conjunctions are: even if, if it weren't for/if it hadn't been for, but for, if in doubt, if possible, if if, so/as long as, providing/provided (that), suppose/supposing, what if, unless and when, and they are used in different cases.

### **Keywords**

1. Autonomous - capable of existing independently
2. Boost- increase, raise
3. Complexity- state of being complex
4. Intrigue- practice of engaging in secret schemes
5. Adjunct- something joined or added

### **Self Assessment**

1. " \_\_\_\_\_ arrogance and lack of respect"
  - A. The things I hate
  - B. What I hate
  - C. I hate
  - D. What I hate are
  
2. " \_\_\_\_\_ Claudia really wants to learn"
  - A. It's the guitar that
  - B. The guitar is
  - C. Is the Guitar
  - D. The guitar that is
  
3. " \_\_\_\_\_ of the music in that club that I dislike"
  - A. The loudness is
  - B. It's the loudness
  - C. Is it the loudness
  - D. Is the loudness
  
4. I went to the shop. I bought a watch.
  - A. To buy a watch I went to the shop
  - B. I went to the shop and bought a watch
  - C. As I went to the shop and bought a watch
  - D. I went to the shop to bought a watch
  
5. What is the dependent clause?  
Mrs. Smith baked a cake because Mr. Smith wanted dessert.
  - A. Mrs. Smith baked
  - B. Mrs. Smith baked a cake
  - C. because Mr. Smith wanted dessert
  - D. No dependent clause in the sentence
  
6. India will win the world cup. That is certain .
  - A. It is certain that India will win the world cup

- 
- B. India will certainly win the world cup  
C. India will win the world cup  
D. India will surely win the world cup
7. I bought these mangoes yesterday. They are very sweet.  
A. I bought these mangoes but they are sweet  
B. These mangoes which I bought yesterday are very sweet.  
C. I bought these mangoes however they are sweet  
D. I bought the mangoes and they are sweet
8. What type of sentence is this? Natalee covered her ears because Mrs. Crompton started singing again.  
A. complex sentence  
B. simple sentence  
C. fragment  
D. This is not a sentence because Keely says aliens wrote it.
9. Would George be angry if I \_\_\_\_\_ his bike without asking? (take)  
A. would take  
B. will take  
C. took  
D. take
10. If we \_\_\_\_\_ to their party next week, they would be very angry. (go)  
A. don't go  
B. didn't go  
C. will not go  
D. wouldn't go
11. If I \_\_\_\_\_ a ticket, I \_\_\_\_\_ to the theatre. I really want to see Hamlet. (get , go)  
A. get , go  
B. got , went  
C. get , would go  
D. get , will go
12. What \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ if you won a million pounds? (do)  
A. would - do  
B. will - do  
C. did - do  
D. have - done
13. Choose the sentence with the same meaning.  
She won't go to sleep unless you tell her a story.  
A. She won't go to sleep if you don't tell her a story.  
B. She won't go to sleep if you tell her a story.
14. Is this sentence correct or incorrect?

I will help him unless he treats me politely.

- A. Correct.
- B. Incorrect

15. Choose the alternatives with the same meaning.

If I receive a promotion, I will go on Holiday with my Family.

- A. Providing I receive a promotion, I will go on Holiday with my Family.
- B. Unless I receive a promotion, I will go on Holiday with my Family.
- C. Provided I receive a promotion, I will go on Holiday with my Family.
- D. All sentences have same meaning

### **Answers for Self Assessment**

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. D  | 2. A  | 3. B  | 4. B  | 5. C  |
| 6. B  | 7. B  | 8. A  | 9. C  | 10. B |
| 11. D | 12. A | 13. A | 14. B | 15. C |

### **Review Questions**

1. Cleft Sentences can emphasise different parts of a sentence. Elaborate with examples?
2. Discuss different rules for synthesis of sentences?
3. Write five complex sentences using Although and Because?
4. When do we use different conditional sentences?
5. Write one sentence using IF, EVEN IF, ONLY IF, AS LONG AS, PROVIDED, SUPPOSING, UNLESS, BUT FOR, IF NECESSARY, IF SO, IN CASE?



### **Further Reading**

1. Cleft Sentences With Examples Of The Most Common Forms ([justpublishingadvice.com](http://justpublishingadvice.com))
2. Cleft Sentences ([really-learn-english.com](http://really-learn-english.com))
3. IF, EVEN IF, ONLY IF, AS LONG AS, PROVIDED, SUPPOSING, UNLESS, BUT FOR, IF NECESSARY, IF SO, IN CASE etc. | Gramaring
4. Unless - As long as...-English ([tolearnenglish.com](http://tolearnenglish.com))
5. Conditionals ([perfect-english-grammar.com](http://perfect-english-grammar.com))
6. Complex Sentence Examples ([yourdictionary.com](http://yourdictionary.com))

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**Objectives**

- Distinguish between denotation and connotation
- Use context clues to infer a word's connotations
- Examine how context determines whether a word has a positive or negative connotation
- Identify synonyms and antonyms
- Identify the connotations of synonyms and antonyms
- Use synonyms and antonyms to express precise meanings

**Introduction**

A reverse dictionary is a type of one-word replacement. We understand the meaning of a word, or at least a portion of it. However, we are unfamiliar with the term itself. We attempt to recall the word from memory.

We can end ourselves unhappy as a result of our bad recall. This search will most likely be beneficial. Trying to figure out synonyms and antonyms is a fun way to improve your vocabulary and helpful words' antonyms There are a variety of prefixes and suffixes that change or modify the meaning of a word. You should study the definitions of terms.

One-word substitution is a one-of-a-kind way to learn new words. You're given a definition or description and must come up with a word, or perhaps a short phrase, that best answers, matches, or suits it. As a result, the word and its definition will become synonymous. They will readily stick in your mind since they are related to each other.

The current unit is a one-of-a-kind collection of definitions and their solutions. It is a reasonably excellent collection; however, it cannot claim to be thorough (many terms may have been left out). It consists of words from all domains of human knowledge and experience. Each and every syllable with the exception of a few self-explanatory nouns, and their key derivatives have been utilized throughout to make their meanings apparent, use expressive language.

## 5.1 One-word Substitution

To write accurately and communicate in a single word, one word replacement is critical. We tend to speak or write in a garrulous manner. However, it is clear that exact terms are usually easily comprehended by everybody. We can become overly verbose at times, but there are instances when this isn't necessary, and we must communicate or speak clearly. There are several single terms for a set of words in the English language. As a result, communicate clearly to prevent being misinterpreted. Let me give you an example of a single word for a set of words.

One important point needs to be mentioned here. There are other aspects of a language without which the learning process will remain incomplete. Phrasal verbs and idioms make the English language lively, vibrant and dynamic. In fact, you cannot do without them. Then there are collocations which are, more often than not, ignored by most learners. It is important to know which part of speech a word belongs to or in which way it has been used. The emphasis should be on how a particular word or phrase should be or can be used in a sentence

1. One who is out to subvert a government- Anarchist
2. One who is recovering from illness- Convalescent
3. One who is all powerful -Omnipotent
4. One who is present everywhere -Omnipresent
5. One who knows everything- Omniscient
6. One who is easily deceived -Gullible
7. One who does not make mistakes- Infallible
8. One who can do anything for money -Mercenary
9. One who has no money- Pauper
10. One who changes sides -Turncoat
11. One who works for free- Volunteer
12. One who loves books -Bibliophile
13. One who can speak two languages- Bilingual
14. One who loves mankind- Philanthropist
15. One who hates mankind- Misanthrope
16. One who looks on the bright side of things -Optimist
17. One who looks on the dark side of things- Pessimist
18. One who doubts the existence of god- Agnostic
19. One who pretends to be what he is not- Hypocrite
20. One incapable of being tired- Indefatigable
21. One who helps others Good- Samaritan
22. One who copies from other writers- Plagiarist
23. One who hates women -Misogynist
24. One who knows many languages -Polyglot
25. One who is fond of sensuous pleasures Epicure
26. One who thinks only of himself- Egoist
27. One who thinks only of welfare of women- Feminist.
28. One who is indifferent to pleasure or pain- Stoic
29. One who is quite like a woman- Effeminate
30. One who has strange habits -Eccentric
31. One who speaks less- Reticent
32. One who goes on foot- Pedestrian

33. One who believes in fate- Fatalist
34. One who dies without a Will- Intestate
35. One who always thinks himself to be ill -Valetudinarian
36. A Government by the people- Democracy
37. A Government by a king or queen- Monarchy
38. A Government by the officials -Bureaucracy
39. A Government by the rich -Plutocracy
40. A Government by the few -Oligarchy
41. A Government by the Nobles- Aristocracy
42. A Government by one- Autocracy
43. Rule by the mob -Mobocracy
44. That through which light can pass- Transparent
45. That through which light cannot pass -Opaque
46. That through which light can partly pass- Translucent
47. A sentence whose meaning is unclear- Ambiguous
48. A place where orphans live -Orphanage
49. That which cannot be described- Indescribable
50. That which cannot be imitated- Inimitable
51. That which cannot be avoided- Inevitable
52. A position for which no salary is paid -Honorary
53. That which cannot be defended- Indefensible
54. Practice of having several wives -Polygamy
55. Practice of having several husbands -Polyandry
56. Practice of having one wife or husband -Monogamy
57. Practice of having two wives or husbands- Bigamy
58. That which is not likely to happen -Improbable
59. People living at the same time -Contemporaries
60. A book published after the death of its author- Posthumous

## 5.2 Antonyms and Synonyms

Synonyms and antonyms are key concepts to understand as you work on expanding your vocabulary. Synonyms are frequently employed to spice up the language and provide variety and colour. Because the concepts of synonyms and antonyms appear in many competitive tests, we've created a section dedicated to them.

The goal is for you to be able to build a solid vocabulary. We'll go over some words and synonyms that might appear on a graduate-level exam. However, to qualify this section, you will have to develop a very strong vocabulary by memorizing at least a few words and their synonyms and antonyms every day till the day of your exam. Let us see some examples of synonym words here.

### Synonyms



Example 1: The desert that was served was rather **unpleasant**, but her companionship made up for everything.

In the above sentence, the word(s) in bold can be replaced by which of these words.

- A) Vexatious      B) Torpor      C) Jolly      D) Aberrant

Answer: Many books and online articles you read while studying for bank exams will tell you that there are rules and shortcuts that will allow you to guess the synonyms or antonyms of words in a sentence. This, however, is not the case. The only strategy that works with vocabulary is to start learning new words. A few words each day should do the trick. As far as this example goes, you will see that the words do sound similar.

We are seeking for a term that sounds like unpleasant but has a different connotation. Vexatious refers to something that irritates or frustrates the user. We reject this and see this as a credible alternative. Because merry connotes something nice and amusing, it is rejected. Let's start with the other two. Torpor, despite its negative connotation, refers to lethargy or idleness. As a result, this isn't the best solution. Finally, aberrant refers to something that deviates from the norm; it may be unpleasant, but that is not the meaning of the word. As a result, the right answer is Vexatious.

### Antonyms

An antonym, as opposed to a synonym, is a term that has the exact opposite meaning to another word in the same language. It comes from the Greek words "anti" and "onym," which mean "opposite" and "name," respectively. The antonym for hot, for example, is cold, and the antonym for up is down.

In the English language, antonyms are extremely valuable. Knowing what the opposite of a difficult word implies will help you comprehend the meaning and context of that term. Consider the term "mundane," which has the synonym "humdrum." "Extraordinary" or "imaginative" is the antonym for humdrum. The meaning of the term mundane is now much clearer.



"In a buerocratic **community**, neither the people nor the higher authorities have anything to say!"

The word in the bold is exactly opposite in meaning to?

- A) Civilised      B) Stupid      C) Uncivilised      D) Uneducated

Answer: At first, you might believe you're looking for terms that signify the opposite of enlighten. But wait, three of the choices have the exact opposite connotation as enlighten. So, which one should you pick? The context is important here, and if you're asked to choose a word from a paragraph, you'll have to determine what it means in the context.

For example, the term enlightened has been translated as informed or educated in the above text, hence the opposing word from the possibilities would be uneducated. As a result, the answer is Uneducated.

Keep in mind that the more you practise your vocabulary, the better you will become. Also, when you're asked to locate a synonym or antonym for a word, remember to analyse the context. If you don't know what a term means, you might be able to figure it out from the context.

| Words   | Synonyms - Same Meaning | Antonyms - Opposites |
|---------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Abate   | Moderate, decrease      | Aggravate            |
| Adhere  | Comply, observe         | Condemn, disjoin     |
| Abolish | Abrogate, annul         | Setup, establish     |

*Unit 05: Vocabulary*

|             |                           |                       |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Acumen      | Awareness, brilliance     | Stupidity, ignorance  |
| Abash       | Disconcert, rattle        | Uphold, Discompose    |
| Absolve     | Pardon, forgive           | Compel, Accuse        |
| Barbarous   | Frustrate, perplex        | Civilized             |
| Bleak       | Grim, Austere             | Bright, Pleasant      |
| Bewitching  | Alluring, charming        | Repulsive, Repugnant  |
| Baroque     | Florid, gilt              | Plain, unadorned      |
| Brittle     | Breakable, crisp          | Tough, Enduring       |
| Callous     | obdurate, unfeeling       | Compassionate, Tender |
| Capable     | competent, able           | Incompetent, Inept    |
| Calamity    | adversity, misfortune     | Fortune               |
| Calculating | Canny, Devious            | Artless, honest       |
| Calumny     | defamation, aspersion     | Commendation, Praise  |
| Captivity   | imprisonment, confinement | Freedom, Liberty      |
| Deceit      | deception, artifice       | Veracity, Sincerity   |
| Defray      | spend, pay                | Disclaim, Repudiate   |
| Defile      | contaminate, pollute      | Purify, sanctity      |
| Demolish    | Ruin, devastate           | Repair, construct     |

|            |                       |                          |
|------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Deliberate | cautious, intentional | Rash, Sudden             |
| Efface     | destroy, obliterate   | Retain, Maintain         |
| Eloquence  | expression, fluency   | Halting, Stammering      |
| Enormous   | colossal, mammoth     | Diminutive, negligible   |
| Endeavour  | undertake, aspire     | Cease, quit              |
| Equivocal  | uncertain, hazy       | Obvious, lucid           |
| Epitome    | precise, example      | Increment, expansion     |
| Feud       | strife, quarrel       | Harmony, fraternity      |
| Fragile    | weak, infirm          | Enduring, Tough          |
| Forsake    | desert, renounce      | Hold, maintain           |
| Frivolous  | petty, worthless      | Solemn, significant      |
| Frantic    | violent, agitated     | Subdued, gentle          |
| Frugality  | economy, providence   | Lavishness, extravagance |
| Gloom      | obscurity, darkness   | Delight, mirth           |
| Gather     | Converge, huddle      | Disperse, Dissemble      |
| Gorgeous   | magnificent, dazzling | Dull, unpretentious      |
| Glut       | stuff, satiate        | Starve, abstain          |
| Grisly     | disgusting, atrocious | Pleasing, attractive     |

|             |                         |                      |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Hasty       | Abrupt, Impetuous       | Leisurely, Cautious  |
| Humility    | Resignation, Fawning    | Boldness, Pride      |
| Humble      | Meek, Timid             | Proud, Assertive     |
| Impenitent  | Uncontrite, Obdurate    | Repentant            |
| Hypocrisy   | Deception, Pharisaism   | Sincerity, frankness |
| Indifferent | Equitable, Haughty      | Partial, Biased      |
| Impulsive   | Flaky, Impetuous        | Cautious, Deliberate |
| Infernal    | Damned, Accursed        | Heavenly,            |
| Indigent    | Destitute, Impoverished | Rich, Affluent       |
| Interesting | Enchanting, Riveting    | Dull, Uninteresting  |

### 5.3 Connotative and Denotative Meanings

First and foremost, we must define denoting and connotative terms in order to comprehend their meanings: we will begin with denoting words. These are words that describe a thought in the most exact and straightforward manner possible. That is, these are the terms that demonstrate the most exact meaning of a word, without any multiple meanings, in order to represent the thought that the speaker wishes to express. The words react to their meaning and have no other meaning except the one that corresponds to the true notion.



Examples of denotative words

In order to better understand what denoting words are, we are going to see a series of examples in sentences:

Ramey works in a Consultancy.

The girls eat pizza.

The ship leaves for destination at 9 am.

His mother is a football player.

Albertina wears heels when she goes to office.

As you can see, none of these statements have a double meaning; they say what they mean and the words reveal what they mean. Because it has a literal meaning, denotative terms are the simplest to recognise.

Connotative words, on the other hand, have a literal or denotative meaning but take on a metaphorical meaning as a result of their use. In other words, certain Spanish words can have a comparative or metaphorical meaning that serves to convey an idea or notion in addition to their literal meaning.

Connotation is an example of how words do not always imply what they appear to express. The same term might take on a new meaning that communicates an abstract notion or idea unrelated to the denotative meaning of the word. Examples of denotative and connotative terms.

These terms are highly common in Spanish, and they are almost always used to represent the virtues, vices, or physical qualities of a person, animal, or item. When we employ these terms, it's because we want to draw attention to them over the rest of the traits.

Connotative words cannot be detached from their cultural environment in most circumstances since they have metaphorical or figurative meanings. That is, many idioms or words have specific meanings exclusively in certain regions or in groups of a different culture.

In sayings and phrases having several meanings, this form of indicating words is particularly common. They represent one notion plainly, but there is always another that is disguised and must be grasped in them.

Words with connotative meanings

As you can see, connotative terms are more difficult to comprehend, particularly if you are unfamiliar with their cultural background. Despite this, we'll look at a few instances to assist you comprehend the figurative and metaphorical meanings of these words:

Their teeth are pearls: this does not imply that the individual has lost their teeth and has replaced them with pearls. Because the term pearl has a connotative sense, the true meaning of the statement in this situation is that the individual in question has extraordinarily white and shiny teeth.

Step 1: Recognize when a word's meaning is unfamiliar. Consider whether a word has more than one meaning, or denotation. In the following example, the word craft, which can mean "skill in making something," must have a different meaning. If you tried substituting skill in making something for craft, the example makes no sense. You must find a new meaning.



Example

The craft and trickery of the con man allowed him to fool many people.

Step 2: Check a word's denotation(s) in the dictionary. Looking up craft in a dictionary reveals that it has several denotations, or literal meanings, one of which will work best in a given sentence.



Example

Denotations of craft: 1. art, skill. 2. guile, slyness.

Step 3: Examine context to determine a word's connotation. A word's connotation, or emotional association, goes beyond its dictionary meaning. Look for context clues – such as other words in the same sentence – to determine whether a word's connotation is positive or negative. For example, clever may connote either smart or conniving.



Positive Connotation: The apprentice was quick-witted and clever.

Negative Connotation: The apprentice was clever and adroit at avoiding work.

Step 4: Choose words carefully, noting their connotations. Words with the same meanings may have a wide range of positive, neutral, or negative feelings. The example shows several synonyms for clever, each with its own connotations – some positive, some negative.



Example

Positive: The talk show host's comments were intelligent.

Positive: The talk show host's comments were witty.

Negative: The talk show host's comments were facile and superficial.

Negative: The talk show host's comments were cunning and manipulative

## 5.4 Collocations

A collocation is a pair or group of words that are often used together. These combinations sound natural to native speakers, but students of English have to make a special effort to learn them because they are often difficult to guess. Some combinations just sound 'wrong' to native speakers of English. For example, the adjective fast collocates with cars, but not with a glance.

There are many different types of collocations. Here are some examples.

### Adjectives and nouns

Notice adjectives that are typically used with particular nouns.



Jean always wears red or yellow or some other bright colour.

We had a brief chat about the exams but didn't have time to discuss them properly.

Unemployment is a major problem for the government at the moment.

Improving the health service is another key issue for government.

### Nouns and verbs

Notice how nouns and verbs often go together. The examples below are all to do with economics and business.



The economy boomed in the 1990s, [the economy was very strong]

The company has grown and now employs 50 more people than last year.

The company has expanded and now has branches in most major cities.

The two companies merged in 2003 and now form one very large corporation.

The company launched the product in 2002. [introduced the product]

The price increase poses a problem for us. [is a problem]

The Internet has created opportunities for our business, [brought new opportunities]

### Noun + noun

There are a lot of collocations with the pattern a ... of... .



As Sam read the lies about him, he felt a surge of anger, [literary: a sudden angry feeling]

Every parent feels a sense of pride when their child does well or wins something.

I felt a pang of nostalgia when I saw the old photos of the village where I grew up.

### Verbs and expressions with prepositions

Some verbs collocate with particular prepositional expressions.



As Jack went on stage to receive his gold medal for the judo competition you could see his parents swelling with pride, [looking extremely proud]

I was filled with horror when I read the newspaper report of the explosion.

When she spilt juice on her new skirt the little girl burst into tears, [suddenly started crying]

## Verbs and adverbs

Some verbs have particular adverbs which regularly collocate with them.



She pulled steadily on the rope and helped him to safety, [pulled firmly and evenly]

He placed the beautiful vase gently on the window ledge.

'I love you and want to marry you,' Derek whispered softly to Marsha.

She smiled proudly as she looked at the photos of her new grandson.

## Adverbs and adjectives

Adjectives often have particular adverbs which regularly collocate with them.



They are happily married.

I am fully aware that there are serious problems. [I know well]

Harry was blissfully unaware that he was in danger. [Harry had no idea at all, often used about something unpleasant]

## 5.5 What are Context Words and Phrases?

To support their work, authors of various genres of literature are frequently forced to utilise difficult terms. The author frequently includes hints that can be utilised to determine the meaning in order to allow readers to grasp it without having to use a dictionary. Context words and phrases are another name for these clues.

How to use Context to Infer the Meaning of a Phrase?

To infer the meaning of a word or phrase, you must utilise past knowledge or information to make educated guesses about what you don't know. To enjoy their reading and learn more, smart readers like to make the correct conclusions from the sentences. Using the information in its context to create assumptions about the meaning of a phrase is a highly useful strategy. The context refers to the words and phrases that surround the phrase to be inferred.

The following are some approaches for determining the meaning of a phrase based on its context:

### Explaining Clues in a Contextual Setting

The context of a sentence most of the time perfectly explains its meaning. As a result, one must carefully study and reread the context of a phrase until he or she is able to discern certain hints that will aid in inferring the meaning of that phrase.

### Synonyms Explained in Context

When a sentence is tough or contains difficult terms, the context can often assist in deducing its meaning. In many circumstances, the context includes a synonym for the phrase's difficult words, if not the entire sentence. It is quite straightforward to deduce the meaning of a statement when a synonym is present in the context.

### Antonyms in Context Explanation

The antonymous meanings of a term may be found in the same context as the synonyms. In this situation, all you have to do is recognise and comprehend the antonymous notion, which will take you to the entire phrase's meaning.

### Appositives in Context (Explaining Appositives)

When two sentences are put side by side in a context, this is referred to as apposition. To put it another way, the second phrase defines the term to be inferred in a different way. This juxtaposition in context can aid in deducing a phrase's meaning.

## Summary

- A very interesting method of enhancing your vocabulary is to try to find out the synonyms and antonyms of useful words. There are a host of prefixes and suffixes that alter or modify the meanings of words and you should learn them.
- There are other aspects of a language without which the learning process will remain incomplete. Phrasal verbs and idioms make the English language lively, vibrant and dynamic.
- Antonyms are words opposite in meaning to another. For example, good and bad, fast and slow etc.
- Synonyms is a word or phrase that means exactly or nearly the same as another word or phrase in the same language. For example shut is a synonym of close, listen is a synonym of hear etc.

## Keywords

- Abolish: Do away with wholly
- Abbreviation: A shortened form of a word or phrase
- Accelerate: To increase the speed; to hasten the progress
- Aggravate: To increase the gravity of an offence or the intensity of a disease

## Self Assessment

1. The Study of Ancient Societies
  - A. History
  - B. Archaeology
  - C. Anthropology
  - D. Etymology
2. Things which cannot be read
  - A. Illegible
  - B. Legible
  - C. Negligible
  - D. Corrigible
3. Incapable of being seen through
  - A. Brittle
  - B. Opaque
  - C. Ductile
  - D. Transparent
4. The Government wing responsible for making rules
  - A. Judiciary
  - B. Legislature
  - C. Executive
  - D. Court
5. Find the synonym of the following word-Inherent

- A. primary
  - B. helped
  - C. received
  - D. latent
6. Find the synonym of the following word-Altruistic
- A. humanist
  - B. bad
  - C. considerable
  - D. Greedy
7. Find the synonym of the following word-Aerobic
- A. drill
  - B. internal
  - C. inactiveness
  - D. dullness
8. Find most opposite word of -COERCIVE
- A. Growth
  - B. Promotion
  - C. Openness
  - D. Gentle
9. literal or primary meaning of a word, in contrast to the feelings or ideas that the word suggests
- A. Denotation
  - B. Connotation
  - C. Figurative language
  - D. Poetry
10. Implied by a word apart from the thing which it describes explicitly
- A. Denotation
  - B. Irony
  - C. Paradox
  - D. Connotation
11. Exorbitant cars like Masserati, Ferrari, Lamborghini and even Bugatti can only be purchased by Wealthy people. What is the meaning of exorbitant?
- A. Expensive
  - B. Strong
  - C. Renowned
  - D. None of these
12. Due to her busy schedule I office she forgot to have any meals. By evening time, she feels famished .What is famished?
- A. Feeling faint

- B. Extremely hungry
- C. Very tired
- D. Very excited

13. Deenak received a TGPA of 9.94 for her Degree and feeling jubilant of her achievement.

What is jubilant?

- A. elated
- B. thrilled
- C. delighted
- D. proud

14. She offered a feeble excuse for her late assignment and they could tell that she wasn't telling the truth. What does feeble mean?

- A. Weak
- B. Good
- C. Strong
- D. Believable

15. Fortunately, the dizzy spell was transient. He was able to continue playing within seconds and had no trouble winning the match. When you describe an event as "transient", you are saying that \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. it sounds like a train
- B. it is harmful
- C. it helps you win
- D. it doesn't last long

### Answers for SelfAssessment

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. B  | 2. A  | 3. B  | 4. B  | 5. D  |
| 6. A  | 7. A  | 8. D  | 9. A  | 10. D |
| 11. A | 12. B | 13. D | 14. A | 15. D |

### Review Questions

1. Directions: Read each pair of vocabulary words. Use one word to write a sentence that makes its positive connotation clear. Use the other word to write a sentence with a negative connotation. vocabulary words: bookish / intellectual  
Positive:  
Negative:
2. Vocabulary words: remedy (n.) / quick fix (n.)  
Positive:  
Negative:
3. Vocabulary words: ridiculous / humorous  
Positive:

Negative:

4. Directions: Read the given example. Then, write answers to the questions.  
EXAMPLE As he carefully guided the automobile down the icy hill, Kyle used extreme caution, knowing that he could easily slide into a spin.  
In the example sentence, does extreme have a positive or a negative connotation?  
Explain in a sentence how you figured out your answer to question 6.  
Give a synonym for extreme with the same connotation as the example
5. Directions: Read the given example. Then, write answers to the questions  
The mayor told the council, "This hurricane forecast is a matter of grave concern. We may need to consider mandatory evacuation of residents living less than a mile from the coast."  
In the example, does concern have a positive or a negative connotation?  
Write a sentence in which concern has a connotation opposite to the example



### **Further Reading**

1. One Word Substitution | One word Substitute for a sentence (targetstudy.com)
2. 200+ One Word Substitution with Examples PDF Download - Leverage Edu
3. J. Mathew, Business Communication, RBSA Publishers, 2008, p. 260.
4. Meenakshi Raman, Prakash Singh, Business Communication, Oxford University Press, 7th Impression 2008.
5. PD Chaturvedi, Mukesh Chaturvedi, Business Communication – Concepts, Cases and Applications, 2007, Pearson Education.

## Unit06: Idioms and Proverbs

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### Objectives

After this Unit students will be able to

- Identify the meaning of different idiomatic expressions.
- Familiarize with commonly used idiomatic expressions.
- Use idiomatic expressions correctly.

### Introduction

English language is so adaptable, it continuously adds to its vocabulary with terms created by language speakers, brightens it up with new idiomatic phrases, and, on occasion, replenishes its stock with borrowings and neologisms. English is awe-inspiring in its linguistic richness. In English, idioms and proverbs are collections of words with distinct meanings that capture the core of the English culture. These figurative word chunks or statements have meanings that cannot be determined from literal definitions of words. These idioms, which are regularly used by native language speakers, highlight the distinctive flavor of the English language.

In both professional and casual circumstances, English idioms and proverbs are often employed in written and spoken form. Because of their widespread use, these prefabricated components are valuable instructional tools for learning the language. Idiomatic expressions are most commonly seen in oral or written dialogue. It can help you enhance your conversational abilities by demonstrating to native speakers that you grasp the idiom's cultural meaning and context.

### 6.1 Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are made up of verb + prep/particle. Some phrasal verbs have a particle and a preposition. These are known as multi word verbs.



Example: One example is: Please slow down. You're moving too quickly. I'm not able to keep up with you.

Keep + particle up + preposition with is a verb.

The flight took off an hour late. ('off' alters the meaning of the verb but does not link words or communicate direction, place, time, or possession like a preposition would.) This is why in phrasal verbs, words like this are referred to as particles.) The particle is comparable to a preposition, but it functions more like an adverb, giving the verb greater meaning. It occurs after the primary verb in most cases.

The following are some of the most prevalent particles: on, off, in, into, out, up, down, away, back, through, over, etc. As you can see they resemble the preposition. In fact they are identical to look at.

An example of a preposition and a particle.



Example: She took the file up to the finance department.

Here the verb 'take' and the 'preposition 'up' is used. Up implies movement.



Example: She went up to the finance department on a floor above the one where I work. This is the literal meaning of 'take up'.



Example: My large bed takes up too much place. I need to buy a smaller one. This is a phrasal verb and 'up' is known as the particle as it adds a different meaning to what the preposition would.



Example: If I am holding my dog. I can put it down. 'Put + preposition as I make a movement to put the dog down on the floor. This is the literal meaning of 'Put down'.

Phrasal verbs have a plethora of hidden idiomatic meanings.



Example: If my dog is put to sleep by the vet, he gives it an injection and it never wakes up. When animals are too ill to live, veterinarians put them down.

Most of the phrasal verbs used with the verb «BE». are inseparable

## 6.2 Types of phrasal verbs

### Transitive phrasal verbs

Like regular transitive verbs, transitive phrasal verbs have a direct object.

Cherry couldn't put up with her in-laws family.

### Intransitive phrasal verbs

Likewise, intransitive phrasal verbs do not use an object.

The CEO was late, so the employees went ahead without him.

### Separable phrasal verbs

You can occasionally insert the direct object in between the sentences with transitive phrasal verbs, such as "pull you up." With separable phrasal verbs, however, there are a few restrictions to observe, so pay attention to our following section on word order.

I forgot to shut the lights off before I left my room yesterday.

### Inseparable phrasal verbs

Inseparable phrasal verbs cannot be split up and must be used together.

She carried on without his father.

## Commonly Used Phrasal Verbs

1. Abide by- Accept or follow a decision or rule.

We have to ABIDE BY what the judge says.

2. Account for- To explain.

They needed to ACCOUNT FOR all the money that had disappeared.

3. Ache for- Want something or someone a lot.

My mother was away for a fortnight- I am ACHING FOR her.

4. Act on- To take action because of something like information received.

The cobs were ACTING ON a clue from an informer and caught the culprits redhanded.

5. Act on -Affect.

The tablet only ACTED ON infected area.

6. Back away- Retreat or go backwards.

The public BACKED AWAY when the thief pulled a knife.

7. Back down- Retract or withdraw your position or proposal in an argument.

Liz refused to BACK DOWN and was fired.

8. Back into- Enter a parking area in reverse gear.

Chris prefers to BACK his bike INTO the garage.

9. Back off- Retreat.

The cobs asked the people to BACK OFF.

10. Back out- Fail to keep an arrangement or promise.

Albert BACKED OUT few days before the vacation so we gave the ticket to his mother

11. Call after- Name someone after somebody else.

He was CALLED Razz AFTER his late grandfather.

12. Call around -Visit.

Her mother CALLED AROUND but she wasn't in.

13. Call back -Return a phonecall.

You must CALL him BACK when we get to the campus.

14. Call for -Demand.

The Opposition party CALLED FOR the minister's resignation after the war broke.

15. Call for- Go to collect something.

Someone CALLED FOR Liz's parcel, but I told him it wasn't ready yet.

16. Call for Telephone for something.

She'll CALL FOR a taxi right away as it's already late.

17. Call for- Go and collect someone to take them out.

I'll CALL FOR you at midnight, so be ready because the concert starts at half past.

18. Call for-Require.

A situation like this CALLS FOR some pretty sudden action.

19. Call forth -Make something happen.

The public CALLED FORTH a strong reaction from the cobs.

20. Cash up- Count all the money taken in a shop or business at the end of the day.  
After the shop closed, they have to CASH UP before they can go home.
21. Damp down -Calm or reduce feelings, emotions.  
They tried to DAMP DOWN the anger over the announcement.
22. Damp down- Make a fire burn less.  
They tried to DAMP DOWN the flames before the fire spread.
23. Damp off -hen there is too much moisture and a plant is affected by fungal parasites.  
The seedlings DAMP OFF in the spring if it's very wet.
24. Dash down- Write something quickly.  
He DASHED DOWN a memo and sent it to everybody.
25. Dash off -Leave somewhere quickly.  
It's late- I'm going to DASH OFF home.
26. Dash off- Do something quickly, especially writing.  
He DASHED OFF the report in a couple of hours.
27. Dawn on- Finally realise or understand something.  
The truth only DAWNED ON me much later.
28. Decide on -Choose, select.  
Trevor spent a long time looking at flats before he bought one, but eventually DECIDED ON one near his work.
29. Decide upon -Choose, select.  
Jane spent a long time looking at houses before she bought one, but eventually DECIDED UPON one near her office.
30. Ebb away- Disappear gradually.  
His life was EBBED AWAY as the illness progressed.
31. Edge out- Gradually push someone or something out of their position.  
The stakeholders EDGED the CEO out because results were getting worse.
32. Edge up -Approach slowly.  
She EDGED UP behind the bus at the red light.
33. Egg on- Encourage.  
The other team members EGGED him ON when he started arguing with the coach.
34. Eke out- Make something like money last as long as possible.  
Most college going students have to EKE OUT their pocket money because they have so little to live on.
35. Embark on- Start a project or venture.  
She EMBARKED ON a new project last summer
36. Front onto- Face (of a building).  
My apartment FRONTS ONTO the main garden area.
37. Front out- Face up to someone, withstand criticism.

Lawyer accused her of lying, but she FRONTED him OUT

38. Front up Appear somewhere for a short time.

She hates these gatherings, but she'll FRONT UP for the first 30minutes.

39. Front up- Advance cash for something.

They FRONTED UP the money that she needed for her fee.

40. Frown on- Disapprove.

He FROWNS ON people that use mobile at work.

41. Fuel up- Put petrol or other fuel into a vehicle.

We stopped to FUEL UP before the bike ran out.

42. Gad about- Visit a lot of different places for pleasure.

I spent the afternoon GADDING ABOUT in the down street.

43. Gad around- Visit different places for pleasure.

I spent the afternoon GADDING AROUND looking for some books.

44. Gag for- Want something a lot.

I'm GAGGING FOR a chocolate.

45. Gang up- Form a group against something or someone.

They GANGED UP to try to stop the new system.

46. Gang up against -Harass, bully (in a group).

They GANGED UP AGAINST me because I wouldn't accept their ideas.

47. Hone in on -Target, focus.

The company HONED IN ON its rival and tried to take it over.(Some consider this verb to be wrong and that is confused with 'home in on.)

48. Hook into -Persuade someone to do something they don't want to do.

She HOOKED them INTO coming after all.

49. Hook up- Meet someone.

We HOOKED UP at the concert.

50. Hand down -Give a formal decision.

The jurisdiction HANDED DOWN its ruling the previous day.

### **6.3 Business Expressions**

When native English speakers speak about business, they come out as both professional and courteous. This is because they explain themselves using brief, concise, and appropriate business English phrases, idioms, or business words. You will increase your understanding as well as your speaking proficiency by studying business English phrases!

Here are suggestions for really learning (and applying!) new business English expressions:

Always strive to acquire new terms in context (rather than on their own), therefore try to get your vocabulary and phrases from reliable sources (such as business papers).

Remember to employ both active (speaking and writing) and passive (reading and listening) learning methods.

Go through your new expressions again. Try to say the term at least three times on three distinct days.

Below are few business expressions along with their meaning:-

1. a tough break-When something unfortunate happens, it can be called a "tough break."  
Liz's departure was a tough break for us. She was a standout performer for us.
2. ahead of the pack-To be "ahead of the pack" means to be better or more successful than the competition.  
We'll have to work hard and continue to innovate if we want to stay ahead of the pack.
3. at stake-"At stake" means at risk.  
I'm a little nervous about giving my final Viva. There's a lot at stake.
4. back to square one-To go "back to square one" means to start something over again.  
She is back to square one due to mistake she made in her project.
5. back to the drawing board-To go "back to the drawing board" means to start something over and go back to the planning stage.  
The project wasn't successful. We have to go back to the drawing board.
6. backroom deal-A "backroom deal" is an agreement or decision that is made without the public knowing about it.  
I think they got such a good contract because of a backroom deal.
7. ballpark number/figure-A "ballpark number" is a very inexact estimate.  
I'm not sure what a commercial costs, but to give you a ballpark figure I'd say about three million Euros.
8. by the book-To do things "by the book" means to do things according to company policy or the law.  
If you want to work in this organization you have to go by the book.
9. call it a day-To "call it a day" means to decide to stop working for the day.  
Well, Kristy we are done with work hence we can call it a day.
10. catch someone off guard-To "catch someone off guard" means to surprise someone by doing something that he or she was not expecting.  
Manager was caught off guard when they asked him to handle the stage.
11. change of pace-"A change of pace" is something different from a normal routine or schedule.  
It's nice to go on business trips occasionally because it's a change of pace.
12. come up short-To "come up short" means to try to achieve something but fail. We often say that someone has "come up short" when someone fails to achieve a goal, but not completely.  
The charity was supposed to raise 5million dollars, but they came up short due to lack of cooperation from public.
13. corner a market-To "corner a market" means to dominate a particular market.  
Samsung has cornered the market on music systems. They control a sizable portion of the market.
14. cut corners-To "cut corners" means to take shortcuts and find an easier or cheaper way to do something.  
We don't cut corners on quality when it comes to our high-end items.
15. A "diamond in the rough" is something or someone that has a lot of potential but first requires a lot of work.  
He was "diamond in the rough." He was bright and full of ideas, but his management and English abilities were lacking.

## 6.4 Proverbs

Proverbs are short and pithy sayings that express some traditionally held truth. They are usually metaphorical and often, for the sake of memorability, alliterative. And, as so many proverbs offer advice and uplift, many of them are religious in origin. Here is a list of some commonly used proverbs.

1. A burnt child dreads the fire- People will avoid specific things after a terrible encounter.
2. A bad penny always turns up- An undesired or shady individual keeps reappearing.
3. A barking dog seldom bites-Someone who makes threats on regular basis rarely follows them.
4. A problem shared is a problem halved(Also : A worry shared is a worry halved.)- -It's simpler to solve a problem if you talk about it with someone.
5. A rotten apple spoils the barrel- -It's simpler to solve a problem if you talk about it with someone.
6. An old fox is not easily snared-A person having lot of experience is difficult to fool or manipulate.
7. Another day, another dollar- work may be difficult or tiresome, but at the very least it pays.
8. A soft answer turned away wrath- If you respond in a pleasant and tactful manner, you will avoid provoking fury.
9. A picture paints a thousand words.- A picture is preferable than a lengthy description.
10. A young idler, an old beggar- If you don't work now, you won't have any money afterwards.
11. A bad tree does not yield good apples- a bad parent doesn't develop good kids.
12. A bad workman blames his tools- blaming the tools for shoddy work is a poor excuse for a lack of expertise.
13. A bird in hand is worth two in a bush.- It's preferable to retain what you have than risk losing it in the pursuit of something greater.
14. A black plum is as sweet as a white-We should never judge people by their appearance.
15. A book holds a house of gold- books contain a wealth of information.
16. A broken friendship may be soldered but will never be sound- Friendships can be repaired after a disagreement, but they will never be as strong as they once were.
17. A burden of one's own choice is not felt- When something tough is done freely, it appears to be easier.
18. A calm sea does not make a skilled sailor- When challenges come, a person demonstrates their competence or aptitude.
19. A rising tide lifts all boats-It refers to something that will be helpful to all.
20. A rolling stone gathers no moss- A person who moves from place to place does not accumulate friends or things.
21. A stitch in time saves nine-If you deal with a problem at an early stage you will save time and prevent it from getting worse.
22. A stumble may prevent a fall-Correcting a small mistake may help you to avoid making a bigger one.
23. A swallow does not make the summer-One good event does not mean that everything is alright.
24. Absence makes the heart grow fonder- When you are away from someone you love, you love them even more.

25. Actions speak louder than words-What a person actually does is more important than what they say they will do.
26. Advice is cheap- It doesn't cost anything to offer advice.
27. Advice is least heeded when most needed-When a problem is serious, people often do not follow the advice given.
28. Advisors run no risks-It's easier to give advice than to act.
29. A new broom sweeps clean (but the old brush knows all the corners...)-A newly-appointed person often makes changes quickly .
30. A nod is as good as a wink (to a blind horse/man)-A hint or a subtle signal is enough to convey meaning to someone who is ready to understand.

### **Summary**

- Idioms allow us to communicate a lot with a few words.
- They enhance our language, are more pleasant to listen to, and make conversations less monotonous and more entertaining.
- Native speakers frequently use idioms, therefore if you want to sound like one, start utilising them.
- Idioms allow us to feel more at ease in our target language, allowing us to be "as cool as cucumber."
- We may state that the sheer number of idiomatic expressions and their high frequency in discourse make them an important aspect of vocabulary acquisition and language learning in general.
- One of the approaches to defining this linguistic phenomenon stresses that an idiom is a manner of speaking that is natural to native speakers of the language.
- It proves that only people who are very good at speaking English can adequately and to the point use idiomatic expressions in their speech.
- English is a language with a vast idiomatic basis, which makes its learning very exciting and intriguing. So grasping the use of idioms is an essential part of learning English.

### **Keywords**

- Neologisms- a newly coined word or expression
- Occasionally:- at infrequent or irregular intervals; now and then.
- Conversational:- consisting of or relating to conversation.
- Replenishes:- fill (something) up again

### **SelfAssessment**

1. You cannot leave the kitten because it was rude to you. Two wrongs don't make a right.  
What does the bold phrase mean??
  - A. Just because the kitten did something bad doesn't mean you should also.
  - B. It's okay to do something bad if it's done to you first.
  - C. If the kitten had been nicer then you could be nice to it.
  - D. It's always good to take care of kittens.

2. The jury who attended the seminar were like birds of a feather flocking together. They have not even spoken to anyone outside their group. What does this mean?
- A. The jury share similar beliefs and experiences from the seminar so they are sticking together.
  - B. Jury enjoy bird watching; the birds' feathers are beautiful to them.
  - C. Jury love meeting new people.
  - D. Jury can't wait to go to another seminar.
3. The admissions in this university get filled in very early. If you really want to enroll your daughter here then you should remember that the **early bird gets the worm**. What does the bold phrase mean?
- A. Birds get all of their worms to eat early in the morning.
  - B. There are a lot of worms out in the early hours because of the dew on the ground.
  - C. Their daughter doesn't have a good chance of getting into that college.
  - D. If they enroll their daughter early, he has a better chance of getting in.
4. I was already getting late for college as I got stuck in the traffic, and to **add insult to injury**, I was stopped by the police for speeding. What does the bold phrase mean?
- A. When people insult us, it hurts.
  - B. Your situation of being stuck in traffic was worsened when you got pulled over by the cops.
  - C. Because you were stuck in traffic, you got pulled over.
  - D. When we get stuck in traffic, injuries occur.
5. Liz was always ready to go shopping at the **drop of a hat**. What does the bold phrase mean?
- A. Liz is always ready to go shopping without hesitation.
  - B. Liz always drops his hat in the water when he goes shopping.
  - C. Liz is afraid of dropping his hat.
  - D. Liz always drops his hat when people mention shopping.
6. Don't throw that basket away! It may still ..... in handy when we go picking mushrooms.
- A. find
  - B. run
  - C. come
  - D. Give
7. The final decision has already been taken, so there's no use in your ..... the toss.
- A. arguing
  - B. disapproving
  - C. dismissing
  - D. quarrelling
8. What is an idiom
- A. The same as an adage.
  - B. A common figurative phrase.
  - C. The same as a proverb.

- D. None of these
9. The expression "on the fence" is an idiom meaning:
- A. Broken-hearted
  - B. I am overwhelmed.
  - C. Undecided
  - D. I have more shoes than I can count.
10. When I took this project, I bit off more than I can chew. What is the meaning of this idiom?
- A. I have more cake in my mouth than I can swallow comfortably.
  - B. I am overwhelmed and need help getting all of my work done.
  - C. I think that I am going to be sick.
  - D. I eat too much steak.
11. What is a proverb?
- A. A saying that has been popularly accepted over a long period of time.
  - B. Where there's smoke, there's fire.
  - C. The same as an idiom.
  - D. A simple and concrete saying popularly known and repeated.
12. What is the meaning of the following proverb? Actions speak louder than words.
- A. Your actions have a voice.
  - B. What you do means more than what you say you are going to do.
  - C. Be kind to others.
  - D. Always be honest with what you say and do.
13. What is the meaning of the following adage? You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
- A. It's really hard for older people to learn something new and use it on a daily basis.
  - B. Don't give old people cell phones.
  - C. Be willing to help others that are older than you because sometimes you will need help.
  - D. Always go slower than everyone else in the hopes that you can understand what is going on better.
14. Which sentence contains an idiom?
- A. He came up with a low of motion.
  - B. The action happens when one object crashes into another.
  - C. This is the reaction of what you did.
  - D. When you're at an amusement park, things may seem out of hand.
15. Which sentence from the passage contains a proverb?
- A. This monsoon, I taught my little son Liz how to swim.
  - B. My mom always says, "Patience is a virtue."
  - C. Liz choked on his tears and immediately stopped crying.
  - D. I took him to the deeper end of the pool.

**Answers for Self Assessment**

- 1. A      2. A      3. D      4. B      5. A
- 6. C      7. A      8. B      9. C      10. B
- 11. D     12. B     13. A     14. D     15. B

**Review Questions**

Read the following dialogues and answer the Questions

Florence: I'm always running out of food.

Tina: Why don't you pick up some odds and ends at the store?

Florence: Because I'm fed up with having to foot the bill. I don't like to throw my money down the drain.

Tina: Have everyone chip in.

Florence: No, just skip it.

Vocabulary

- 1) run out of:- (verb ) finish the supply, use up
- 2) pick up:- (verb )obtain, get
- 3) odds and ends :-(noun) miscellaneous items
- 4) fed up with:- adj.) disgusted with, had enough of
- 5) foot the bill:- (verb) pay
- 6) down the drain (tubes)(adjective or adverb):- wasted, lost
- 7) chip in (verb) :-contribute, give jointly
- 8) skip(verb) :- forget, pass over

Exercise I.

Complete the sentences with the correct idiom.

|             |                  |                |               |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Run out of  | Pick someone up  | Down the drain | Odds and ends |
| Fed up with | Footing the bill | To chip in     | skip          |

- 1. She doesn't like cooking every night. She's.....it.
- 2. Everybody occasionally..... bread and milk.
- 3. He goes to college and lives at home. He doesn't have a job yet. His father is .....
- 4. I bought a pair of shoes that don't fit me. I wore them once but my feet hurt. I can't wear them anymore. That was money.....
- 5. Susan wanted to go to the movies but John was too tired. She told him to.....it.
- 6. I'm almost packed for vacation. I only need suntan lotion, toothpaste and other.....
- 7. I don't have enough money to buy that color TV. How much do you have? If all of us..... , we can buy it.
- 8. I don't have any bread. I have to.....

Exercise II.

Rewrite the phrases in italics, using the proper idiomatic expression.

1. We used all the milk yesterday.
2. I must get a loaf of bread.
3. I'm disgusted with ndtng the subways.
4. Whenever they went fbr dinner, he had to pay.
5. If you gamble, it's money wasted.
6. We're buying her a gift and asking everyone to contribute.
7. We need some miscellaneous tterns for the party.
8. Forget it!



### **Further Readings**

1. Idioms and Phrases: Meaning, Idiom, Examples, Videos, Solved Questions (toppr.com)
2. Idioms and Phrases – Check Commonly Used Idioms & Phrases Here: (embibe.com)
3. 30 Best-Known Proverbs in English for Students & Learners (preply.com)
4. 50 Common Proverbs in English · engVid
5. 150 Common English Proverbs with Meanings and Examples | Lemon Grad
6. 9 common business English expressions you need to know | English Live (ef.com)
7. Learn 30 Business English Phrases and Expressions [+Examples] (preply.com)

## Unit 07: Reading Skills

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### Objectives

After this Unit students will be able to

- Identify the different text types;
- Differentiate each text types;
- Use text types in processing an information; and,
- Create different text types.

### Introduction

As a college student, you'll spend a lot of time dealing with texts of all sorts, sizes, and delivery methods. A text is a collection of words that communicates a set of meanings to the reader. It's a collection of written material in many forms and patterns, such as words, phrases, and sentences that make up a written passage.

It is, to put it as simply as possible, a collection of words. It can, however, take many distinct shapes. Written resources, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, or internet information, can all be considered texts. But it might also be something else, something we don't often identify with text. Movies, screenplays, artworks, music, political cartoons, commercials, and maps are all examples of text. You're looking at a text if you can look at anything with words and phrases, examine it, uncover levels of meaning in it, and take information and conclusions from it. A text is something that provides a set of meanings to the person who studies it in academic terminology. You could believe that texts were only found in printed items like books, periodicals, newspapers, and 'zines (an informal term for magazine that refers especially to fanzines and webzines). Films, paintings, television shows, music, political cartoons, internet documents, ads, maps, works of art, and even rooms full of people are all texts. We're looking at a text if we can look at something, study it, uncover levels of meaning in it, and take information and conclusions from it.

## **7.1 Texts should here be Understood as Referring to both Listening and Reading Texts**

### **1. Simplified (or Graded) Text:-**

Texts that have been simplified or graded have been written or changed to be within the linguistic competency of the learner reading or listening to them. They were widely used in Audio-lingual Methodology, which believed that learners should not be exposed to language that was not controlled to the level of structure and lexis that they could use productively, as this would lead to confusion and thus error, which Audiolingualism saw as harmful to learning. Simplified texts, on the other hand, such as those included in the course book or graded readers, would repeat vocabulary that the learners had already encountered, cementing their prior mastery of the language.

Though simplified/graded texts are just no longer utilised as the main foundation for reading and listening assignments in the classroom, it might be argued that they still have a place at lower levels, such as for lengthy reading. For example, graded readers can provide students with simple and enjoyable reading experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. These are books prepared for a given level utilising just language things from a prescribed curriculum, so the instructor may be certain that the students have already encountered the items.

### **2. Authentic Texts:-**

Authentic texts (also authentic materials) are resources that were originally created for a purpose other than language instruction, whether for a native speaker or an international audience. For example, a newspaper story from the United Kingdom or the United States; a trip brochure; a paper published in an academic journal; a DVD film; a TV news programme.

The Communicative Approach believed that learners should not be "insulated" from genuine language usage in the classroom, but rather exposed to it, arguing that:

- a) The language they encountered should always represent natural language use, with no simplifications.
- b) It is possible to build receptive competence at a greater degree than producing competence.
- c) Learners should be taught in the classroom how to deal with challenges provided by real materials, such as unfamiliar terms, in order to better prepare them for their language experiences outside of the classroom.

Many writers, such as Widdowson (1979), distinguish between the text's authenticity and the text's authenticity in relation to the purpose for which it is utilised. Reading/listening for enjoyment (a film) or for information (a vacation brochure) are both "genuine" uses of texts, but studying any of these texts to focus on the language they contain is not. Lexically

### **3. Enhanced Texts:-**

Lexically enriched texts are linked to Lewis's Lexical Approach, which advocated that lexis in general, and lexical chunks in particular, should be prioritised above grammar in language acquisition. The Lexical Approach highlighted the large number of fixed and semi-fixed phrases that native speakers can recall as single units from memory, so improving fluency - once a phrase is started, the rest just happens effortlessly, without the need for preparation time, thereby "freeing up" the brain.

However, this resulted in an issue of exposure. How many learners be exposed to the massive number of pieces in the language? How might they be recycled frequently enough to be digested and retained? One solution was to utilise lexically enhanced texts, which were written with a larger proportion of lexical chunks than would ordinarily be present in the same length of text, rather than to simplify them. According to Powell (1996), the Business English textbook *Business Matters* explains:

"The articles in *Business Matters*, as well as many of the tasks, have been particularly crafted to include a major portion of the course's target language. They are lexically augmented rather than simplified, having a disproportionately large number of word pairings and/or fixed phrases (and little of the redundant or colloquial language found in many authentic texts). As a result, they are readily exploitable in the classroom as both a primary source of input and a source of conversation

fuel. To cover anything close to the same variety of topic language, your students would have to read a vast number of newspaper and magazine articles."

## 7.2 Texts can be divided into five basic types, each with a Different Purpose and Different Organisational and Linguistic Features

### 1. Descriptive text

Descriptive text explains people, locations, and things in detail. The language employed appeals to the reader's senses (forming a mental image of how things appear, feel, smell, taste, and sound) and has the following key features:

- usage of manner adjectives and adverbs
- use of metaphor, simile, and comparison

It may be found in travel guides and novels, among other genres.



Example1:- T. Brooks,

The ragpicker roamed the desolate empty wasteland in the aftermath of a rainfall, humming tunelessly. The sky was still cloudy, and the land was wet and slippery from the surface water



Example of Descriptive Text about Experience in Waterfall

The Lembah Pelangi Waterfall is unfamiliar to both locals and visitors. Sukamaju village, Ulubelu sub district, Tanggamus district, Lampung province, Indonesia, is home to the Lembah Pelangi Waterfall. Because Ulu Belu sub district is located in a secluded location of Lampung, with its steep contours, getting to this tourist attraction is challenging.

The Lembah Pelangi Waterfall is divided into two tiers, the second of which contains two branches. The first level waterfall is roughly 100 metres tall, while the second level waterfall is several metres tall. The rainbow that forms between the valley and the waterfall, as the name says, is the finest enchantment of this waterfall. The sound of a softly flowing, gurgling waterfall is like a chant from nature, and it might help you forget about your exhaustion from the long journey there. There are various locations of warm water beneath the waterfall that may be a fun place to bathe. This location will offer you a panorama of natural beauty that will pique the curiosity of every set of eyes who sees it. The sight of rocky hills surrounded by lush trees will truly relax both of your eyes.

Writing Tips for Descriptive Text:

1. Select a noteworthy person, location, or object as your subject. ...
2. Give a brief description of the person, location, or item you're describing. ...
3. Appeal to your reader's visual senses. ...
4. If you're able, describe the odours and tastes. ...
5. Describe how the situation or thing makes you feel. ...
6. Describe the sound of your subject.
7. Make an original observation
8. Use metaphors and figurative language.
9. Concluding remarks

### 2. Narrative Text

Narrative text tells a story and is common in fiction, anecdotes, and news pieces. A story's usual structure is as follows:

- A structure that is commonly divided into: a) Setting (character introductions, locations, and other background information); b) Complication (a difficulty that the characters encounter); c) Resolution (what happens at the conclusion); while typical language characteristics include:

- Using past verb forms, such as past simple, continuous, and perfect (though see also the use of the "historic" present in narrative genres such as anecdotes).
- Action verbs that are dynamic.
- Time adverbials and sequencers to illustrate how the events are related in time.
- The use of both direct and indirect speech, with direct speech predominating in some narrative genres like books and a combination of both in others like television.



Example:- Narrative Text Legend: The story of Toba Lake

There was once upon a time a guy who lived in north Sumatra. In a rural field, he resided in a tiny cabin. For a living, he did some gardening and fishing.

One day, while fishing, the man caught a large golden fish in his trap. It was the largest fish he'd ever caught in his whole life. Surprisingly, the fish transformed into a lovely princess. He proposed to her as his wife after falling in love with her. "Yes, but you must agree not to tell anyone about the secret that I was once a fish, otherwise there will be a major problem," she warned. The man made the deal and they got married, lived happily and had a daughter.

A few years later, same girl would assist her father in taking lunch to the fields. His kid was so hungry that she ate his father's lunch one day. Unfortunately, he discovered this and became enraged, shouting, "You blasted daughter of a fish!" The girl dashed back to her house and inquired of her mother. The mother began to cry, saddened by her husband's failure to keep his commitment.

Then she instructed her daughter to run up the hills because there was going to be a tremendous calamity. She prayed as her daughter went. There was a large earthquake soon after, followed by nonstop rain. Toba Lake was formed when the entire region was inundated. She reverted to a fish, and the guy transformed into the island of Samosir.

### 3. Expository text

Expository text is factual in content and aims to provide information on a specific topic. Examples include textbooks, glossaries (like this one!), and articles in professional journals - e.g. English Language Teaching Journal - and popular publications such as National Geographic or Scientific American. Typical features include:

- Layout - use of headings and subheadings; connected text divided into fairly long paragraphs; inclusion of visual information - diagrams, graphs, tables, photographs etc; provision of an index in books.
- Citations and references to the work of other authors and researchers.
- Lexis, often including technical terminology, related to the specific topic being discussed
- A high proportion of stative verbs - eg include above.
- Impersonal style, using eg passive verbs, avoiding reference to the writer etc.

| Typical Text Structures of Expository Text |  |
|--|--|
| Cause and Effect                           | Ideas, events in time, or facts are presented as causes of the resulting effect(s) or facts that happen as a result of an event. |
| Compare and Contrast                       | Information is presented by detailing how two or more events, concepts, theories, or things are alike and/or different.          |
| Description                                | A topic is described by listing characteristics, features, attributes, and examples.   |
| Problem and Solution                       | A problem and one or more solutions to the problem is outlined.  |
| Sequence                                   | Items or events are listed in numerical or chronological sequence, either explicitly or implied.                                 |



Examples: This article is itself an example of expository text, while the following comes from McKenna, E (1987) Psychology in Business Lawence Erlbaum Associates Ltd

Social control

In social control the influence is exercised from above on a vertical basis, rather than on a horizontal basis as in social comparison. Experiments on obedience to authority, such as the famous study by Millgram, have shown that a significant number of people are prepared to inflict pain on others because an authority figure instructs them to do so.

#### 4. Procedural (or Directive)

Procedural writing describes "how to" perform something, i.e. the stages in a procedure. A recipe or an item in a DIY manual would be a good example of a genre that uses procedural writing. It might begin with a list of supplies and/or tools required, with the stages broken into numbered points or bullet points. The employment of the imperative and/or simple present or modal verbs with the second person pronoun you, as well as adverbs of manner to alter those verbs, are all common traits.

- a large share of lexis in the topic's unique lexical area
- adverbial clauses with time adverbials
- expressions are sequenced

Some common forms of procedural texts are.

How do I go someplace if I don't know where I'm going? Location names and titles are included in the detailed instructions. It is necessary to use formal language, and including a map will make your directions much easier to comprehend.

How do I accomplish something if I don't know how to do it? If there are difficult aspects to finish, your language must fit the demands of your audience, and you may need to add a diagram.

Recipes - How do I prepare a dish? Recipes are a text that is universal. The audience has a very definite expectation, therefore never wander from the core. Ingredients, procedure, and a few illustrations are all necessary.

How do I play this game according to the rules? Keep in mind who you're writing for and write in a manner and language that they'll understand. This type of writing nearly always necessitates the use of pictures.

How do I use this, according to the manual? Are there any precautions I should take before proceeding? Make your explanation as precise as possible.

Timetables - What exactly are we doing? What time are we going to do it? Who is to blame for this?

#### 5. Persuasive (or Argumentative)

From commercials to political speeches, persuasive language encompasses a wide spectrum of genres.

- the use of emotive terminology - positive to "sell" the writer/product speaker's or message, and negative to characterise any competing views - are prevalent aspects.
- Repetition, tricolons, parallel syntax, and metaphor are examples of rhetorical techniques.

See Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech for an example.

Text types and genre types are not the same thing. Only a few genres employ a single text type. Consider the following scenario:

- Expository text (factual information on a plant) and procedural texts may coexist in a gardening magazine article (advice on how to grow it)
- Fictional genres such as novels, short stories, and fairy tales will incorporate elements of both narrative and descriptive text (what occurred) (what places, people etc looked like).
- Narrative texts (the events) and explanatory writings will be combined in history textbooks (other factual information such as who was involved, the reasons for the event etc)

- To achieve their primary goal of persuasion, advertisements frequently feature a great quantity of descriptive language concentrating on the product's benefits.
- Business reports may blend narrative language (e.g., what happened to sales recently) with persuasive writing (e.g., when passing on the suggestions being made).

Persuasive text can be used and found in a variety of publications, such as:

- newspaper columns;
- advertising campaigns;
- academic essays;
- reviews;
- brochures;
- campaign flyers.



Example: Persuasive Text Example

'Fur is also being shunned by celebrities and socialites. Anjelica Huston donated her unwanted furs to PETA in January and assisted us in cutting them up for use as bedding for orphaned animals. The Oscar winner added, "These jackets were given to me decades ago, when I had no idea how animals suffered in the fur trade.' Animal fur and artificial fur now share the same R-value, which is a measurement of fabric's ability to retain heat. Notably, Team Canada's Winter Olympic outfits (which members of parliament originally advocated should contain fur from dead seals) were made entirely of vegan materials this year, implying that the use of animal skins for performance gear is no longer necessary. The fact that the is a sign of the times is telling.

### 7.3 Essential Skills for Reading Comprehension

Some individuals believe that reading is a simple job that can be mastered quickly. Reading, in truth, is a complicated activity that necessitates the use of a variety of talents. These abilities work together to help you achieve the ultimate aim of reading: reading comprehension or comprehending what you've read. For a variety of reasons, reading comprehension might be difficult. Here are few essential skills that can enhance reading skills.

#### 1. Decoding

The stage of decoding is crucial in the reading process. This talent is used by students to sound out words they've heard but haven't seen written down. This talent is the foundation for all other reading abilities.

Phonemic awareness is an early language ability that is required for decoding. (This ability is part of a larger one known as phonological awareness.) Phonemic awareness allows student to distinguish between distinct sounds in words (known as phonemes). They may also "play" with sounds at the level of words and syllables.

Individual sounds are also linked to letters in decoding. To read the word sun, for example, students must understand that the letter s generates the /s/ sound. Understanding the relationship between a letter (or set of letters) and the sounds it makes is a crucial step in "sounding out" words.

The process of decoding allows one to recognise a word. When reading, the skilled student naturally identifies grade-level appropriate terms without having to think about it. When confronted with an unknown word, the reader can use alphabetical principles to try to pronounce it (i.e., knowledge of letter-sound correspondence). If the foreign word's pronunciation matches a term in the reader's spoken vocabulary, the word will be recognised, and the reader will be able to continue reading.

But what if the act of speaking a word isn't enough to aid in word recognition? What we discovered is a distinguishing factor between "good" and "bad" decoders. Some youngsters, known as typical decoders, will take longer to decode an unknown word. Poor decoders, on the other hand, will not be as tenacious and will give up.

#### 2. Fluency

To read effectively, children must be able to detect words quickly, even if they can't sound them out. Fluency improves a person's ability to read and comprehend content at a faster rate. It's especially crucial when children come across irregular words that can't be sounded out, such as *and* and *the*.

It takes a lot of work to sound out or decode each word. Word recognition refers to the capacity to recognise complete words by sight without having to sound them out.

"Fluent" readers are those who can read fast and without making too many mistakes.

Fluent readers read quickly and smoothly. They utilise the right tone in their voice when reading aloud and combine words together to aid with meaning. Good reading comprehension necessitates reading fluency.

What may be done to help: For struggling readers, word recognition can be a major roadblock. The average reader must view a word four to fourteen times before it becomes a "sightword" that they identify instantly. Children with dyslexia, for example, may require up to 40 viewings.

Reading fluency is a problem for many children. To enhance word recognition, kids require a lot of targeted teaching and practise, just like they do with other reading abilities.

Reading practise is the most effective strategy to improve fluency. It's critical to select books for children that are at the appropriate degree of complexity.

### **3. Vocabulary**

To comprehend what you're reading, you must comprehend the majority of the text's words. Reading comprehension relies heavily on having a large vocabulary. Vocabulary may be taught to students through instruction. They learn the meaning of words, though, from ordinary experience as well as reading.

What can be done to help: The more words that children are exposed to, the more diverse their vocabulary grows. By having regular talks on a range of topics, you may assist your child in expanding his or her vocabulary. Make an effort to include new terms and concepts. It's a lot of fun to practise this ability by telling jokes and playing word games.

Reading aloud every day with your child might also help you increase your vocabulary. Stop reading aloud when you come across a new term and clarify it. Encourage your youngster to read independently as well. Even if you don't provide your child a meaning for a new term, he or she can utilise context to figure it out.

Watch as an expert shows how to assist struggling readers expand their vocabulary for additional ideas.

### **4. Sentence construction and cohesion**

Understanding the structure of sentences may appear to be a writing talent. Cohesion refers to the process of linking concepts inside and between phrases. However, these abilities are also necessary for reading comprehension.

Understanding how concepts connect at the sentence level aids children in making sense of passages and complete books. It also leads to something known as coherence, or the capacity to link ideas in a larger piece of writing.

What can be of assistance: Children can learn the fundamentals of sentence structure through explicit instruction. Teachers, for example, might work with children to link two or more ideas through writing and reading.

### **5. Reasoning and background knowledge**

The majority of readers make connections between what they've read and what they already know. As a result, when children read, it is critical that they have some background or past knowledge of the world. They must also be able to "read between the lines" and deduce meaning even when it is not explicitly stated.

Consider the following scenario: A youngster is reading a story set in the 1930s about an impoverished household. Knowing about the Great Depression will help you understand what's going on in the narrative. The youngster may form inferences and draw conclusions based on his or her prior knowledge.

What can be of assistance: Reading, talks, movies and TV shows, and art may all help your youngster gain knowledge. Knowledge is also gained via life experience and hands-on activities.

Expose yourself as much as possible, and discuss what you've learned through shared and different experiences. Take assistance in making connections between new and old information. In addition, ask open-ended inquiries that necessitate thought and explanation.

## 6. Working memory and attention

These two talents are both part of the executive function category of abilities. They're not the same, yet they're linked.

When children read, their ability to pay attention permits them to absorb information from the text. Working memory enables people to retain that information and use it to make sense of and learn from what they're reading.

It's also linked to the ability to self-monitor when reading. When children don't comprehend anything, they must be able to acknowledge it. Then they must pause, go back, and reread to clarify up any misunderstandings.

This passage provides instructions for renewing a driver's license. Read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



**Task: Instructions for License Renewal** A driver's license must be renewed every four years. A renewal application is sent approximately five to seven weeks before the expiration date listed on the license. Individuals who fail to renew within three years of the license expiration date are not eligible for a renewal and must repeat the initial licensing process. To renew a license, you must visit a Motor Vehicles Agency. You must present a completed renewal application; your current driver's license; acceptable proof of age, identification, and address; and proof of social security in the form of a social security card, a state or federal income tax return, a current pay stub, or a W-2 form. You must also pay the required fee. If all the documents and payment are in order, your photo will be taken and a new license will be issued.

Q1. What documents does one need to renew a driver's license?

Q2. What documents represent proof of social security?

Q3. How often must one renew a driver's license?

Q4. How does one obtain the renewal form?

Q5. True or False: You can renew your driver's license by mail.

Set out to read with an explorer's eye and sense of curiosity by probing into details behind key actions and events. If you are unfamiliar with a specific factual detail in a passage, consider asking a friend or family member for help, or check a reference source such as a dictionary, atlas, encyclopedia, or Internet database. There are print and Internet archive collections and specialized libraries covering almost every imaginable subject—from space missions and history to the performing arts.

## Summary

- Decoding, fluency, and vocabulary skills are key to reading comprehension.
- Being able to connect ideas within and between sentences helps kids understand the whole text.
- Reading aloud and talking about experiences can help kids build reading skills.
- The stage of decoding is crucial in the reading process. This talent is used by students to sound out words they've heard but haven't seen written down. This talent is the foundation for all other reading abilities.
- A narrative text serves a different goal than an informative text.
- Authors employ their imagination and personal experiences to write captivating passages that address essential issues, values, and life lessons.

- Expository texts aim to enlighten or advise readers on important facts.
- When readers require precise, well-founded information to make judgments or perform real-world evaluations, they turn to expository writings.
- Expository writings do not need the use of the imagination and have a more objective, less personal appeal.

### **Keywords**

- Narrative – to tell or present a story, usually for entertainment.
- Instruction – to instruct a reader how to make or do something.
- Explanation – to show how things work and why things happen.
- Factual – to present a record of information after careful observation and analysis.
- Persuasive – to inform or persuade the readers and to explore more than one side of the issue.
- Expository – to persuade the reader to agree with the writer’s position or opinion.

### **Self Assessment**

1. Another name for Simplified Text is.....
  - A. Graded
  - B. Competency
  - C. Learner
  - D. Audi-Lingual
2. In a SEQUENCE/CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER text structure, the author...
  - A. DESCRIBES a topic and its characteristics.
  - B. tells about events in the ORDER they happened.
  - C. explains how things are SIMILAR and DIFFERENT.
  - D. describes a PROBLEM and then explains how it can be solved.
3. In a COMPARE and CONTRAST text structure, the author...
  - A. explains something that happened and the REASONS WHY.
  - B. tells about events in the ORDER they happened.
  - C. explains how things are SIMILAR and DIFFERENT.
  - D. describes a PROBLEM and then explains how someone solved it.
4. The purpose of this text type is to entertain the readers through telling a story.
  - A. Expository
  - B. Narrative
  - C. Persuasive
  - D. Explanatory
5. The purpose of this text is to explain what, how, and why a certain thing happened.
  - A. Narrative
  - B. Expository
  - C. Explanatory
  - D. Persuasive
6. The purpose of this text type is to convince or encourage the readers of the merits of adopting a particular viewpoint or taking a specific course of action.
  - A. Persuasive
  - B. Narrative
  - C. Expository
  - D. Explanatory

7. In the United States, many kids claim to have been harassed in school. Natalie Hampton is a senior who experienced a lot of bullying in middle school. She didn't always have somebody to sit with during lunch. As a result, she designed "Sit With Us," a phone app. This app allows students to join up and post when seats at their lunch tables become available. These pupils have agreed to treat others who sit with them with respect. Hampton thinks that her software will assist pupils in finding folks to sit with who aren't bullies.

What text structure is being used in this passage?

- A. Description
- B. Problem and Solution
- C. Compare and Contrast
- D. Sequence/Chronological Order

8. In a beautiful blue sky, the sun gleamed brightly yellow. The gleaming pavement emitted a thin haze, indicating steam coming from a heated surface.

What text structure is used in the passage?

- A. description
- B. compare & contrast
- C. order & sequence
- D. problem & solution

9. The first step in editing your writing should be to rewrite it. Start by reading each paragraph individually and then identifying the topic sentence for each. After that, check to see if all of the sentences are related to the main sentence. Finally, consider how the paragraphs interact. To ensure that your writing flows smoothly, use transitional words between each paragraph.

What text structure is used in the passage?

- A. order & sequence
- B. descriptive
- C. compare & contrast
- D. problem & solution

10. The .....stage is critical in the reading process. Students utilise this ability to sound out words that they have heard but not seen written down.

- A. Decoding
- B. Fluency
- C. Vocabulary
- D. Cohesion

11. ....enhances a person's ability to read and absorb information more quickly.

- A. Decoding
- B. Fluency
- C. Vocabulary
- D. Cohesion

12. Reading comprehension relies heavily on having a large.....

- A. Vocabulary
- B. Decoding
- C. Fluency
- D. Cohesion

13. Working memory and attention is one of the skills required in reading comprehension.

- A. True
- B. False

14. A text is a collection of .....that communicates a set of meanings to the reader.

- A. Ideas
- B. Words
- C. Creations
- D. None of these

15. The examples of text are.....

- A. Movies
- B. Screenplay
- C. Artwork
- D. All of the above

### Answers for Self Assessment

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A  | 2. B  | 3. C  | 4. B  | 5. C  |
| 6. A  | 7. B  | 8. A  | 9. A  | 10. A |
| 11. B | 12. A | 13. A | 14. B | 15. D |

### Review Questions

1. It is widely believed that every word has a correct meaning that we learn these meanings principally from teachers and grammarians (except that most of the time we don't bother to, so that we ordinarily speak "sloppy English"), and that dictionaries and grammars are the supreme authority in matters of meaning and usage. [...] Few people ask by what authority the writers of dictionaries and grammars say what they say. Let us see how dictionaries are made and how the editors arrive at definitions. What follows applies, incidentally, only to those dictionary offices where first-hand, original research goes on—not those in which editors simply copy existing dictionaries. The task of writing a dictionary begins with the reading of vast amounts of the literature of the period or subject that the dictionary is to cover. As the editors read, they copy on cards every interesting or rare word, every unusual or peculiar occurrence of a common word, a large number of common words in their ordinary uses, and also the sentences in which each of these words appears. That is to say, the context of each word is collected, along with the word itself. For a really big job of dictionary writing, such as the Oxford English Dictionary (usually bound in about twenty-five volumes) millions of such cards are collected, and the task of editing occupies decades. As the cards are collected, they are alphabetized and sorted. When the sorting is completed, there will be for each word anywhere from two to three to several hundred illustrative quotations, each on its card. To define a word, then, the dictionary editor places before him the stack of cards illustrating that word: each of the cards represents an actual use of the word by a writer of some literary or historical importance. He reads the cards carefully, discards some, rereads the rest, and divides up the stack according to what he thinks are the several senses of the word. Finally, he writes his definitions, following the hard-and-fast rule that each definition must be based on what the quotations in front of him reveal about the meaning of the word. The editor cannot be influenced by what he thinks a given word ought to mean. He must work according to the cards or not at all. The writing of a dictionary, therefore, is not a task of setting up authoritative statements about the "true meanings" of words, but a task of recording, to the best of one's ability, what various words have meant to

authors in the distant or immediate past. The writer of a dictionary is a historian, not a lawgiver. [...] To regard the dictionary as an "authority," therefore, is to credit the dictionary writer with gifts of prophecy which neither he nor anyone else possesses. In choosing our words when we speak or write, we can be guided by the historical record afforded us by the dictionary, but we cannot be bound by it, because new situations, new experiences, new inventions, new feelings, are always compelling us to give new uses to old words. Looking under a "hood," we should ordinarily have found, five hundred years ago, a monk; today, we find a motorcar engine. ( Source: S. I. Hayakawa, Language in Thought and Action, 2nd Edition. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1939

- i. What is this essay about?
  - ii. What kind of text is this (i.e., description, explanation, argument, narrative)?
  - iii. Where do dictionary meanings come from?
  - iv. What is the role of a dictionary writer?
  - v. Do words keep the same meaning forever?
  - vi. Write any words, phrases, or numbers you noticed.
2. How descriptive text different from Narrative text? Give examples.
  3. Define persuasive text and quote an example?
  4. What Skills are required for Reading comprehension? Discuss in detail.



### **Further Readings**

1. Descriptive Text Structure Examples - Weavingaweb ([yvettealexander.org](http://yvettealexander.org))
2. What is Narrative? 5 Narrative Types and Examples | Now Novel
3. Narrative Text: What It Is, Structure, Characteristics and Examples ([crgsoft.com](http://crgsoft.com))
4. Narrative Text; Definition, Generic Structures, Purposes, Language Features - BRITISH Course
5. Expository Texts: What They Are, Structure, Types and Characteristics ([crgsoft.com](http://crgsoft.com))
6. Expository Text Structures | Expository Text Graphic Organizer ([storyboardthat.com](http://storyboardthat.com))
7. Examples Of Persuasive Texts, So You Can Convince All Your Readers ([elivestory.com](http://elivestory.com))

## Unit 08: Comprehension Skills

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### Objectives

After this unit, students will be able to:

- List and identify comprehension strategies.
- Apply comprehension strategies to text.

### Introduction

In business communication, it is essential for the business executives in mastering the various skills of communication. There are four communication skills – writing, speaking, reading and listening. Each skill has its own significance, however, for complete efficiency one is required to be efficient in all. Each one of us spends a lot of time on reading. We began our day by reading the newspapers. During the day, we read our e-mails, letters and other books and magazines. We also read banners and advertisements on the boards. The success of any business organization depends upon the ability of its executives to read and understand the material given in office manuals, newspapers, magazines, books, journals, letters, reports, business reports, etc., quickly and adequately. Moreover, comprehension is the understanding of the read material. There is more or less an inverse relationship between reading speed and understanding of material. If the reading speed is slower, comprehension rate will be higher. However, this may not be true always. A reader may improve his reading speed, without compromising his ability to understand and comprehend. It is also often observed that good and speedy readers have good comprehension ability and poor readers have poor comprehension ability. Comprehension of a person can be tested in two ways, i.e., immediate recall and immediate inference.

### 8.1 Reading Strategies

When we start with comprehension, we should determine the purpose of the passage. It is important that we be flexible and determined about how to read a passage by its difficulty level and purpose. There are many reading speeds; we must pace ourselves according to what suits us best.

It is important to set a realistic time limit. We must try and read as much as possible from as diverse sources as possible. Before reading, think about the topic and ask yourself if you already know something about it, also ask yourself the following questions:

- What kind of text am I reading? (Informative, entertaining etc.)
- Is there any information that I learnt from it?
- What's interesting in it?

As you are reading you can also make a list of all difficult words, look for their meanings in the dictionary and try to remember them. You can judge yourself by quizzing yourself on the main points like the main idea or the characters of the story, the information that you learnt from it etc. It is always better to jot down your thoughts which would actually help you in remembering the facts or the main points.

Reading the questions first also helps in identifying the answers quickly. It also gives you an idea as to what you should be focussing on while reading the text.

**Inculcate Reading:** Some students are naturally inclined towards reading. Students who're not much into reading need to be slowly nudged into it. Learning about your taste would help you select books. Fairy tales, non-fiction, travelogues, fantasy, mystery, thrillers, or comics – it can be anything! Reading is an ongoing learning process. Over time, readers consciously or unconsciously move from one level of reading to the next. Their thought-process and depth of understanding improve with each good book they read. They also subconsciously begin picking up new words and use them in everyday communication. It goes without saying that their confidence with the language also increases.

**Reading Comprehension and Personality Predicates**

“Brevity is the soul of wit” – William Shakespeare in ‘Hamlet’

Communication is linked to personality, and comprehension in reading is different for different types of personalities. Communication, therefore, is dependent on the ability to absorb learning from reading. Capacity of individual memory is an independent variable, and is highly personality specific. Symmetrically organizing the mosaic of thoughts while examining the specific factors in the various methods of cognition leads to as clarity of understanding.

Reading comprehension skills vary with different personality types. It is a skill pivotal to any kind of business activity, because policy decisions are based on what is comprehended from reading letters and literatures. Today's environment of cut-throat competition needs quick comprehension and the ability to act thereon.

Those students who can rapidly comprehend and understand articles can digest ideas faster than others. In order to become a good research fellow or research assistant in one of the 100 best B-schools in the world, one has to read and comprehend a minimum of ten articles of international repute steadily, to present before the professor before one can be rated as an ideal student.

If we carefully examine the subject area, we learn that comprehension is a two-fold process. Incidentally, it requires the understanding of what is presented and reproduced, all of which is comprehended from reading. Comprehension skill, therefore, plays a vital role in practical life and it can be developed through diligent effort, like any other skill.

**8.2 Reading Comprehension**

Comprehension involves rapid reading, quick understanding and precise reproduction. According to Edward Fry, it is observed that there are three reading speeds ‘study reading speed’, ‘average reading speed’ and ‘skimming speed’

According to Edward Fry, the three reading speeds are study reading speed, reading and skimming speed. Grading of each of them is given below:

|  |       |             |             |
|--|-------|-------------|-------------|
|  | Speed | Poor Reader | Good Reader |
|--|-------|-------------|-------------|

|   |                 |                                    |   |
|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|---|
| A | Study Reading   | 90-125 WPM 80 to 90% comprehension | 200-300 wpm 80 to 90 comprehension      |
| B | Average Reading | 150-180 wpm 70% comprehension      | 250-500 wpm 70% comprehension 800 + WPM |
| C | Skimming        | 150-180 wpm 70% comprehension      | 50% Comprehension                       |

The 'study reading speed' is used for reading material that deals with difficult arguments, ideas and notions, etc. This kind of reading aims at almost total comprehension and retention of what has been read. A good study reader can read 200 to 300 words per minute. Similarly, the 'average reading speed' is the speed used for reading newspapers, magazines, novels, etc. Here, the emphasis in this kind of reading is on following the writer's line of thought. A good average reading speed is 250 words per minute. And finally we recognize that 'Skimming is the fastest reading speed'. A good reader is one who, keeping his purpose in mind can quickly attain the required speed.

In fact, it is never too late to improve one's speed of reading. And it is a fallacy that 'when reading speed increases, comprehension suffers'. Therefore, to improve speed, one must try to cultivate the habit of looking at larger groups of words and of moving ahead faster. The wider one's 'eyes span', the greater will be his or her speed to comprehend. The other habit which slows down reading speed is the practice of pointing at the words with pencil, pen or finger and going back to words which have already been read.

### Words have Nature, Like Human Character

Words have their own distinctive character, just like people. Words are arbitrary symbols of things, ideas, thoughts, actions, feelings, etc. They eventually serve as a medium to convey the message often by the use of words that do not literally convey the same meaning. In other words, words can carry different connotations depending on the context, emphasis, etc. If one can manage to concentrate on the message, one will be able to read faster.

### 8.3 Comprehending Passages: Wants, Hints and Clues

Clues are important to trail and nab thieves, and hints are important to comprehending a passage. Communication is always done with symbols and signs, and hints come in that bracket, too. There are techniques to scan passages optimally, and the following 'hints' may help every professional and student alike, when it comes to better comprehension:

1. Read the passage to get its general meaning, and then pause for a while to recollect and determine what the writer is trying to say. Go through the passage once more and note down the main points.
2. You may come across words whose meaning you do not know. Try to make a guess; very often, the context will help you to arrive at the meaning.
3. Then read all the questions attentively and look for answers. The answer should be based on what is stated, implied, or merely suggested in the passage.
4. Be precise in answering the questions. As far as possible your answer should be in your own words, and should be in complete sentences.
5. Check carefully the grammar, spelling and punctuation of what you write.

Going forward from the aforesaid understanding, we see that reading comprehension requires an ability to understand the meaning of what is put forth, as well as the competence to re-state the meaning clearly. We learn that the meaning of a sentence is not the sum total of the meanings of the individual words that constitute it. Therefore, to understand a passage fully, one should know the nature of the words, as well as the function of the 'inter sentence and inter paragraph links'. This ability can be acquired through intensive and disciplined practice.

## 8.4 Synthesizing Comprehension Strategies

Comprehension strategies can be synthesized into the following six habits:

1. Organizing text information by sculpting the main idea and summarizing
2. Connecting to background knowledge
3. Making inferences and predictions
4. Generating and answering questions
5. Understanding and remembering word meanings
6. Monitoring one's own comprehension

**1. Organizing text information by sculpting the main idea and summarizing:-** Finding the main idea has never been fun for most struggling readers. They have been asked to find it countless times and have produced inadequate answers. After repeated failures, many students just give up on the search altogether. They figure out how to work the system instead, most often by searching for answers to questions or by copying.

Unfortunately, getting the main idea is the most vital type of thinking readers can do to comprehend a text. We cannot sidestep it. It is why the text exists. Nor can we avoid the related habit of summarizing along the way, because it supports the main idea. For these reasons, this chapter provides a variety of ways to help students develop better text organizing abilities in engaging ways.

Have you ever started reading a book that was just too stuffed with information to absorb it for more than five minutes? You either take lots of breaks or choose not to read it. Our students do not have these choices. We ask them to read and learn it all, but the texts are overloaded with information. What does a good reader do? A good reader reduces text to just the essentials. The good reader then proceeds to organize the essentials by using a process I call sculpting the main idea—the process in which a reader looks at emerging clues and develops the text's core information before and during reading, not just after.

The good reader uses this evolving main idea to decide what to store in the smaller summaries. Summarizing is the process of reducing a just-read portion of text into a manageable chunk of important information. This chunk, in turn, helps guide the reader in sculpting the overall main idea. As one can see, this becomes a codependent cycle: As the main idea becomes more defined, the reader can more effectively decide which information goes into the summaries that support the main idea. As the summaries increase in number, they help the reader sculpt a better defined main idea. This chapter offers ideas for helping all students to develop these symbiotic organizing habits:

- Identifying, generating, developing, and sculpting the main idea of the passage
- Summarizing portions of text to strengthen, change, and challenge the evolving main idea

Sculpting the main idea is the process of creating a compact chunk of information that includes the topic, what is said about the topic, and, usually, the text's purpose. These items can be shortened to the What? What about it? and Why? components to help students remember the process. Starting with the text's title and other initial visual clues, we begin to formulate the main idea. Some titles are misleading, however, and we must test our hypotheses about the main idea and look for evidence as we read. If evidence comes along that contradicts our existing main idea, we must "trim" away pieces and "attach" new ones that align with the text.

**The Role of Flexibility :-** The reader must be flexible when forming and refining the main idea. The main idea generated in the beginning of a reading may be very different from the main idea at the end of a reading. Perhaps the beginning of a text is so difficult or unfamiliar that the reader can only form a very generalized main idea.

**The Role of Memory :-** A good reader monitors the quantity and quality of information that goes into his or her memory (Taylor et al., 2000). In the beginning of a reading, there is more room in the memory, and, therefore, more extraneous information can fit. Gradually, the less important details are discarded to make room for the more important ones. A reader must decide if each piece of current information is important enough to store; the reader does this by deciding how well it supports (or changes) the evolving main idea. The reader also continues to monitor how well the key information is supported throughout the text.

**2. Connecting to background knowledge:-** Background knowledge is like a backbone for comprehension. For this reason, it is known as backbone knowledge. We can't do without it. Why? Because as we read, we must connect the text's information to related knowledge and experience in our brains that we, in a sense, use as raw material to construct meaning as the text dictates. We compare this evolving meaning with each successive piece of text and we modify or discard any inconsistencies (i.e., we "prune away" the less useful information).

Authors expect readers to possess and use certain pieces of background knowledge. This fund of background knowledge often consists of facts, concepts, experiences, values, and ideas (Alvermann & Phelps, 2001). An author will use idioms, analogies, technical words, and descriptions that the readers of the text are supposed to understand already; the author does not take the extra time to elaborate on what he or she considers to be common experience or knowledge shared by most of the prospective readers. For example, an author might omit common details about a typical ocean beach. When the text deviates from this common fund of background knowledge, however, then the author must take the time to describe how it differs from readers' common expectations (e.g., an ocean beach with mounds of red seaweed and pink sand). The problem for many struggling readers and English learners is that their funds of background knowledge and vocabulary are not what the authors of middle school and high school texts expect them to be.

When we use background knowledge to create mental images and associations that aid us in comprehension, we are visualizing. Proficient readers routinely create a variety of mental pictures during reading. We use the text's information to bring up prior mental images that we obtained from life, photos, movies, television, or other sources. We adapt the images as we read in order to fit what the text says. The more vivid the mental pictures we can create, the more comprehensible and memorable the text tends to be (Hyerle, 2008).

**3. Making inferences and predictions:-** Making an inference in reading is the process of combining the current text information with one's own experience in order to create meaning that is not directly stated in the text (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991). It means creating connections and making educated guesses that go beyond the author's exact words or images. Inference might be seen as taking little "thinking steps" off the safe path of the literal and seeing if they lead to where the author intends. It means making educated guesses and filling in the blanks that are not in the text. If the inference is correct, then we have learned something new and will have that learning better anchored in our brains. If it is wrong, then we still learn something new – to make a different inference in a similar situation in future texts.

An inference about future information in a text is a prediction. We use the text clues and our background knowledge to predict what will happen next in a story or what we will learn later in a text. We then go through the text to confirm, discard, change, or make new predictions, based on new evidence that comes up. Prediction provides us with motivation and purpose for reading. It also helps the mind prepare itself to understand the upcoming ideas in the text. As we predict, we need to reflect on the main idea in order to make a logical prediction. This necessitates a certain amount of focus on text details and an ongoing handle on the main idea.

## Types of Inferences

**Text-to-Text Inferences:-** These inferences allow us to connect one part of a text to another. For a particular section of text, comprehension depends, in large part, on text information that preceded it. Proficient readers remember what was read earlier in a text and then connect it to what they are currently reading (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007).



For example, readers need to remember characters, their traits, and their relationships; the order of events; the setting; causes and effects; foreshadowing; and key vocabulary terms within a text as they read. Authors usually expect the reader to make these text-to-text inferences within the specific text being read. They also may assume that the reader has read certain other texts, but authors have much less control over these text-to-other-texts connections.

**Text-to-Self and Text-to-World Inferences:-** When we make inferences, we connect the text information to our own experience and knowledge of the world. For example, I may think of the

tree as a symbol of growth in a story, or the dry lake as a metaphor for death. As I read on, these inferences might be confirmed, perhaps in a class discussion, or we may conclude that they were nothing more than a tree and a dry lake. I may infer that, because I know ice floats, all other solid versions of a liquid will float, and I would be wrong. Many authors expect readers to make text-to-self and text-to-world inferences – they want us to apply what we read and learn to past or present situations, problems, and settings in the world.

The following questions can be powerful igniters of text-to-text and text-to-self and text-to-world inferences. Ideally, we can figure out ways to make such inference-generating questions automatic for students.

Who is doing the action? Why?

How does a part fit into the overall text?

What are the effects of an event, both psychological and physical?

What feelings does a person experience?

What is the author's purpose?

What if I had been in that situation?

How does this apply to my life or the world around me?

What does this word mean?

**4. Generating and answering questions:**-Each stage of comprehension includes questioning: We must ask good questions before we read to prepare us to find and store the information. During reading, we must ask questions to make sure we are sculpting the main idea and achieving the purpose we established for reading. After reading, we must ask questions to further organize what we have read and to fit it into the lesson we are learning. The following is a list of sample questions that facilitate comprehension in different stages of reading.

Before

- Why am I reading this text?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- How can the text structure help me to read?
- What will this text be about?

During

- Is this text making sense?
- What just happened?
- What will happen next?
- Did I miss anything?
- What makes this text difficult to understand?
- How does \_\_\_\_\_ relate to \_\_\_\_\_?
- What does this \_\_\_\_\_ remind me of?
- What caused \_\_\_\_\_?
- What does \_\_\_\_\_ mean? Why do I think so?
- What would happen if \_\_\_\_\_? • How does \_\_\_\_\_ affect \_\_\_\_\_?
- What information is important enough to remember as I read the rest of the text?
- What am I supposed to be learning by reading this text? •

Why is \_\_\_\_\_ important?

After

- So what?
- Did the reading end the way I predicted?

- What do I want to remember?
- How could I communicate what I read to someone else?
- Why did the author write this?
- In what ways is this text like anything else I have read?
- What was I supposed to learn by reading this text?

#### 5. Understanding and Remembering Word Meanings:-Using Context Clues With Text Signals

- Explanation or definition: The author explains or defines the word in the same sentence in which it is introduced. Following are some signal words and punctuation for this type of clue and some sample sentences in which they are used
- Synonym or restatement: The author uses more familiar terms to explain the new word. Following are some signal words and punctuation for this type of clue and some sample sentences in which they are used.
- Antonym or contrast: The author offers the opposite meaning of the unknown word. Following are some signal words for antonym clues and some sample sentences in which they are used.
- Cause and effect: With a cause-and-effect clue, we automatically attempt to make the connections shown.

**6. Monitoring One's Own Comprehension:-** Comprehension monitoring means being aware of our level of understanding as we read and then using this awareness to guide us (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007). Comprehension monitoring is an unseen "higher level" of reading, similar to the unseen director of a play, who keeps the show running smoothly and fixes the problems as they arise. This director is behind the scenes, managing the actors (comprehension habits) to produce the play (text meaning). Basic elements of comprehension monitoring include the following:

- Establishing a purpose for reading, and keeping in mind whether or not the purpose is being met by checking to see whether each new piece of text fits, or changes, that purpose for reading.
- Combining new information with previously stored information in your brain.
- Realizing when a current part of the reading clashes with your evolving main idea or expectations.
- Controlling your attention, commitment, attitudes, and motivation during learning.

Questions that help with this step include the following:

Can I keep other things out of my mind long enough to concentrate on this text?

Am I committed enough to read it all and go back over it, if necessary?

Do I believe I have the ability to understand this?

Am I motivated enough to expend the energy to understand this?

Using "fix-up" strategies when comprehension breaks down. These are called strategies because they are more conscious and noticeable techniques (i.e., one can better remember using them) for overcoming comprehension problems than the automatic habits in other chapters. Fix-up strategies include the following:

- Rereading the text
- Reading further to see if things clear up
- Sounding out words
- Adjusting reading rate (slowing down or speeding up)
- Noticing extra clues such as text structure, pictures, introductions, back cover, questions, and so on



### Task: Passages for Comprehension

Education has always had two objects

On the one hand, to give skill; and on the other, to impart a vaguer thing which we may call wisdom. The role of skill has become very much larger than it used to be and is increasingly threatening to oust the role of wisdom. At the same time it must be admitted that wisdom in our world is useless except for those who realize the great part played by skills, for it is increase of skill that is the distinctive feature of your world.

Although scientific skill is necessary, it is by no means sufficient. A dictatorship of men of science would very soon become horrible. Skill without wisdom may prove to be purely destructive. For this reason, if for no other, it is of great importance that those who receive a scientific education should not be merely scientific, but should have some understanding of that kind of wisdom which, if it can be imparted at all, can only be imparted by the cultural side of education. Science enables us to know the means to any chosen end, but it does not help us to decide upon what ends should be pursued. If you wish to exterminate the human race, it will show you how to do it. If you wish to make the human race so numerous that all are on the very verge of starvation, it will show you how to do that. If you wish to secure adequate prosperity for the whole human race, science will tell you what you must do. But it will not tell you whether one of these ends is more desirable than another. Nor will it give you that instinctive understanding of human beings that is necessary if your measures are not to arouse fierce opposition which only ferocious tyranny can quell. It cannot teach you patience, it cannot teach you sympathy, it cannot teach you a sense of human dignity. These things, in so far as they can be taught in formal education, are most likely to emerge from the learning of history and great literature. (By Bertrand Russell From: Fact and Fiction, 1960)

Questions

1. What are the two objects of education?
2. Why is it necessary to study history and great literature?
3. Bring out the distinction between 'knowledge' and 'wisdom'?



Task: I am always amazed when I hear people say that sport creates goodwill between the nations, and that if only the common people of the world could meet one another at football or cricket, they would have no inclination to meet on the battlefield.

Nearly all the sports practised nowadays are competitive. You play to win, and the game has little meaning unless you do your utmost to win... Anyone who has played even in a school football match knows this. At the international level sport is frankly mimic warfare. But the significant thing is not the behaviour of the players but the attitude of the spectators, of the nations who work themselves into furies over these absurd contests, and seriously believe—at any rate for sort periods—that running, jumping and kicking a ball are tests of national virtue.

As soon as strong feelings of rivalry are aroused, the notion of playing the game according to the rules always vanishes. People want to see one side on top and the other side humiliated, and they forget that victory gained through cheating or through the intervention of the crowd is meaningless. Even when the spectators don't intervene physically they try to influence the game by cheering their own side and 'rattling' opposing players with boos and insults. Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence: in other words, it is war minus the shooting.

Instead of babbling about the clean, healthy rivalry of the football field and the great part played by the Olympic Games in bringing the nations together, it is more useful to inquire how and why the modern cult of sport arose. Most of the games we now play, are of ancient origin, but sport does not seem to have been taken very seriously between Roman times and the nineteenth century. The games were built up into a heavily-financed, activity, capable of attracting vast crowds and rousing savage passions, and the infection spread from country to country. It is the most violently combative sports, football and boxing, that have spread the widest. There cannot be much doubt that the whole thing is bound up with the rise of nationalism—that is, with the lunatic modern habits of identifying oneself with large power units and seeing everything in terms of competitive prestige. Also, organised games are more likely to flourish in urban communities where the

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average human being lives a sedentary or at least a confined life, and does not get much opportunity for creative labour. In a rustic community a boy or young man works off a good deal of his surplus energy by walking, swimming, climbing trees, riding horses, and by various sports involving cruelty to animals, such as fishing, cock-fighting and ferreting for rats. In a big town one must indulge in group activities if one wants an outlet for one's physical strength or for one's sadistic impulses.  
(By George Orwell From: The Collected Essays, 1970)

Questions

1. What do you mean by:
  - (a) Mimic warfare
  - (b) Savage passion
  - (c) A confined life
2. In which way is international level sport mimic warfare?
3. Cite reasons as to why do organized games flourish in urban communities.
4. Bring out the merits and demerits of international level sport.

Summary

- In this unit you have learnt that it is important to read the text in such a manner that we understand what we are reading.
- Also this must be done at the fastest possible speed.
- This speed will differ on the difficulty level of the passage and also the familiarity of the reader with the subject of the text.
- You have also learnt the reading strategies to be kept in mind while going through a text.
- Reading at one's suitable reading level is an important first step in improving reading comprehension.
- Encourage yourself to respond to what is being read as the second stage in improving reading comprehension.
- Leading discussions about what has been read is the third stage in promoting reading comprehension.

Keywords

- Comprehension: It is the capacity to accurately understand the ideas and facts of any written material.
- Realistic: Actual or real
- Taste: Likings
- Thought Process: The process in which we use our mind to think something very carefully.
- Travelogue: A film, video, or piece of writing, or a lecture accompanied by pictures, video or film, about travel, especially to interesting or remote places, or about one person's travels.

Self Assessment

1. When we start with comprehension, we should determine the .....of the passage.
  - A. Introduction
  - B. Purpose
  - C. Conclusion
  - D. Preface
2. Words have their own distinctive....., just like people

- A. Meaning
  - B. Reason
  - C. Character
  - D. All of the above
3. Getting the .....is the most vital type of thinking readers can do to comprehend a text.
- A. main idea
  - B. supporting ideas
  - C. concluding idea
  - D. connected idea
4. Words are arbitrary .....of things, ideas, thoughts, actions, feelings, etc.
- A. Meanings
  - B. Symbols
  - C. Signals
  - D. Systems
5. The reader must be .....when forming and refining the main idea.
- A. Knowledgeable
  - B. Flexible
  - C. aware
  - D. experienced
6. ....knowledge is like a backbone for comprehension.
- A. Background
  - B. Personal
  - C. Business
  - D. Book
7. Making an .....in reading is the process of combining the current text information with one's own experience in order to create meaning.
- A. Experience
  - B. Inference
  - C. Action
  - D. None of these
8. Each stage of comprehension includes .....
- A. Activity
  - B. Questioning
  - C. Games
  - D. None of these
9. There are number of ways to use context clues to understand the text. Some of them are.....
- A. Explanation
  - B. Definition
  - C. Antonyms
  - D. All of these above
10. You will be severely penalised for not \_\_\_\_\_ by my order. [=obeying/ following]
- A. abiding
  - B. smearing
  - C. flexing
  - D. bullying
11. If they attack us we won't hesitate to \_\_\_\_\_. [=fight back]

- A. Retaliate  
B. scurry  
C. dice  
D. Hustle
12. I think it's impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ examinations. [=stop]  
A. paddle  
B. concur  
C. abolish  
D. Orchestrate
13. The seasoned athlete \_\_\_\_\_ the best performance in the regional tournament. [=got/  
gained/ achieved/ accomplished]  
A. attained  
B. weeded  
C. halved  
D. groped
14. Liz never ceased to \_\_\_\_\_ his controversial beliefs. [=maintain/ argue/ defend]  
A. undercut  
B. trickle  
C. infuse  
D. assert
15. The investment banker was charged with intent to \_\_\_\_\_. [=deceive/ rob]  
A. inscribe  
B. defraud  
C. punctuate  
D. posit

### **Answers for SelfAssessment**

1. B      2. C      3. A      4. C      5. B  
6. A      7. B      8. B      9. D      10. A  
11. A      12. C      13. A      14. D      15. B

### **Review Questions**

1. Reading strategies plays an important role. Discuss.
2. Words have Nature, Like Human Character. Elaborate with example.
3. While reading how important is to have background knowledge?
4. What do you understand by inferences and how one can infer while reading?
5. Read the passage and underline the words that are new to you along with it's meaning and one example

Symbols Reality for human beings is not action or feeling but meaning. Humans are symbolic creatures; a symbol is anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by the people who share culture. A whistle, a wall of graffiti, a flashing red light, a fist raised in the air—all serve as symbols. We see the human capacity to create and manipulate symbols in the various ways a simple wink of the eye can convey interest, understanding,

or insult. We are so dependent on our culture's symbols that we take them for granted. Often, however, we gain a heightened sense of the importance of a symbol when someone uses it in an unconventional way, say when a person in a political demonstration burns a U.S. flag. Entering an unfamiliar culture also reminds us of the power of symbols; culture shock is nothing more than the inability to "read" meaning in one's surroundings. We feel lost, unsure of how to act, and sometimes frightened—a consequence of slipping outside the symbolic web of culture. Culture shock is both what travelers experience and what they inflict on others by acting in ways that may offend them. For example, because North Americans consider dogs to be beloved household pets, travelers to the People's Republic of China might well be appalled to discover people roasting dogs as a wintertime meal. On the other hand, a North American who orders a hamburger in India causes offense to Hindus, who hold cows to be sacred and thus unfit for human consumption.

Words:-

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)



### **Further Readings**

1. Strategies for Reading Comprehension :: Read Naturally, Inc.
2. 10 Strategies to Increase Student Reading Comprehension (thoughtco.com)
3. Strategies For Successful Reading Comprehension | UoPeople
4. EJ1234493.pdf (ed.gov)
5. Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies and Selecting Appropriate Text (ed.gov)

## Unit 09: Group Discussion

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### Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Know the meaning of group discussions
- Discuss skills needed to be an effective participant in group discussions
- State do's and don'ts of group discussions
- Understand importance of listening in group discussions

### Introduction

Group Discussion is a term that appears quite technical due to its popular usage in selection processes for employment, admissions, etc. But on a closer look, we find that we have all participated in GDs at least during our entire childhood. Do you remember the days when you used to play with your friends and used to get involved in chats for a long time over a topic with them? Or for that matter, do you remember those adulthood days, when you used to think that you have started to know a lot and developed a habit of explaining things to your juniors? Or may be involved yourself in a so called "argumentation" with some elder members of your family, and made them fume over your justified "discussion"? Yes, we have all been doing discussions. But at a professional level, the term discussion is essentially different than that of "chat" or "talk". Managers have to involve deliberately, indeliberately, out of job's obligation, in discussions with seniors, juniors, same level, colleagues and many more during their entire career. That is why the art of group discussion participation is a must to be mastered by every manager.

## 9.1 Group Discussion

The Group Discussion is a personality test, most popular with public/private sector undertakings, government departments, commercial firms, and other organizations, used to screen candidates, after the written test. It is a part of oral communication. The entire study of communication would remain incomplete if there was no analysis of the system of group discussions (GDs). To gauge/judge the mettle of students prior to their entry into any organization, the communication skills of each one of them are tested vis-à-vis other equally, academically, competent candidates.

It primarily evaluates one's ability to interact in a group on a given topic. One's group behavior means so much for one's success as a manager or an executive, responsible for co-ordination and organization of activities of groups of individuals. The GD evaluators, therefore, focus on group dynamics rather than contents of the discussion.

## 9.2 Aspects of a Group Discussion

There are two aspects of a group discussion:

1. Content, i.e. the subject matter of discussion.
2. Process, i.e. how the subject matter is discussed and presented.

Therefore, the critical success factors for a group discussion are:

Quality of content and presentation, i.e. what you say and how you say it, Comprehension of core ideas Logical reasoning and communication skills ,Clarity of thought, and Body language, eye contact, and good diction. (These should demonstrate enthusiasm.)

### **Tests are judged on the quality of:**

- Thematic approach
- Choice of words and style of communication
- Ability of the candidate to associate events and facts related to the particular topic, and
- Inter-personal skills.

### **Keeping this in mind, the skills required for a group discussion are:**

1. Strong listening and conceptualisation skills
  2. Effective communication (in English)
  3. Good diction and articulation of speech
  4. Good inter-personal skills, i.e. how a candidate interacts with another, supports others, his or her team spirit, leadership ability, and
  5. Power of logical reasoning. Some of these skills cannot be ascertained in the personal interview.
- It should be appreciated that group discussion is a structured interview process, whereas the personal interview is an open process where the candidate generally faces questions covering a broad area of topics, and is encouraged to talk freely to demonstrate his or her skills and abilities.

## 9.3 Qualities Needed for Group Discussion

Group Discussions are held with a particular purpose in mind. It may be to select a suitable candidate for job or suitable candidate as student for admission to a particular course. In any of these cases, the aim is to select a person owning some qualities. There are certain qualities, which are looked for during a GD.

### **1. Leadership Qualities:**

- a) *Taking Initiative:* Primary among the qualities looked for is the leadership quality. In GDs leadership qualities necessitates that the individuals have the capacity to take initiative during the course of the interaction. This could entail adopting strategies such as beginning the discussion, picking up the threads at a later stage, etc.
- b) *Ability to Give Direction:* It is not necessary to take the initiative if one is not familiar with the topic. The quality which comes subsequent to it is the quality of possessing the ability to give direction to the entire discussion. It follows naturally that the interactant should have the power and ability to sum up all that is being said in a manner which is conducive to the

growth of the discussion. Often, it happens that one is led astray by emotions or by an inability to comprehend the topic. This is coupled with the feeling that one must make a perceptible contribution right at the very beginning of the discussion in order to get noticed. In instances such as these, if an individual is able to give some kind of direction it becomes easier to follow the flow of the discussion. The essential attributes of a leader are, therefore, to give direction. An individual would be viewed as a leader with the capacity of planning a strategy, filtering and assimilating the ideas while leading and controlling the interactants.

- c) *Taking the Group Along*: The ability to sum up the discussion not only at the end but also in between is a major quality of the interactant. This helps in preventing the group from straying away from the topic. In the course of the discussion it is not important to be the first speaker, but it definitely is important to make even and regular contributions throughout the discussion. This can only be achieved when there is some one who is willing to take up rather tedious and monotonous task of conjoining all the ideas and presenting them in a nutshell to the participants at regular intervals.
- d) *Listening*: All this necessitates that the individual should possess capabilities of listening to what the other interactants are saying. Here, once again we must emphasise the difference between hearing and listening. Listening would only be evident when the listener shows signs of absorbing, assimilating and then presenting the spoken material to the rest of the participants. On the contrary, if only hearing has taken place it indicates that the speaker has not been able to penetrate the screen of indifference.
- e) *Goal Fulfillment*: These leadership qualities observed in the group indicate that either the goal has been achieved or is in the process of being achieved. In other words, we can say that the topic has been thoroughly discussed by all the participants with appropriate input from the leader and all of them have been able to perform the important feat of bringing into focus the main/ancillary points related to the topic. Trying to conjoin the efforts of all the participants in a fruitful manner which would reveal all of them to be part of a cohesive group is no mean achievement. It is definitely a Herculean task which only a leader could perform.

**2. Knowledge of the Subject Matter:** Together with leadership qualities, the individual should also be rather well-read about the issues under discussion. His knowledge of the subject matter, two things need to be kept in mind – the quantitative and the qualitative aspect of the topic. Where the former is concerned, figures and numbers should not be reeled off merely to prove one's point or knowledge about an issue unless and until one is absolutely confident of the same. If not in the group, then definitely among the experts there is bound to be someone who would be aware of the details. Keeping quiet because of lack of information or knowledge is really not as bad as trying to impress the experts by spouting incorrect information. The quality of presentation would be an appropriate assessment of the topic and the issues discussed.

**3. Analytical Ability:** The next in the sequence of trying to present an acceptable picture of the self is the capacity to use one's analytical ability to the optimum. While it is relatively simple to present data on an issue, it gives the appearance of a well thought of and analysed presentation in the GD.

**4. Clarity of Thought:** Clarity of thought is extremely important which can be brought about by a distillation of the essentials and abandonment of the peripherals. The move in

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the discussion could be either from the core to the periphery or from the periphery to heart of the issue. The participants should not get hooked to the peripheral issues. This could lead to unnecessary emphasis on trivial issues. There has to be concentration in the moves which would indicate awareness on the part of the participants regarding the subject matter and the delineation of the topic. The shift from the general to the specific will indicate awareness along all lines and areas pertaining to the topic are bound to creep in.

**5. Conviction:** Whatever is being said should be stated with conviction. It often happens that the participants communicate their ideas in a group without really believing in them. This is more than evident at the face level and is easy for the experts to decipher and identify. It normally happens when the interactants harbour under the misconception that to be heard in the group is more important than positing of concrete ideas. Here, they are exposed because they reveal a lack of conviction at the time of making a statement.

**6. Flexibility:** Conviction while speaking goes hand in hand with flexibility in approach and ability to appreciate the viewpoint of the other person. Often a participant makes an error in interpreting the topic which he realises, much to his dismay, some where in the middle of the interaction. The need then arises to rectify the mistake and proceed along correct lines. The transition, which must be made, needs to be extremely subtle. Without really admitting that a mistake has been made, the speaker has to accept the view point of the other interactant and change sides to be one with those who have a more positive understanding of the topic. To cite an example, if a glaring blunder has been pointed out by a co-participant you need to be alert enough to realise that it is a mistake. You can start by saying, "I understand your point of view/that's really good point..." and proceed by substantiating the point of the co-interactant. You are now part of the group and are no longer an alien. But this strategy should be adopted as a last resort. In the first instance, there should be no errors made. Careful thought should be given to the topic floated, before any kind of discourse is begun on the same. This strategy has been presented as a rescue measure for extreme cases in which an error has been made, albeit unwittingly, and the situation demands a rectification. If unfortunately this be the case, the participant would not be at a loss to make suitable amends.

#### **9.4 Strategies for Group Discussions: Do's and Don'ts**

The first thing which needs to be kept in mind at the time of a GD and interview is that one should be immaculately dressed. It is the first impression of the interactant which to a great extent influences the interviewers. Together with this, accessories which as individual carry or possesses are also important. They speak a language of their own which could be of great significance in transmitting a positive impression to those monitoring the show. Besides the dress, for the conduct during the Group Discussion, there are a number of dos and don'ts which should be kept in mind at the time of participating in the GD.

## DO's

1. **KISS (Keep It Short and Simple):** The KISS principle which states – Keep It (interaction) Short and Simple is the most important of all the strategies to be adopted in a GD. The descriptive mode which could be used in lieu of brief statements should be avoided at all costs. This could lead the participants into lengthy monologues merely to prove a point.
2. **Follow Principles of oral communication:** While presenting ideas, all essentials of oral communication need to be observed. Like being polite, audible, pleasant and effective, besides being courteous, concise and correct.
3. **Make Even Contributions:** In a GD it is important that the contributions made by the participants should be evenly spaced. Often it is noticed that the participants are in a rush to start speaking. In case you are not familiar with the topic you can easily shelve the idea of trying to be the first speaker. What is important in a GD is that you should make even contributions if you, as a participant, want to create a long -lasting impression in the minds of the people monitoring the discussion.
4. **Make Periodical Conclusions:** It should be noted that periodical conclusions are also important. They help in retaining focus of the group. This strategy could also be adopted if the interactant is not familiar with the topic but still needs to be listened to and to make a mark in the GD. This however, should be the best resort. Prior to participating in a GD you should be rather well-versed and updated on all the current topic of national and international concern. This also helps you to get the group into focus and prevents it from digressing from the main topic. Here, you show leadership qualities and give the impression on one hand, that you are a strong individual with the capacity of controlling the GD.
5. **Be Deliberate and Slow in Delivering the Points:** Every time you speak, try to be deliberate and slow in delivering your points. If you start speaking too fast the rest of the interactants would keep probing ideas and issues and wondering as to what is the true import of the concepts. A number of factors come into play when there is a situation of this sort. Does your speed of speaking fit in with the other individual's speed of listening and assimilation? As stated in the earlier unit on listening, there is a difference in the speed of speaking and comprehension. Rarely does it happen that there is a perfect match between the two.
6. **Adhere to Principles of Politeness:** Once you start speaking, there would be, at the same time, many interactant who would like to have their voice heard over and above yours. You have the floor but it may not be yours for long if, and when, others make some "uncommunicative" attempts. You need to finish stating your own point but there are others who would not let you complete your statement. In this kind of situation, what you need to do is to tackle the situation in firm and decisive manner. All principles of politeness need to be adhered to in the process. Your "please", "Excuse me, I have a point to make" and "I still have not finished speaking" should be in place. You should abide by the basics norms of etiquette.
7. **Substantiate your Point with examples:** Substantiating point with examples is also a very good strategy to be observed at the time of the GD and should be adhered to in an orderly manner. The individual should, at no cost, start by narrating an incident or cite an example and than round it off with a point. While this could be an effective strategy in informal interaction or discourse of any kind in GDs, one needs to observe a different code for communication.

## Don'ts

1. **Don't Speak Loudly:** Inability to make oneself heard above the loud noise in the GD can lead to virtual screaming on the part of the interactant. Not only the tone becomes loud but even the manner of presentation becomes rather overbearing and pushy. This move has a negative impact on the rest of the participants as well as on the people monitoring the GD.
2. **Avoid taking a negative stance:** Coupled with this is the "don't" which normally come

into play—avoid taking a negative stance against any participant, however incompetent or ill-informed he may appear to be.

3. *Don't Provide Opportunities for others to talk, at your own cost:* At the time of the GD the need of the hour is to avoid being magnanimous where offering opportunities to other interactants is concerned.

4. *Don't give the look of a Casual Approach:* There is a tendency among some participants to convey an impression of casualness during participation in a GD. Some obvious manifestations would be evidenced in the positioning of hands and legs during the course of an argument. The following body postures should be avoided.

## 9.5 Group Discussion Myths

**Myth 1:** You should always initiate the discussion: Though it is true that you may earn some points if you take initiative, but you should only do it if you know the subject well. A weak opening (because of poor knowledge of the subject) may work against you and may give a wrong impression of your leadership qualities. I won't say that first impression is the last impression, but first impression does matter a good deal. So, if you are not confident enough, let someone else take the initiative and then you can make your points. However, I'll advise you to be among the first few speakers.

**Myth 2:** Only aggressive speakers win: Nothing can be further from the truth. Aggression is one thing, assertiveness is another. And you can be assertive without being aggressive. While aggression may diminish your chances of getting selected, assertiveness may enhance your chances. Just back your statements with relevant examples and arguments.

**Myth 3:** You should speak very loudly so that others can hear you: You should speak loud enough, but not too loudly. Shouting is not considered appropriate. In fact, the most successful speakers hardly ever shout. Speak as naturally as you always do when you talk to the people. ('How to make yourself heard in a fishmarket' will be discussed later.)

**Myth 4:** If you speak a lot, your chances of getting selected are increased: It's simply not true. Saying irrational things will leave a bad impression on the evaluator (judge). Even if you have a lot to say, say it in a concise manner. Let others also make their points. It shows team spirit. (However, that doesn't mean you should cut back on your time so that others can speak. Live and let live.)

**Myth 5:** If you speak like a celebrity, you'll make a great impression: Please don't underestimate the evaluators. They want to hear you, not a famous personality. Be yourself.

**Myth 6:** If you keep quiet, you may still get selected: No chance. No pain, no gain. You have to say what you must, or how else will the judges evaluate you?

**Myth 7:** Only fluent speakers perform well in a GD: Fluency has its benefits, no doubt. But even if you are not an absolutely fluent speaker, still you will have a fair chance if you know what to say and how to say it. Your knowledge, attitude, manners, attentiveness and other qualities also determine your score. (That doesn't mean you can ignore the fluency part entirely. Work on it as much as you can, but don't take unnecessary tension. In fact, some B-schools arrange language fluency lessons for those bright candidates who need them.)

**Myth 8:** You may use your native language in a GD: Some people believe they can do this. No, you mustn't. While an evaluator may forgive some of your mistakes, speaking in your native language will definitely leave a negative impression, unless, of course, it is also the official language of the discussion. However, you may use a few words or examples which are very common and generally known to all. Otherwise, stick to the language allowed to you (which is mostly English).

**Myth 9:** The group must reach a consensus: No. Though it is good if the group does reach a consensus, but it is not a condition (unless stated so by the organizers). Evaluators know you may not have sufficient time to reach a consensus. Just do your best.

## 9.6 Types of Group Discussions

1. Topic-based discussion: You can be provided a topic which is:

(a) A controversy: For example, your topic could be 'Castebased reservation', or 'China - Biggest threat to India?' or 'Which diet is better - vegetarian or non-vegetarian', etc. In this type of discussion, you are required to take a stand on the given topic, and support your stand with suitable arguments and examples.

(b) A descriptive one: For example, you may be told to discuss 'Indo-US Relations', or 'Poverty in India', or 'Causes of Inflation'. In this kind of discussion, your knowledge of the subject plays an important part. Else, you may be provided a plain fact and told to discuss it.

(c) An abstract topic: This type of discussions has gotten popular in the recent years. Topic may be anything under the sky, such as 'Zero', 'Black', 'Gold', or a number, or anything you can think of. Your creativity comes into play here. You simply say what you think is relevant about the topic.

2. A case study: You may be given a real-life situation or an imaginary case scenario, or even a dilemma. Then you'll be asked to present your opinion on the given situation, or find a solution to a given problem (as a group or/and as an individual). You may be instructed to speak one by one or all at once, or even both. Such variations hardly matter to a candidate who is well prepared.

## 9.7 How to prepare for Group Discussions

### Some simple and powerful techniques

**How to practise with friends:** If you were thinking that you need to cut back on the time you spend with your friends to prepare for a GD, think again. In fact, group discussions are one of those few tests in which your friends can help you a lot. Every time you're discussing something with them, you're preparing for a GD. However, you need to set apart some time to discuss the topics which are commonly asked in GDs. This exercise will be even more helpful if you have a mentor watching you, so that you don't divert from the topic. They may also provide you invaluable feedback. Use an alarm clock (or the alarm in your mobile phone) to keep track of time. After the discussion, ask your friends to give an unbiased feedback of your performance. Try to minimise the mistakes pointed out by them next time you're discussing. Also, at least once a week, try to look as formal as you will be in a real discussion. Dress formally, act formally and think formally.

**How to practise in a class:** A class seems to be the perfect place for formal discussions. And why not? You have almost everything you need for a group discussion available in a class. You can rearrange the chairs (at least after college hours), use blackboard, and avail the help of your professors (at least those who are friendly with the students). Moreover, you can definitely find the students with similar goals. Spend some time with such students after college hours. Just take care that you notify the group when to meet and in which room to meet. Practise as described in the previous paragraph. Again, take care to include only the serious participants who want to learn something.

**How to practise with family members:** If one of your family members has gone through the process of group discussions, you're lucky. Ask them to discuss something with you (that 'something' could be anything - a breaking news on TV, a newspaper headline, or even anything related to their profession). Even if they have been out of practice for years, at least they can listen to you when you speak and provide their feedback. They'll be more interested if you choose a topic related to their field of work.

**Using TV and Internet to your advantage:** There are so many news channels on TV and hundreds of useful websites on the internet that can help you enhance your knowledge about the current and historical topics, and can also teach you how to express your thoughts clearly. Watch discussions and debates on the news channels. Some popular ones are 'The News Hour' on Times Now, 'Hard Talk' on BBC World, 'Centre Stage' on Headlines Today (there are always some nice debates/discussions on the news channels these days). If you love internet, search 'Group Discussion' on any search engine and you'll find almost all the information you want. On 'YouTube', you can find recorded discussions. If you're looking for information, search Wikipedia. There are more ways available today than ever before were.

**Make your mobile your true friend:** In most of the mobile phones, you get the 'recording' option (or else you can use a tape-recorder). That means you can record your own voice and play it back to know how you sound when you speak. You can use a stop-watch to check your pace. Although some experts say that a particular pace is most suitable to make others understand your point, but trust me, a real GD can be very unpredictable! May be you'll get a plenty of time to make your point, or may be others will keep interrupting you. That's why, in my opinion, you should be able to change your pace according to the situation. If you get sufficient time, speak at your natural

pace. If it's a hell out there, you may have to speak a bit faster. Prepare for both. The following exercise will definitely help you: Take a book, find a nice paragraph (preferably a part of your favourite leader's speech), read it at your natural pace and then at a faster pace, record both, judge whether you were able to make it understandable both times. Do it as many times as you want. It will help a lot.

**How to practise alone:** Stand in front of a mirror and try making a short speech (it need not be longer than 1-2 minutes). Watch your expressions as you speak. Watch your body language. Maybe you should use your hands more/less, or maybe you should keep your chin a bit high! Watch the way you dress; your colour combination, knot of the tie, shoes, etc. Notice every big and small detail. Make changes as you desire. Remember, the more you sweat in practice, the less you bleed in a fight (or a GD). Three words for you – practice, practice and practice. The more prepared you are, the less tense you'll be on the D-Day

## 9.8 Special Tips for Those Who Hate Group Discussions

There can be many reasons for why you hate group discussions. Maybe you are an introvert person; maybe you think you can't get through it; maybe you have a BP issue! And it is also true that the number of people who hate group discussions is quite high. But since you can't afford to hate it, here are some tips for you:

1. Begin your preparations as early as possible. You should try to get better at discussions. When you do something well, you begin to like it. It's a well-established fact.
2. When you practise in front of a mirror, try to speak like your favourite speaker/news anchor/politician sometimes. Think why they love to speak. If you like this exercise, if it helps you, continue it. (Caution: This exercise is only for practice, till you fall in love with GD. In a real GD, be yourself.)
3. Make your GD practice a fun. For instance, when you're working on fluency, speak the dialogues you like. It will make the activity more appealing to you.
4. Go in depth of expected topics; try to find more and more about them. The more you know an issue, the more you can speak on it.
5. Learn to admire yourself. No matter how bad you perform, you'll still be more courageous than those who simply watch and laugh at others. As you might have heard, you never fail if you try. Every performance prepares you for the next one.
6. Don't worry about the stage fright. Almost everyone has it. It tends to fade away with time.
7. If you have the problem of high BP, take your medicine regularly and act natural in a GD. There's never a need to get overexcited. Trust me, there have been the performers who don't shout at all and still perform extremely well. Only after enough preparations you'll be able to do this.
8. In GDs, there's always a second time. Don't care so much about your performance that it gets on your nerves.

## 9.9 Roles you can play in a GD

1. Initiator: If you initiate a discussion and introduce new points in the discussion, it shows your confidence, ability to take initiative, and creativity. An initiator will definitely gain some points over other members, provided he starts the discussion well.
2. Info-seeker: When you ask other group members relevant questions on the points they have made, you become an information seeker. Asking questions can fetch you some points, but don't overdo it; or it might give an impression that you don't have sufficient knowledge of the subject.
3. Coordinator: When you help keep the discussion on track, when you make sure that all the important points are discussed one by one, when you show the relations between various ideas presented, you become a coordinator. But remember, unless you prove your knowledge in the initial phase of the discussion, other participants may not accept you as a coordinator. Moreover, to an extent, a coordinator is expected to have an influential personality. If you could prove that you are a good coordinator (in addition to being a good team player), you can expect to get wonderful points.

4. **Elaborator:** When you elaborate upon the points and ideas presented during the discussion, when you provide examples to support them, you become an elaborator. It requires having a good knowledge of the subject to play this role. But if you manage to do it, you are rewarded well.

5. **Opinion giver:** When you give your opinion on the points made by other members, you become an opinion giver. However, you must only play this role in addition to other, more important ones (initiator, elaborator, etc.), because being an opinion giver alone doesn't hold much value. So, it's more like a secondary role that can fetch you some additional points. Nevertheless, if your opinion can change the opinion of the group, the rewards can be nice.

6. **Critic:** Being a critic doesn't mean you need to criticize other group members; it simply means that you have to make an unbiased assessment of the points made by them. When done in a polite manner, it can be quite helpful to the group and make a good impression on the evaluators. But if you're just a critic and play no other part in the group, you will definitely attract a lot of criticism from the rest of the group, and that will be detrimental to your own image. So, play your cards carefully.

7. **Energizer:** When you act as a stimulator and motivate the group to act in a more energetic manner and in the right direction, you are an energizer. When done in a positive and cheerful manner, it can definitely be a positive trait.

8. **Summarizer:** When you summarize a discussion, you become a summarizer. To play this role, you should keep track of the points discussed during the discussion. You need to tell the group what important points came up and what conclusion can the group reach, or if no consensus was reached. Needless to say, you need to be an active participant throughout the discussion to play this important role.



Example: Mock Gd Complete Performance Analysis of Ten Candidates (Ten candidates, some excited and others nervous, are awaiting their turn. They aspire to get admission into the prestigious MBA program of a leading institute. They have been shortlisted for Group Discussion on the basis of their scores. They are wearing badges of their names on their coats, just according to the procedure set by the institute. Suddenly, they notice eight candidates coming out of the discussion room. Now, it's their turn. Since they are the last lot, they all form a single group. An employee of the institute calls out their names one by one and they enter the room, and find three evaluators waiting for them. They are asked to take their seats. After that, one of the evaluators writes a word on the board - 'ZERO'. "Here's your topic. Please discuss. You have fifteen minutes," he says. Some candidates look clean bowled. Zero? What is there to discuss about it? Suddenly, one of them starts speaking...)

**Abhijeet:** Friends, Zero is a unique number. You multiply any number with it and you get a zero. Due to such unique properties, it is the easiest one to multiply or divide with (looks nervous). We can discuss the mathematical properties of Zero in detail.

**Vaibhav:** Well said my friend, but we shouldn't forget that zero is more than just a number because it reminds different people of different things. For instance, Zero may remind us of our 'Zero tolerance policy' against terrorism. Zero is also one of the most important discoveries of ancient India. Let's discuss all the important ones one by one. I'd like to begin with 'Zero tolerance policy', if you all agree.

**Rajan:** Why don't we begin with a lighter one; for instance, if a batsman scores a zero in a match, he's called a duck!

**Lakshmi:** I think we better begin with 'Zero tolerance policy'. We can discuss the lighter ones if time remains. Please go ahead Vaibhav.

**Vaibhav:** Thank you, Lakshmi. 'Zero tolerance policy' is adopted against certain crimes which are believed to be unacceptable for the society. 'Zero tolerance policy' means that those who commit certain crimes must be awarded the pre-determined punishments; no matter who they are and why they had committed that crime. Since terrorism results in the deaths of the innocent civilians, many of the top leaders of India have declared that India will have a 'zero tolerance policy' against terrorism. This means that perpetrators and supporters of terror will be brought to justice, regardless of who they are and if they have done it for the first time. I fully agree with this stand because terrorism must not be given a free hand at all.

**Shrikant:** I fully agree with you, my friend. However, since terrorism is not the only unpardonable crime, we should adopt the same policy against other severe crimes such as rape, murder, drug

dealing, female foeticide as well. Everyday we hear new incidences of these crimes on the news channels. Such crimes are against humanity, and the people who carry them out must not be forgiven, no matter what excuses they make.

Lakshmi: I tend to agree with both Vaibhav and Shrikant on this matter, but we must exercise caution while using such a strict policy. Not all the criminals are professionals. What I mean is that some of them do deserve a second chance. For instance, a young person, who has been caught carrying drugs, may not understand the consequences of his actions. Law should allow him to live a respectful life and he should not be given severe punishment; he can even be pardoned for the first time. So, technically, I'm suggesting that, in some cases, 'zero tolerance policy' must consider the circumstances of the person.

Sonal: Friends, since we have limited time, I think we should move on to the next interpretation of Zero. Zero signifies nothingness too, and, as they say, nothingness or emptiness is considered everything in some religions; they believe that when you have attained the state of nothingness, there's nothing left to be achieved anymore. Therefore, it might be... Rajan: Sorry, but that sounds quite foolish. I mean how can you say nothingness is everything? Sonal: To make it more clear, I'll use an example. Think of meditation. When you attain the state of no thoughts in your mind, you attain the highest degree of meditation. It means that the state of zero thoughts may be everything for a meditator.

Lakshmi: I think that's a unique and wonderful interpretation of zero. Vaibhav: And as I was saying earlier, zero is one of the most important discoveries of ancient India. Earlier, it was called 'Shoonya' in Sanskrit language. It made the number system much more useful and easy to use. Without zero, how could we have developed in the field of science?

Sonal : I'd also like to add one more point about zero. It is believed that our universe started with a big-bang which originated from nothingness, that is, zero! So, zero is much more complex than it sounds.

Shrikant: You're absolutely right.

Rajan: Shall we now talk about the point I raised in the beginning? As I was saying, when a batsman scores zero, we call him a duck. Also, when an actor fails to impress the people, he becomes a zero from a hero. Isn't that funny? (Nobody says anything.)

Lakshmi: I think we should know the opinions of other group members who haven't spoken so far. Naveen, would you like to add something?

Naveen: I think I agree with all my friends. Nothing more to say.

Shweta: Me too. You have already discussed everything.

Vaibhav: Abhijeet, you were discussing some Mathematical properties of zero, weren't you?

Abhijeet: Yes, being an expert of Maths, I want to say something. Zero is a unique number because it's neither positive nor negative. Also, in Physics, zero temperature is the freezing point of water, while in the Binary System used by all the modern computers, 'zero' and 'one' are the only numbers used.

Lakshmi: Wow, that's really very interesting, isn't it? Raj: Yes, indeed.

Shrikant: Friends, it's about the time. So, we can conclude by saying that zero is a unique number, more complex than it initially looks, and it holds various interpretations in different subjects and in the minds of different people. Thank you! [What else could have been discussed - Zero tariffs! Why didn't anyone say that we need to have free trade with some nations in order to boost export and import? Mostly, the candidates with business or commerce background will bring up this important point. (Read more about it in the topic 'SAARC'.) May be someone could have discussed 'zero to hero' stories of real people; or how a student feels when he/she gets a zero in a test; or how accidents happen when the speed of a vehicle is brought to zero in a short time interval; or even how a 'size zero' is considered unhealthy by the health experts. (Never say you have nothing to add to a discussion. There's always something you can add. Just think with a cool mind.)]

[Since the topic given was a difficult one, not all the participants could perform well. Still, those who dared, will reap the rewards. In the given discussion, Abhijeet made a hasty decision and started the discussion without thinking sufficiently. He may not be selected, except if the selectors want the students with good knowledge of science subjects, which is not likely to happen in most institutions. Vaibhav, the second opening speaker, has successfully put his best foot forward and

while making his points in a strong manner, he was able to take other participants along with him. He kept contributing to the discussion and also motivated other members to speak. Therefore, he is very much likely to get selected. Rajan looks a bit arrogant and immature and fails to impress anyone (Don't be surprised by what or how he spoke; you may meet such speakers!). Lakshmi has done a nice job. She put forth her opinion in an assertive manner, and showed that she was able to think independently. She also tried to bring in those who didn't speak. She is very likely to get selected. Shrikant spoke less, but he made his point clear and was able to conclude the discussion; therefore, he has fair chances of getting selected. Sonal did contribute to the discussion, though she began late. However, she has done her job and might get selected for the PI. Raj and Naveen have clearly lost their chances by not contributing anything, while Shweta has proved to be unprofessional too. The tenth candidate could not say a word.]

## **Summary**

Group Discussion is a personality test which evaluates one's ability to interact in a group on a given topic.

In a group discussion, a group usually consists of 8 to 10 candidates.

No one is nominated as a leader, coordinator or chairman to conduct the discussion.

Normally, 20 to 30 minutes are given as time to complete the discussion on a particular topic.

Group Discussions are held with a particular purpose in mind.

There are certain qualities, which are looked for during a GD. Primary among them are Leadership Quality, Knowledge of the Subject matter, Analytical Ability, Clarity of Thought, Conviction and Flexibility.

There are certain strategies: Do's and Don'ts to be followed for an Effective Group Discussion.

The desirable things include following a polite way of discussion, giving suitable examples, showing positive body language.

The undesirable behavior includes sitting cross legged or with arms folded, or other negative gestures.

There are certain techniques which can be followed to politely enter a discussion, or to express the non acceptance of a point or to put forward a point with conviction.

Listening attentively and with patience is very essential in a Group Discussions.

## **Keywords**

*GD*: Group Discussion

*KISS*: Keep It Short and Simple

## **SelfAssessment**

1. What is Group Discussion?
  - A. It is interpersonal communication that involves three or more people with a common purpose.
  - B. A Group Discussion (GD) is a technique used by corporate companies, educational institutes, and other organizations to judge the communication skills of the participant.
  - C. Both (A) and (B)
  - D. None of these
  
2. In group discussion people \_\_\_\_ .

- A. solve a problem
  - B. arrive at a decision
  - C. answer a question of mutual interest
  - D. All of the above
3. A decision is a “good” decision if \_\_\_\_ [Select all that apply]
- A. it has good reasons or explanation behind it.
  - B. it is supported by leadership.
  - C. people support it.
  - D. it doesn't cost a lot of money.
4. Which of the following is NOT something you should do in the early stages of a meeting?
- A. Make sure everyone understands how a final decision will be made.
  - B. Summarize the discussion.
  - C. Make the purpose of the meeting clear.
  - D. Share information.
5. What are the four basic stages in the process of decision-making, in order?
- A. Making a decision, generating ideas, evaluating ideas, communicating the decision.
  - B. Generating ideas, making a decision, evaluating the decision, sharing information.
  - C. Sharing information, generating ideas, evaluating ideas, making a decision.
  - D. Discussing options, generating ideas, evaluating information, making a decision.
6. Which of the following should you NOT do when facilitating a decision-making meeting?
- A. Bring up arguments against someone's idea.
  - B. Evaluate each idea as it comes up.
  - C. Give everyone a chance to express their ideas.
  - D. Allow people to bring up new information.
7. How to start the group discussion?
- A. I agree completely
  - B. I would like to begin the discussion by saying that....
  - C. Absolutely!
  - D. How do you feel about....?
8. How to ask other candidates' opinion?
- A. I agree with you
  - B. That is true but...
  - C. What do you think about this matter..?
  - D. It's clear to me that....
9. These expressions are to show STRONG AGREEMENT except :
- A. I couldn't agree with you more
  - B. Exactly!
  - C. I disagree completely
  - D. I am sure you are right

10. To express PARTIAL agreement, EXCEPT :
- You could be right, but..
  - You have a point but..
  - It's clear to me that..
  - I agree to a certain extent but..
11. The first quality that is looked for in a group discussion is ..... quality.
- Management
  - Leadership
  - Motivation
  - Interpreting
12. Clarity of ..... is important for a participant.
- Discussion
  - Other's ideas
  - Thoughts
  - None of these
13. How to conclude group discussion?
- Let me explain this
  - May I know why?
  - That is so interesting
  - We have come to an agreement that...
14. You agree with the statement given by your friend, "I think we should organize an anti-drug campaign". What would you say?
- Why don't we decide later?
  - Do you think we can get full support?
  - I am not so sure about that.
  - A good idea indeed! Let's start as soon as possible!
15. "Imported goods are better than locally made ones". You totally disagree with this statement. What can you say?
- I disagree. Our local goods are just as good.
  - Are you sure?
  - I think you might have a point.
  - What did you say?

### **Answers for Self Assessment**

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. C  | 2. D  | 3. C  | 4. B  | 5. C  |
| 6. B  | 7. B  | 8. C  | 9. C  | 10. C |
| 11. B | 12. C | 13. D | 14. D | 15. A |

## **Review Questions**

1. How does a candidate become a leader of the discussion in a group?
2. What traits of candidates are evaluated by the panelists of a group discussion? Elaborate your answer with examples.
3. Comment on the importance of body language for being successful at a Group Discussion.
4. 'Before anything else, preparation is the key to success.' Comment.



## **Further Readings**

- Raisher, Business Communication, Aitbs.
- Vandana Khetarpal, M K Sehgal, Business Communication, Excel Books.
- Woolcott& Unwin, Mastering Business Communication, Macmillan.



## **Web Links**

Correct Body Language for Group Discussions (GDs) (ssbguru.com)

Mastering body language in Group Discussions - GD PI Preparation

<https://www.shiksha.com/mba/articles/group-discussion-topics-for-mba>

## Unit 10: Presentational Skills

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### Objectives

- To prepare students to speak with greater control and charisma in front of others.
- To help the speaker to choose the right amount of information.
- To provide different techniques that presenter can use to engage the audience.
- To identify the solution to common speaking problems.
- To answers the queries confidently.

### Introduction

Getting your message through requires the ability to present information simply and effectively. Presentation abilities are now essential in nearly every sector, and most of us will be forced to deliver presentations at some point in our careers. While some people are unfazed by this, others find it quite difficult. With a little effort, though, you can enhance your presentation abilities. Presentation skills are a collection of talents that allow a person to communicate with the audience, clearly relay messages, engage the audience in the presentation, and comprehend and understand the listeners' mindsets. These abilities improve your ability to communicate effectively and persuade others. Good presenting abilities are very important in today's world. This is due to the fact that they play a significant part in persuading clients and consumers.

### 10.1 What's the big idea?

If you want to persuade someone, you must have a message. What do you want to say? What's the big idea? You must know what idea you want to promote. A single governing idea is more likely to persuade your listener than a group of ideas, simply because one strong idea is easier to remember. Begin by gathering ideas. Conduct imaginary conversations in your head and note down the kind of things you might say. Capture ideas as they occur to you and store them on a pad or in a file. Spend as much time as you can on this activity before the conversation itself. Having captured and stored some ideas, ask three fundamental questions:

- 
- ‘What is my objective?’ What do I want to achieve? What would I like to see happen?
  - ‘Who am I talking to?’ Why am I talking to this person about this objective? What do they already know? What more do they need to know? What do I want them to do? What kind of ideas will be most likely to convince them?
  - ‘What is the most important thing I have to say to them?’ If I were only allowed a few minutes with them, what would I say to convince them – or, at least, to persuade them to keep listening? Think hard about these three questions. Imagine that you had only a few seconds to get your message across. What would you say?

Try to create a single sentence. Remember that you can’t express an idea without uttering a sentence. Above all, this idea should be new to the listener. After all, there’s no point in trying to persuade them of something they already know or agree with!

Once you have decided on your message, consider whether you think it is appropriate both to your objective and to your listener. Does this sentence express what you want to say? Is it in language that the listener will understand easily? Is it simple enough?

Now test your message sentence. If you were to speak this sentence to your listener, would they ask you a question? If so, what would that question be? If your message is a clear one, it will provoke one of these three questions:

- ‘Why?’
- ‘How?’
- ‘Which ones?’

If you can’t imagine your listener asking any of these questions, they’re unlikely to be interested in your message. So try another. If you can imagine them asking more than one of these questions, try to simplify your message. Now work out how to bring your listener to the place where they will accept this message. You must ‘bring them around to your way of thinking’. This means starting where the listener is standing and gently guiding them to where you want them to be.



Did you know?

Once you are standing in the same place, there is a much stronger chance that you will see things the same way. Persuading them will become a great deal easier. People will only be persuaded by ideas that interest them. Your listener will only be interested in your message because it answers some need or question that already exists in their mind. An essential element in delivering your message, then, is demonstrating that it relates to that need or that question. Here is a simple four-point structure that will bring your listener to the point where they can accept your message by using the letters SPQR

### **Situation**

Briefly tell the listener something they already know. Make a statement about the matter that you know they will agree with. This demonstrates that you are on their territory: you understand their situation and can appreciate their point of view. Try to state the Situation in such a way that the listener expects to hear more. Think of this as a kind of ‘Once upon a time...’. It’s an opener, a scene-setting statement that prepares them for what’s to come.

### **Problem**

Now identify a Problem that has arisen within the Situation. The listener may know about the Problem; they may not. But they certainly should know about it! In other words, the Problem should be their problem at least as much as yours. Problems, of course, come in many shapes and sizes. It’s important that you identify a Problem that the listener will recognize. It must clearly relate to the Situation that you have set up: it poses a threat to it or creates a challenge within it. Problems can be positive as well as negative. You may want to alert your listener to an opportunity that has arisen within the Situation.

### **Question**

The Problem causes the listener to ask a Question (or would do so, if they were aware of it). Once again, the listener may or may not be asking the Question. If they are, you are better placed to be able to answer it. If they are not, you may have to carefully get them to agree that this Question is worth asking

*Unit 10: Presentational Skills*

| Situation        | Problem                  | Question                        |
|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Problem Question | Something's gone wrong   | What do we do?                  |
|                  | Something could go wrong | How do we wrong stop it?        |
|                  | Something's changed      | How do we changed adjust to it? |
|                  | Something could change   | How do we prepare for it?       |

**Response**

Your Response or answer to the Question is your message. In other words, the message should naturally emerge as the logical and powerful answer to the Question rose in the listener's mind by the Problem! SPQR is a classic story-telling framework. It is also well known as a method management consultants use in the introductions to their proposals. The trick is to take your listener through the four stages quickly. Don't be tempted to fill out the story with lots of detail. As you use SPQR, remember these three key points:

1. SPQR should remind the listener rather than persuade them. Until you get to the message, you shouldn't include any idea that you would need to prove.
2. Think of SPQR as a story. Keep it moving. Keep the listener's interest.
3. Adapt the stages of the story to the needs of the listener. Make sure that they agree to the first three stages without difficulty. Make sure that you are addressing their needs, values, priorities. Put everything in their terms.

**10.2 Making a Presentation**

Think of a presentation as a formal conversation. Speaking to groups is a notoriously stressful activity. Most people spend hours of their time holding conversations. Something strange seems to happen, however, when they're called upon to talk to a group of people formally. A host of irrational – and maybe not so irrational fears – raise their ugly heads.

What do you fear most? A recent study in the United States asked people about their deepest fears. The results were interesting. Here they are, in order:

- speaking to groups;
- heights;
- insects and bugs;
- financial problems;
- deep water;
- sickness;
- death;
- flying;
- loneliness;
- dogs.

One of the main causes of this anxiety is that you put yourself on the spot when you present. The audience will be judging, not just your ideas and your evidence, but you as well. People may not remember reports or spreadsheets easily, but a presentation can make a powerful impression that lasts. If the presenter seemed nervous, incompetent or ill-informed, that reputation will stick – at least until the next presentation.

You, the presenter, are at the heart of it. An effective presenter puts themselves centre-stage. An ineffective presenter tries to hide behind notes, a lectern, slides or computergenerated graphics. To become more effective, you need to take control of the three core elements of the event:

- the material;
- the audience;

- 
- yourself.

Whatever you are presenting, you will also need to use all the skills of persuasion

- working out your big idea: your message;
- validating your message using SPQR (situation- problem-question-response);
- arranging your ideas coherently;
- expressing your ideas vividly;
- remembering your ideas;
- delivering well.

### 10.3 Putting Yourself on Show

Think a bit more about this business of nerves. What's going on in those minutes and hours before you stand up and make your presentation? What is your body saying?

That nervous, jittery feeling is caused by adrenalin. This is a hormone secreted by your adrenal glands (near your kidneys). Adrenalin causes your arteries to constrict, which increases your blood pressure and stimulates the heart. Why stimulate the heart? To give you extra energy. When do you need extra energy? When you're in danger. Adrenalin release is an evolved response to threat.

Adrenalin has two other effects. It increases your concentration – particularly useful when making a presentation. Less usefully, adrenalin also stimulates excretion of body waste. This decreases your body weight, giving you a slight advantage when it comes to running! That's why you want to visit the toilet immediately before presenting.

Your anxiety is probably more about your relationship with the audience than about what you have to say. In the moments before you present, you may find yourself suffering from one or more of the following conditions:

- demophobia – a fear of people;
- laliophobia – a fear of speaking;
- katagelophobia – a fear of ridicule.

Check your condition against this list of adrenalin-related symptoms:

- rapid pulse;
- shallow breathing;
- muscle spasms in the throat, knees and hands;
- dry mouth;
- cold extremities;
- dilated pupils;
- sweaty palms;
- blurred vision;
- nausea.

And the worst of it is that, however much you suffer, the audience will forget virtually everything you say! That's the bad news. The good news is that you're not alone. Every presenter – indeed, every performer – suffers from nerves. Many actors and musicians talk about the horror of nerves and the fact that experience never seems to make them better. The best news is that nerves are there to help you. They are telling you that this presentation matters – and that you matter. You are the medium through which the audience will understand your ideas. You should feel nervous. If you don't, you aren't taking the presentation seriously and you are in danger of letting your concentration slip.

## **10.4 Preparing for the Presentation**

The trick is not to try to dispel the nerves, but to use them. Once you understand that nervousness is natural, and indeed necessary, it becomes a little easier to handle.

Everyone is frightened of the unknown. Any presentation involves an element of uncertainty, because it's 'live'. You can't plan for the audience's mood on the day. You may not even be able to foresee who will be there. You can't plan for any sudden development that affects the proposal or explanation you are giving. You can't plan for every question that you might be asked. This is, of course, the greatest strength of presentations: you and the audience are together, in the same place, at the same time. You are bringing the material alive for them, here and now. If nothing is left to chance, the presentation will remain dead on the floor.

The trick is to know what to leave to chance. If you can support your nerves with solid preparation, you can channel your nervous energy into the performance itself. Prepare well, and you will be ready to bring the presentation to life. You can prepare in three areas:

1. the material;
2. the audience;
3. yourself.

In each case, preparation means taking control. If you can remove the element of uncertainty in these areas, you will be ready to encounter what can't be controlled: the instantaneous and living relationship between you and your audience.

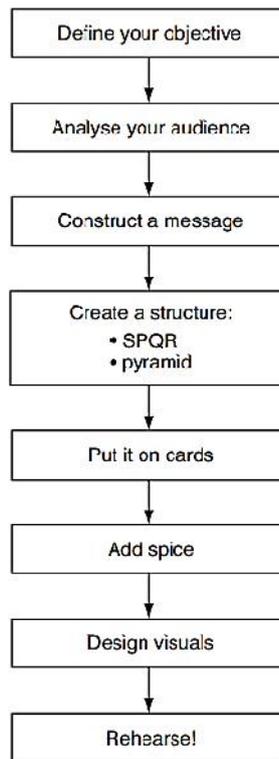
## **10.5 Managing the Material**

Many presentations fail, not because the presenter is weak, but because the material is disorderly. The audience tries its utmost to understand, but gets lost. You have to remember that they will forget virtually everything you say. They may remember rather more of what you show them, but only if it is quite simple. Don't expect any audience to remember, from the presentation alone, more than half a dozen ideas.

In presentations, more than in any other kind of corporate communication, you must display the shape of your thinking. That shape will only be clear if you keep it simple. Detail doesn't make things clearer; it makes things more complicated. If you want to display the shape of your thinking, you must design it. Managing the material is a design process.

### **Defining your Objective**

Why are you making this presentation? That's the first, and most important, question you must answer. Everything else - the material you include, its order, the level of detail you go into.



How long the presentation will last, what visual aids you will use – will depend on your answer to this question. What do you want your audience to take away at the end of the presentation? More importantly: what do you want them to do? Your objective is to tell them everything they need to know to take that action – and nothing more. Presentations are not for giving information. To repeat: your audience is probably going to forget almost all the information you give them. So packing the presentation full of information is almost certainly counterproductive. If you must offer your audience detailed information, put it in supporting notes. I believe that there's only one reason why you should be making a presentation. It may sound rather grand, but a presentation should inspire your audience. They want to be interested: to be moved, involved, intrigued. Your task is to bring your ideas alive with your own feelings, commitment and passion.

### Analysing your Audience

Your presentation will be successful if the audience feels that you have spoken directly to them. If you can demonstrate that you have tailored your material to their needs, the audience will be more inclined to accept it. So think about your audience carefully:-

- How many will there be?
- What is their status range?
- Will they want to be there?
- How much do they already know about the matter? How much more do they need to know?
- What will they be expecting? What is the history, the context, the rumour, the gossip?
- How does your message and your material relate to the audience? Relevance defines what you will research, include and highlight. It will also help you to decide where to start: what your point of entry will be.
- Is the audience young or old? Are they predominantly one gender or mixed?
- Are they technical specialists or generalists? They will want different levels of detail.
- Where are they in the organisation? Different working groups will have different interests and different ways of looking at the world.

## Constructing a Message

Once you have your objective, and you have some sense of who your audience is, you can begin to plan your material. Begin with a clear message. Your message must:

- be a sentence;
- express your objective;
- contain a single idea;
- have no more than 15 words;
- grab your audience's attention.

You might consider putting this message on to a slide or other visual aid and show it near the start of the presentation. But an effective message should stick in the mind without any help. Make your message as vivid as you can.

## Creating a structure

Everything in the structure of the presentation should support your message. Keep the structure of your presentation simple. The audience will forget most of what you say to them. Make sure that they remember your message and a few key points.

## Weaving an introduction

Use SPQR to start the presentation, leading the audience from where they are to where you want them to be. This also allows you to show that you understand their situation and that you are there to help them. Using SPQR will convince them that you have put yourself into their shoes. The more obvious the problem is to the audience, the less time you will need to spend on SPQR.

## Building a pyramid

Use a pyramid structure to outline your small number of key points. Show the pyramid visually: overhead or PowerPoint slides, or a flip chart. Indicate that these key points will form the sections of the presentation. Repetition is an essential feature of good presentations. Because the audience can't reread or rewind to remind themselves of what you said, you need to build their recall by repeating the key features of your presentation. The key features will be your message, your structure, your key points and any call to action that you deliver at the end. Aim to build the audience's recall on no more than about half-a-dozen pieces of information.

Don't be afraid to repeat your ideas. If you want the audience to remember them, you can't repeat them too often. If you plan well, you will almost certainly create too much material. You must now decide what to leave out, and what you could leave out if necessary. Be ruthless. Bear in mind that your audience will forget most of what you say. Go back to your pyramid and make sure that you have enough time to cover each key point. Weed out any detail that will slow you down or divert you from your objective.

## Putting it on cards

Put your ideas on to cards if you want. These are useful memory devices and will help you to bring the presentation alive. The best presentations are given without notes. But few people will always have the confidence or experience to be able to deliver without any help. Nevertheless, any notes you create should aim to support your memory, not substitute for it. Don't write your presentation out in full unless you are an accomplished actor. Only actors can make recitation sound convincing – and nobody is asking you to act. Use cards. Filing or archive cards are best; use the largest you can find. Cards have a number of key advantages.

- They are less shaky than paper – they don't rustle.
- They are more compact.

- 
- They give your hands something firm to hold.
  - They can be tagged with a treasury tag to prevent loss of order.
  - They look more professional.
  - They force you to write only brief notes.

### **Adding spice**

Exciting presentations bring ideas alive. You are the medium through which the audience understands the material. You must make the presentation your own and give it the spicy smell of real life. Rack your brain for anything you can use. Think it up, cook it up, dream it up if necessary. Look for:

- images;
- examples;
- analogies;
- stories;
- pictures;

The aim is to create pictures in your audience's mind. Don't let computer graphics do it all for you. And don't fall into the trap of thinking that putting text on a visual aid makes it visual. Your audience wants images: real pictures, not words. The most powerful pictures are the ones you can conjure up in your audience's imagination with your own words. There's a famous story about a little girl who claimed she liked plays on the radio, 'because the pictures were better'. You should be aiming to create such pictures in your audience's mind.

### **Designing visuals**

Working on the visuals can take longer than any other part of planning. The important thing to remember is that any aid you use is there to help you, not to substitute for you. You are not a voice-over accompanying a slide presentation; the pictures are there to illustrate your ideas. The audience wants to see you: to meet with you, assess you, ask you questions, learn about you. They will not have the chance to do any of this if you hide behind your visual aids.

### **Rehearsing**

There is a world of difference between thinking your presentation through and doing it. You may think you know what you want to say, but until you say it you don't really know. Only by uttering it aloud can you test whether you understand what you are saying. Rehearsal is the reality check. Rehearsal is also a time check. Time acts oddly in presentations. It can seem to stop, to drag and – more often than not – to race away. The most common time problem I encounter with trainees who are rehearsing their presentations is that they run out of time. They are astounded when I tell them that time is up and they have hardly finished introducing themselves! You must rehearse to see how long it all takes. Be aware that it will probably take longer than you anticipate: maybe 50 percent longer.

Rehearsing: general guidelines

- Rehearse in real time: don't skip bits.
- Rehearse with a friend. Ask them what they think and work with them to improve.
- Rehearse with your notes. Get into the habit of looking up from them.
- Rehearse with the visual aids at least once.
- Rehearse in the venue itself if you can. If you can't, try to spend some time there, getting the feel of the room.

## 10.6 Controlling the Audience

Many presenters concentrate so hard on the material that they ignore the audience. They have no idea of the messages that their body is sending out. They are thinking so hard about what they are saying that they have no time to think about how they say it. You are performing. Your whole body is involved. You must become aware of what your body is doing so that you can control it, and thus the audience. A few basic principles will ensure that you keep the audience within your control.

### Eye contact

You speak more with your eyes than with your voice. Your eyes tell the audience that you are taking notice of them, that you are confident to speak to them, that you know what you are talking about and that you believe what you are saying. Look at the audience's eyes throughout the presentation. Imagine that a lighthouse beam is shooting out from your eyes and scanning the audience. Make sure that the beam enters every pair of eyes in the room. Focus for a few seconds on each pair of eyes and meet their gaze. Don't look past them, through them or over their heads. Pick out a few faces that look particularly friendly and return to them. After a while, you may even feel confident enough to return to a few of the less friendly ones! Include the whole audience with your eyes. Many presenters fall into the trap of focusing on only one person: the most senior manager, the strongest personality, maybe simply someone they like a lot.

### Gestures

Many presenters worry about how much or little they gesture. This is reasonable. Arms and hands are prominent parts of the body and can sometimes get out of control. The important thing is to find the gestures that are natural for you. If you are a great gesticulator, don't try to force your hands into rigid stillness. If you don't normally gesture a great deal, don't force yourself into balletic movements. Use your hands to paint pictures and to help you get the words out. Keep your gestures open, away from your body and into the room. Don't cross your hands behind your back or in front of your crotch, and don't put them in your pockets too much. (It's a good idea to empty your pockets before the presentation so that you don't find yourself jingling coins or keys.)

### Movement

Aim for stillness. This doesn't mean that you should stand completely still all the time. Moving about the room shows that you are making the space your own, and helps to energise the space between you and the audience. But rhythmic, repetitive movement can be annoying and suggest the neurotic pacing of a panther in a cage. Try not to rock on your feet or tie your legs in knots! Aim to have both feet on the ground as much as possible and slow down your movements. It can sometimes help to sit to present. You might practice with a chair, or the back of a chair, a stool or even the edge of a table. Make sure that it is stable and solid enough to bear your weight!

## 10.7 Answering Questions

Many presenters are as worried about the question session as about the presentation itself. A few guidelines can help to turn your question session from a trial into a triumph:

- Decide when to take questions. This will probably be at the end. But you might prefer to take questions during the presentation. This is more difficult to manage but can improve your relationship with the audience.
- Anticipate the most likely questions. These may be 'Frequently Asked Questions' that you can easily foresee. Others may arise from the particular circumstances of the presentation.
- Use a 'plant'. Ask somebody to be ready with a question to start the session off. Audiences are sometimes hesitant at the end of a presentation about breaking the atmosphere.
- Answer concisely. Force yourself to be brief.
- Answer honestly. You can withhold information, but don't lie. Someone in the audience will almost certainly see through you.
- Take questions from the whole audience. From all parts of the room and from different 'social areas'.
- Answer the whole audience. Don't let questions seduce you into private conversations. Make sure the audience has heard the question.
- If you don't know, say so. And promise what you'll do to answer later.

### **A simple format for answering a question**

- Repeat the question if necessary. This helps you understand it, helps the audience to hear it, and gives you time to think about your answer.
- Give a single answer. Make only one point.
- Now give one reason for your answer.
- Give an example that illustrates the point. Of course, it may not be easy to think of all these as you spontaneously respond to a question. But if you slow down and try to think this simple format through, you will probably answer more succinctly and clearly.

### **Summary**

- A single governing idea is more likely to persuade your listener than a group of ideas, simply because one strong idea is easier to remember.
- An essential element in delivering your message, then, is demonstrating that it relates to that need or that question. Follow the rule of SPQR that is Situation, Problem, Question and Response.
- An effective presenter puts themselves centre-stage. An ineffective presenter tries to hide behind notes, a lectern, slides or computer generated graphics. To become more effective, you need to take control of the three core elements of the event.
- In presentations, more than in any other kind of corporate communication, you must display the shape of your thinking.
- The higher the level of engagement, the better is the odds that you get your message across to the audience.
- The best presenters are the ones who know how to connect with their audiences.

### **Keywords**

- Unfazed-undaunted
- Persuade-to plead with
- SPQR-Situation, Problem, Question and Response

### **SelfAssessment**

1. It is a good idea to read to your audience when presenting.  
A. False  
B. True  
C. Partially true
2. When giving a presentation in front of an audience you should do all of the following EXCEPT for:  
A. Speak loud and clear  
B. Provide handouts if needed  
C. Dress professionally  
D. Look at your screen and not the audience
3. To whom should a presentation be aimed?

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*Unit 10: Presentational Skills*

- A. The highest authority in the room, regardless of where they are
  - B. The entire audience
  - C. The people in the closest rows
  - D. Your best friend in the room
4. Slides should have a \_\_\_\_\_ progression that makes sense to your audience.
- A. Theme
  - B. Logical
  - C. Grid
  - D. None of these
5. You should always add pictures to your presentation even if it doesn't have anything to do with your presentation.
- A. False
  - B. True
6. What is the last Rule of Thumb when creating an effective presentation?
- A. Organize your information
  - B. Spell check your presentation
  - C. Keep it simple
  - D. Minimize text on slides.
7. Why should you keep text to a minimum on slides?
- A. So the focus is on you as the speaker
  - B. To help make your presentation longer
  - C. So the pictures are easier to see
  - D. To make sure the audience can read everything you have to tell them
8. what is the most important part of making a successful presentation?
- A. organization
  - B. preparation
  - C. software
  - D. time
9. what is something to can do to have a good presentation?
- A. practice
  - B. stand out
  - C. speak softly
  - D. focus
10. What should you do at the very beginning of a presentation?
- A. Tell a joke

- 
- B. Introduce yourself
  - C. Ask questions
  - D. Start with presentation with itself
11. Typically story telling is a great presentation skill because -
- A. Everyone loves some good gossip.
  - B. Audiences respond well to anecdotes when trying to connect to a learning point.
  - C. Audiences respond well to random, off-topic stories that detract from the overall point of the presentation.
  - D. Audiences love any opportunity for a little snooze.
12. The two main components of great actual delivery skills are:
- A. Maintaining a safe distance, lecture type presentations.
  - B. Speaking from behind and Oz-like curtain, lectures.
  - C. Maintaining eye contact, open gestures.
  - D. Maintaining eye contact, no sudden body movements.
13. When beginning a speech you should...
- A. listen to the needs of the audience.
  - B. ask people what they want you to talk about.
  - C. always start with a joke.
  - D. grab the attention of the audience
14. Reading and understanding your subject carefully gives you .....
- A. an edge over your audience
  - B. control over your audience
  - C. more knowledge
  - D. self-satisfaction
15. The ..... should give a preview of what you are going to say and should gain the attention of the listeners with a statement of purpose.
- A. conclusion
  - B. main content
  - C. introduction

**Answers for Self Assessment**

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A  | 2. D  | 3. B  | 4. B  | 5. A  |
| 6. C  | 7. A  | 8. B  | 9. A  | 10. B |
| 11. B | 12. C | 13. D | 14. A | 15. C |

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**Review Questions**

1. Comment on method SPQR?
2. How one can prepare for the presentation?
3. Is material important during presentation? Comment.
4. Analyze the type of fear you have and explain the ways to overcome it?
5. How important is body language during presentation?
6. When to answer the queries? Explain.

**Further Readings**

1. <https://training.simplicable.com>
2. Important Presentation Skills for Workplace Success (thebalancecareers.com)
3. 7 Presentation Skills examples and techniques | Symonds Training (symondsresearch.com)

## **Unit 11: Role Play and Debate**

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Summary

Keywords

Self Assessment

Answers for Self Assessment

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Further Readings

### **Objectives**

After completion of this unit students will be able to

- Understand the procedure for debate
- Delineate difference between debate and decision making
- Learn how to express likes and dislikes and provide an opinion.
- Build confidence and learn how to use their voice.
- Understand the importance of evidence in debate
- Get the importance of role play

### **Introduction**

Role-play is a dramatic subtype of performance in general. Human beings have an impressive capacity to perform. When we do so, we select particular behaviour and emphasize it. We say and do particular things in specific situations that we otherwise might not do. We sometimes reach into our potential and release capacities that surprise and amaze us and others. Wherever it occurs, performance is marked by heightened activity. We find performances spread all throughout human society. The dramatic form called role-play is performance in the educational domain.

Debate is a tool for resolving disagreements and bringing us together as a society. Debate is an incredibly important skill that can help build confidence, train people to think quickly on their feet, and become strong advocates for what they believe. The goal of this unit is to introduce the art of debate and its fundamentals. Its focus is on how to apply the concepts of debate to improved decision making. Debating is a competitive activity, but it's also a way of learning, exchanging ideas, and gaining an understanding of other people's perspectives. That understanding furnishes the basis for making better choices.

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## 11.1 Debate and Decision Making

- The importance of the distinction between argumentation and debate becomes clear in the context of debate as a method of decision making. We tend to think that our best decisions are the product of rationality. Rationality empowers us to make well-considered decisions and judgments, and argumentation helps in that process, focusing our ideas to make sure that the end point of our decision-making process is a product of rationality. But the informal nature of argumentation can lead to incomplete and ill-considered outcomes.
- Arguing about a problem with someone for a while doesn't ensure that you've thought out all the benefits and drawbacks of the solution that you have in mind. That's where the structured nature of debate comes in handy. Debate is the ultimate form of decision making, because it harnesses the best parts of the messy, complex, and sometimes overly emotional process of argumentation while striving to reduce the distractions.
- How debate enhances decision making rests on three concepts crucial to the best forms of debate. First, debate emphasizes the skill of discerning the key questions of a controversy. If you have a finite amount of time to argue a point, then you are already more likely to spend that time on the central questions.
- Debate requires the skill of anticipating the best arguments available to your opponent that produces a better proposal for yourself. The best debates happen when both sides have thoroughly researched the entire controversy, and all the participants are aware not only of the strengths and weaknesses of all positions, but of where all are in agreement. As a result, debaters develop the ability to focus on the core of a controversy and to quickly distill the key questions from the overall potential arguments. Argumentation theory defines this point as stasis, a concept that represents the point of departure between the two sides engaged in the interaction.



Example: Let's say that two colleagues are having a debate about how to increase the market share for the corporation for which they both work. They may agree that buying ads that run before the previews at the local movie theater may not be the best use of resources. That agreement, however, may end when one suggests that spending finite resources on social media and the other suggests print advertising. If both understand where they agree, where they disagree, and why, they are at the point of stasis.

- If you have ever participated in a brainstorming session, you probably know that they tend to begin with the person in charge telling everyone that there is no such thing as a bad idea. The free flow of thoughts is supposed to generate more ideas, making the brainstorming session more productive. According to a study conducted by Dr. Charlan Nemeth, a professor of psychology at the University of California at Berkeley, the truth is that brainstorming with no interaction, with no debate, is actually much less effective than brainstorming with debate.
- The second way that debate improves decision making is that debate creates nuance. The interaction of ideas refines and ultimately produces the best version of participants' arguments.
- Many of us have been taught that the way to approach a big decision is to generate a pro and con list. Of course, this step is important in the process of decision making, but generating the list rarely makes the choice evident. Only when people factor in the values they bring to a decision can they reach a choice likely to address their wants and needs.

- ❖ If we simply list pros and cons, we will have indexed some arguments, but we will not have resolved the core of the controversy: Which value should dictate the decision? Resolving competing values requires an interaction of ideas. It requires argument.
- ❖ Nuance appears when debaters attempt to whittle away their opponents' best reasons for their positions. Proposals start to develop nuance to reduce potential objections. The more complicated the decision, the more important it is to understand the parties' underlying values and to study the interaction of their ideas.
- The third way that debate can help in decision making is by training people – especially leaders in an organization – to make and articulate judgments. Informal arguments rarely include an outside party who listens to the argument and explains who won and why. Debates, on the other hand, are especially effective as a method of arriving at a decision both because that decision is explained to all the participants and because the process vastly improves the participants' ability to make future decisions.
  - ❖ A tangible example is the amount of anxiety, stress, resentment, and overall loss of productivity that comes from the combination of poor organizational decision making and poor communication about decision making.
  - ❖ A business was losing profit because of production related expenses that were steadily growing worse. The products were increasingly expensive to make, and the company could not pass on the increased costs to the customers. The manager approached the production team and asked them to think through some potential solutions and present them to him for review.
  - ❖ Two proposals emerged. The first was to invest in an inventory management system that would help reduce the need for rush orders. The supporters of this proposal argued that if they had an inventory management system they would have adequate lead time to purchase the appropriate components, eliminating the need for rush ordering.
  - ❖ The second proposal was to invest in new production equipment. The existing equipment was in a constant state of disrepair, resulting in extensive delays that reduced the number of orders the production team could fill and cost a tremendous amount to fix. The proponents of this proposal argued that an inventory management system would be nice, but all the inventory in the world wouldn't help if the machines kept breaking down.
- The manager evaluated both proposals. He asked great questions. He assessed the relative viability and timeframes necessary for both proposals. He thanked everyone for their participation in the process, and in the end, he decided to invest in the inventory management system. This initial decision was not all that confusing or controversial. The manager did not go to any lengths to explain his decision. He simply made the call and asked the key players to start the process of purchasing and implementing the new inventory management system.
- The problem was that three weeks later, the manager announced a new investment in technology for the office workers: brand new computers, printers, and copiers. Resentment grew until very little communication occurred between the production team and the manager, and overall productivity began to slip.
  - ❖ The manager did just fine in his initial approach. Where he went awry was the way he handled communicating his decision. After evaluating the perspectives of the

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folks on the front lines, he wanted the authority of a command and control system. Although it is possible to borrow from both approaches, the key is developing the skill of articulating a judgment.

## 11.2 When and How to Use Debate

For the best debaters, a fierce argument is the ultimate sign of respect. It requires all of the participants involved to listen carefully to what another person thinks about the world; to be willing to challenge that perspective with evidence, logic, and well-constructed arguments; and to be open to the possibility that you are wrong. The fierceness of debate isn't in the emotion that you put into your delivery; it's in the precision of your logic and the way you exploit weaknesses in the positions of your opponents and use them to your advantage

### **Harnessing the Power of Debate**

Why would someone want to engage in a fierce argument? The answer is that debate is a useful means of refining and testing ideas and receiving assessments that will challenge the key assumptions, data, reasoning, and recommendations; forcing clarity of purpose by taking on the position of an opponent; and preventing embarrassment before publicly advocating for change. We want to focus on using debate as a means of deliberating about the future.



For example, let's say an organization is trying to determine how to invest some precious resources. Some people advocate for investing in existing staff through a bonus structure. Others argue for new technology. Still others argue that the resources should go toward amenities around the office such as new furniture. All three positions are reasonable and have merit. Debate can and should be used to determine which one is the best choice.

## 11.3 Conditions Necessary for Debate

Three conditions must be present to change an argument to a debate and to help maximize the potential of debate: a formal structure to which all parties agree; agreement on the proposition; and a well-prepared opponent.

1. At a minimum, a formal structure means ensuring that all of the participants have an equal amount of uninterrupted time to present their case and a structure set in place for responses. The point of formalizing the enactment of argument is to enhance the best parts of argumentation while reducing the inevitable messiness that comes with this form of human interaction.
2. There is simply no way around the fact that asking people to stand and deliver their perspectives on difficult controversies invites aggression and emotion. When channeled appropriately those forces can help harness some of the most brilliant and creative thoughts that a person can muster. If those forces become too powerful, then the quality of the argument disappears as the participants begin talking over each other, or worse, focus on attacking their opponents rather than arguing against their positions.
3. Setting ground rules about the structure of the debate will dramatically improve the quality of the arguments. Decide the total amount of time available for a meeting and how many total speeches you want to hear on a topic. Build in preparation time, that is, time for people to think through their arguments in between speeches. Save some time at the very end for debriefing after the debate.
4. The key is to have some actual structure in place. Without it, the argument can too easily turn into a shouting match. Ideally the structure not only prevents that from happening, but it encourages the best arguments possible

The second precondition for a debate is agreement on the proposition. The specificity of the resolution helps debaters determine the relevance of any given argument. Without a clear resolution, debaters can exploit ambiguity to avoid the central question of the controversy.

The third precondition for a debate is a well-prepared opponent. In a competitive intercollegiate setting, the element of surprise is one of the key aspects of creating an asymmetrical advantage to win the round. If you can take your opponent totally off guard then you dramatically increase your chances of winning a debate. In an organizational context, the reverse is true.

1. Debate works because it uses the power of dialectics to put arguments in contestation with each other. The arguments bang up against each other and bash around through a whirlwind of data, reasoning, warrants, and claims.
2. This rigorous process of examination should help with decision making because the best arguments emerge from the contest more refined, more nuanced, and better-reasoned. To maximize that process, the key is to make sure that no one walks into the room unprepared for the battle. As a decision maker, you want both sides of the debate to be as prepared as possible so you need to allocate time and energy to make that happen.
3. In its best forms, debate is an effective process for making decisions because coming to agreement on the terms of the debate can, in itself, be a productive way to determine what the real issues are. After a group makes that determination, the process of debating affords all sides a chance to have their arguments heard before an objective judge who hopefully renders a decision with a clear assessment of the arguments.
4. And this is why the best debaters truly appreciate a fierce argument. In fact, the best decision makers should expect a fierce argument because that is truly how to arrive at the best decisions.

## 11.4 Consider the Timing

In considering when to debate, remember that debating every single decision is simply not feasible. Yet one of the biggest mistakes that people make when they advocate for change in an organization is to rush to make recommendations before they have enough data to support their case. This is a classic case of a rush to judgment: putting the cart before the horse.



For example, imagine a media company that has been very successful generating content for social media. It is generally excited about how the company is going, and the forecasts look good. One night over the dinner table, the social marketing director's nine-year-old daughter says "Wow Dad, I can't believe that you all are still using that social media service. No one thinks that is cool anymore." Later that evening he fires off an email to the executive team expressing his concern and making his recommendation: We should seriously consider figuring out what the kids are using today and moving platforms as soon as possible. Because the company wants to avoid specializing in a social media platform that disappears overnight, a debate ensues—Resolved: we should begin to move away from X social media platform. Over the course of the debate, we discover that the data support the daughter's assertion that for teenagers the presence of so many adults has rendered the service "uncool."

The opposing side argues that our clients are not asking for content for teenagers, and it is the presence of those adults on the service that makes us money. Although it is possible that the service goes up in flames and everyone migrates to something newer and cooler, the resolution was framed to be a question of time: Should we begin to move away from the social media platform?

At the conclusion of the debate the decision makers decide to continue to monitor the usage rates for our core demographic and that we should investigate the newer platforms so that we can sell potential clients that want to target a younger audience. However, we should not, in fact, begin to migrate away from our current social media platform.

One of the hallmarks of the best decision makers is that their decisions are clear, predictable, and consistent. The best decision makers acknowledge, for example, that the goal of a losing proposal

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may be a valuable one, and the proposed expenditure might do important things to achieve that goal, but it simply is not as high a priority as other key investments that have to be made to preserve the long-term viability of the institution. A good decision maker will clarify when a proposal is not possible and when it is just not preferable.

## 11.5 The Structure of Argument

Once we can break an argument into its component parts and put it back together to see how it functions in an interaction, we can start to see what makes for a successful argument. One of the most widely studied models of argumentation was designed by Dr. Stephen Toulmin, a British philosopher and scholar of formal logic. The beauty of the Toulmin model is its simplicity, yet it reveals that truly mastering argumentation requires a series of decisions in the moment that have dramatic implications for the positions you are defending.

Some people believe that raising the drinking age to 21 has encouraged underage people to engage in unsafe behavior to get intoxicated. Others believe that lowering the drinking age to 18 would encourage even worse behaviors. All agree that the priority value is safety. Therefore, the exchange is less complicated and more direct than one that presents a number of competing values. Thus, this controversy is useful for exploring the Toulmin model.

### **Claim, Grounds, Warrant**

The first component of the Toulmin model is the claim—the conclusion that we are seeking to establish over the course of the argument. A claim is a statement that requires support. For example, stating that the drinking age should be lowered to 18, with no additional information, is a claim. By itself this statement carries little argumentative force. It is missing evidence on which to ground it so the audience can start to accept it.

The grounds for an argument represent the facts, data, statistics, or any other type of evidence. The grounds are the second component of the model.

The concept of front-loading is important data about underage drinking. It means that underage drinkers attempt to consume enough alcohol secretly, before they go out in public, to get enough of a buzz to last them through the night. This type of binge consumption is extremely dangerous and related to accidents and deaths from alcohol poisoning.

Studies suggest that this type of binge drinking is more prevalent among people under 21, and some suggest that they are doing it because the drinking age is 21. The evidence can therefore be seen as supporting the idea that if for people under 21 could drink legally, they wouldn't engage in such risky behavior.

Several other lines of argument are possible. For example, the federal government has tied receiving federal highway funds to states' raising the drinking age to 21. Some argue that this move was an inappropriate overextension of government power.

Others argue that the definition of "adult" should be consistent across the board. Eighteen-year-olds can vote; they can fight and die for their country. Both of these civic endeavors assume that they are adult enough to make life or death decisions. If they are adult enough for these decisions, they should be able to choose what they can consume.

According to Dr. Toulmin, the connection between the evidence and the claim is not automatic. In most arguments, people make strong claims and have some data, but they invest relatively little time in connecting them. The connection is the warrant—the third component of the model.

The claim is that we should reduce the drinking age to 18.

The grounds are that the drinking age produces risky behavior because young people are attempting to circumvent the law.

To arrive at the warrant, the relevant question is, "Why do we assume that reducing the drinking age to 18 would eliminate the behaviors that are putting people's lives at risk?"

The reasoning that connects the claim to the grounds—the warrant—is that reducing the drinking age would reduce the incentive of 18- to 20-year-olds to engage in risky behaviors.

They would be less likely to feel compelled to front-load.

They would be able to drink in public bars and restaurants that have standards for determining when a person has had too much alcohol and should not be served.

Public settings are monitored by people who are willing to take action if a person has consumed too much alcohol.

If a person showed signs of alcohol poisoning, the assumption that a responsible person would take appropriate action without fearing legal retribution is more reasonable.

#### *Vulnerability of Arguments*

The reason to focus attention on the warrant is that the connection between the grounds and the claim is often the most vulnerable part of an argument. The warrant assumes that the only way to curb risky behavior is to legalize the consumption of alcohol in hopes that people who were evading the law will now be more likely to comply with it. At least three objections to this warrant arise:

A cognitive difference exists in the capacity to make good decisions between an 18-year-old and someone three or more years older.

The assumption of our warrant is that 18-year-olds will make rational decisions about when, where, and how much alcohol to consume. Although some debate occurs over the specific age for maturity, many scientists agree that the brains of 18-year-olds are still forming.

Mature adults also face risk from impaired decision making when they consume alcohol; the likelihood that 18-year-olds, whose cognitive maturity is incomplete, will be capable of rational decision making is small.

*Rules or laws should not be based on those who are intent on breaking them.*

The phenomenon that supports the grounds of our argument, described as front-loading, happens when 18- to 20-year-olds try to circumvent the law. Although safety is an important value, should we sacrifice the rule of law in the name of helping people intent on making selfish decisions?

Our laws impose restrictions that demand a degree of maturity before a person can access certain privileges. For example, the Constitution provides that a candidate for the president of the United States must be at least 35 years old. If we believe that society can and should impose age restrictions for certain activities, we should not sacrifice the rule of law to help underage drinkers.

Reducing the drinking age to 18 does not resolve the problem of front-loading: It just shifts it to an even more vulnerable population. If 18- to 20-year-olds front-load to circumvent the law, why don't we assume that the same thing will happen with 16- and 17-year-old high school students?

Notice that these three arguments do not challenge the grounds of the original argument nor deny the existence or dangers of front-loading. They do not deny that front-loading presents difficult choices for observers of potential alcohol poisoning. They do challenge whether front-loading should be a factor in the debate.

Once you start to think about arguments in terms of their component parts, you will start to listen differently to how people are arguing. Rather than getting caught up in the power of the claim, which is often where people use their boldest language, you will be listening for their actual warrants. When you realize that they are vulnerable for attack on their warrants, you will start to evolve in terms of which arguments you prioritize when you respond.

## **11.6 Using Evidence in Debate**

There is no such thing as ideal evidence in the abstract. Context is key. When the first thing people seek when researching a controversy is a set of statistics, they have fallen victim to the belief that their argument will be successful simply because they have the statistics. In fact, there are three types of evidence: narrative, empirical, and authoritative. Knowing the types of evidence you can use in a debate is critical, but figuring out which type is appropriate for the argument you are trying to make is the more important skill.

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## Narrative Evidence

Narrative evidence is presented in the form of a story. Dr. Walter Fisher, one of the most prominent scholars of the narrative paradigm, has argued that almost all successful communication tells a story, and that the framework of a story helps people interpret information and persuades them of its veracity. The strength of the narrative paradigm rests in its ability to generate a connection to the audience and to take complicated subjects and boil them down to a coherent story that the audience can absorb.

## Empirical Evidence

Empiricism is a system of thought that relies on observation and experimentation to generate claims about the world and is grounded in a rigorous and transparent philosophy of science. Ideally, experiments can be replicated by others, observations can be made by others, and results have been recorded by many sources. Many empiricists focus on events that have occurred in the past as a way of substantiating a claim about the present.



For example, a person could use statistics to demonstrate that a growing number of consumers have purchased guns at gun shows without going through a background check, as well as statistics about the danger of unsecured weapons in a home where children are present. Still further, a person could show statistics on the number of people who choose to end their life using a gun.

## Authoritative Evidence

Authority, at its core, is an efficiency-gaining measure. Authority should, in principle, help resolve conflicts and debates; we feel we should be able to rely on someone who speaks to an issue after years of developing expertise in the area. We define authority in a multitude of ways. But one person's authority is another person's amateur. Authority or reputation can often be established on some of the societal markers of expertise, such as an advanced degree.

## 11.7 Role Play

Role-playing is sometimes known as pretend-play since it involves pretending to be someone else. It is a useful and adaptable instrument that aids in the understanding of theory via practice. It might be a deliberate decision to take on a new position or an unconscious decision to fulfill a societal obligation.

### Importance of role-playing

Role-playing is utilized for student training and team-building. It entails participating in a variety of exercises, activities, and games aimed at improving communication and increasing student's engagement and motivation. There are dedicated teams in place that use a variety of approaches and theories to provide entertaining and educational events for training sessions, conferences, seminars, workshops, and meetings. In training, role-playing takes place between two or more students to explore a certain setting. It allows them to get more comfortable with challenging situations and to understand how others would react in a similar situation.

Role-playing in class training prepares the students for real-life scenarios. It encourages them to develop cognitive skills that will prove a boon in the days to come

One of the essential benefits of role-playing in class training is that it builds confidence. They have to face innumerable situations within a safe environment for the first few times. This gives them the confidence to understand the concept, identify problems, and learn ways to tackle the given situation admirably.

Listening is an integral part of role-playing as you have to first listen to the instructions and then to your inner self and later to the nuances of the other participants. It helps to develop and hone listening skills that will always be a help in professional as well as personal setting

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### *Unit 11: Role Play and Debate*

In role-playing, it becomes essential to pay attention to the body language of other participants. This helps them to develop this all-important skill for future use

Role-playing in a class training assist in handling difficult situations and develop problem-solving skills.

The role-playing activity indicates the current skill of the students and gives them a chance to be better.

### **Summary**

- Debate is a contest of interpretations and, therefore, arguments. Debating requires participants to persuade an audience about the truth or falsity of the motion; it is a contest of the arguments used to prove or disprove that motion.
- The goal of both teams engaged in the debate is to offer an interpretation of certain events that leads an adjudicator to accept or reject the motion under consideration. In this way, the arguments used in a debate round are no different than those used outside of the round.
- Therefore, the same qualities that make a proposed interpretation of an experience compelling outside of a debate round should make an argument in a round compelling.
- Like any effort to persuade, the success of the arguments in debates depends entirely on the perception of the audience: if the adjudicator prefers your argument to your opponents' you will likely win.
- There is no "right" way to debate. The premises sound decidedly negative. To say that debate is a contest of competing interpretations of reality and that we can never know with certainty why one person prefers one argument to another sounds like a condemnation of the activity. Quite the opposite.
- Role-playing has been used as an essential learning tool for a very long time. Most of the individuals take part in the "what if: the scenario in life.

### **Keywords**

- Whittle- to shape or form
- Anticipating- to give advance thought
- Harnessing- close association
- Fierce-aggressive in temperament
- Debriefing- to interrogate
- Rigorous- harsh, severe
- Vulnerable- open to attack or damage
- Veracity- conformity with truth or fact

### **Self Assessment**

1. Rationality empowers us to make well-considered....., and argumentation helps in that process, focusing our ideas to make sure that the end point of our decision-making process is a product of rationality.
  - A. decisions and judgments
  - B. pros and cons
  - C. advantages and disadvantages
  - D. benefits and drawbacks

2. Arguing about a problem with someone for a while doesn't ensure that you've thought out all the benefits and drawbacks of the solution that you have in mind
  - A. True
  - B. False
  - C. Partially true
  - D. None of these
  
3. How debate enhances decision making rests on .....concepts crucial to the best forms of debate.
  - A. 2
  - B. 3
  - C. 4
  - D. 5
  
4. Debate requires the skill of .....the best arguments available to your opponent that produces a better proposal for yourself.
  - A. thoroughly researching
  - B. integrating
  - C. anticipating
  - D. representing
  
5. The interaction of .....refines and ultimately produces the best version of participants' arguments.
  - A. Ideas
  - B. Students
  - C. Participants
  - D. Trainers
  
6. Nuance appears when debaters attempt to .....their opponents' best reasons for their positions.
  - A. Send away
  - B. whittle away
  - C. keep away
  - D. none of these
  
7. Debate is a useful means of refining and testing .....and receiving assessments
  - A. Ideas
  - B. Opinions
  - C. Both
  - D. None of these
  
8. At a minimum, a formal structure means ensuring that all of the participants have an .....amount of uninterrupted time to present their case and a structure set in place for responses.
  - A. Efficient
  - B. Minimum
  - C. Equal
  - D. Distributed
  
9. Another precondition for a debate is a well-prepared.....
  - A. Participants
  - B. Opponent

- C. Team
- D. Trainers

10. The first component of the Toulmin model is the.....that is the conclusion that we are seeking to establish over the course of the argument.

- A. Claim
- B. Decision
- C. Proposal
- D. Message

11. The reason to focus attention on the warrant is that the connection between the grounds and the claim is often the most .....part of an argument.

- A. vulnerable
- B. appropriate
- C. important
- D. frequent

12. There is no such thing as ideal evidence in the abstract..... is key.

- A. Answer
- B. Conclusion
- C. Context
- D. All of these

13. Narrative evidence is presented in the form of a.....

- A. Story
- B. Proof
- C. Evidence
- D. Essay

14. Empiricism is a system of thought that relies on .....to generate claims about the world and is grounded in a rigorous and transparent philosophy of science.

- A. Demonstration and observation
- B. observation and experimentation
- C. demonstration and experimentation
- D. none of these

15. Role-playing in a class training assist in handling difficult situations and develop .....skills.

- A. problem-solving
- B. aptitude
- C. analytical
- D. decision making

### Answers for Self Assessment

- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. A | 2. A | 3. B | 4. C | 5. A  |
| 6. B | 7. C | 8. C | 9. B | 10. A |

11. A      12. C      13. A      14. B      15. A

### **Review Questions**

1. How could you assess competing values without argumentation?
2. Why do you think that brainstorming without debate is less productive?
3. What are some situations where it is inappropriate to use debate?
4. Why timing is important in debate?
5. Have you ever heard a public argument that was a series of claims without grounds or warrants?



### **Further Readings**

What are the steps in a debate? - R4 DN

How to Start a Debate: Learn to Introduce Yourself and Greet -Bscholarly

How to Hold a Student Debate: 6 Steps to Meaningful Class Discussions

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**Objectives**

After studying this unit, you will be able to

- Understand process of writing
- Importance of professional writing
- Analyze their writing skills
- Learn to correct different errors made during writing

**Introduction**

Whether you are a student about to step into the world of work or a more seasoned employee with years of experience, you must be able to communicate effectively to advance your career. Employers routinely rate solid communication abilities in the top tier of needed talents for both new hires and current workers, including conversing with customers and colleagues, presenting information, and writing. In today's fast-paced environment, the ability to communicate meaning clearly and precisely to a variety of individuals is a must. Writing like a professional – whether the document is printed or on the screen – is best taken on as a process, with careful attention paid to detail. This chapter will describe how to break down all writing tasks into a series of steps to streamline the process as well as describe the characteristics that all professional writing should embody.

**12.1 Writing as a Process**

Many people think that good writing flows out of the brain, into the fingers, and onto the page or screen. Nothing could be further from the truth. Professional writers know that writing, like any acquired skill, requires patience and persistence. Whatever we are composing – whether an e-mail message or a proposal for a new business – the key to writing well is to consider writing a process rather than a one shot deal. If you approach writing as a set of chores, your prose will improve and you will spend less time on it. If you have writer's block or dread the notion of writing, I can assure you that if you break it down into smaller chunks, the end product will be better and you will feel less stressed. Writing may be broken down into three parts, each of which has its own acronym: AWE, which stands for assess, write, and edit. Every piece of writing that will be seen by another

person should go through these three processes. Personal writing is the only type of writing that does not require this procedure.

### Step 1: Assess

Assess the writing environment and identify your audience and objective before you put your fingers on the keyboard or pen to paper. This phase should be formalised, in my opinion: Make a list of your responses. For good writing, you must first understand your target, or reader. Because the language and style we employ rely on who will read what we write, writers must be extremely clear about the target user. To achieve our literary purpose, we must, in essence, freak out the reader. We won't be able to do so until we do a thorough analysis of the reader. Define your reader's attributes as given in Table 1.1: Fill out an audience profile form to start the audience analysis section of the first stage of the writing process. Defining your purpose is the next step in appraising your writing scenario. In the professional sector, there are three primary reasons or purposes for writing: informing, persuading, or requesting. Generalized information, instructions, notices, cautions, and clarifications are all examples of informative writing. Persuasive writing is written to create an impression, influence decisions, win acceptance, sell, or promote something. Requests are written in order to get information or rights, as well as to elicit action. You won't be able to accomplish the job's goal until you define the desired outcome of the written work. Are you responding to a consumer complaint with an e-mail? Are you utilising social media to drive visitors to a nutritional supplement website? Are you utilising social media to drive visitors to a nutritional supplement website? Before you begin writing, you must be certain of what you want your words to accomplish. You may not have all of the information you require to complete your paper. Continue your examination of the writing issue by gathering the information needed to generate the document once you've established who you're writing for and what you want to achieve. It may be necessary to undertake research at times. You may just need to download information from your experience at times. In any case, have your information ready before you start writing. Nothing is more annoying than being on a tight deadline and learning you don't have the knowledge you require to complete a writing assignment. Organize the data once you've gathered it. Consider the organisational framework you'll need to achieve your writing goal for shorter works. Begin by organising information into categories for lengthier articles. Create an outline with headers based on these components. This part of the writing process that involves assessing will make the actual writing much simpler. Why? When you have something on the paper rather than nothing, it is always easier to start writing.

Table1.1

| Audience characteristic                | Rationale  |
|--|--|
| Age                                    | Writing for children differs from writing for adults or teens. Your tone, word choice, and medium may differ greatly depending on the age of the reader.   |
| Gender                                 | Writing for an all-male audience will differ from writing for an all-female audience. Likewise, if the audience is mixed, you may make different language choices than you do for a homogeneous group.             |
| Language proficiency                   | The reader's knowledge of English will affect your word choice, sentence length, and other stylistic elements.   |
| Education Level                        | You may be writing for an audience with a 10th grade reading level or one comprised of college graduates. Each audience will have different expectations and needs, both of which you as the writer must be aware. |
| Attitude toward writer or organization | You must know if the audience is skeptical, frightened, pleased, or hostile toward you, the topic, or the organization. Anticipate your audience's reaction so you can write in a way that will support            |

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 Unit 12: Writing Techniques and Strategies
 

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|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
|                        | the document's purpose.  |
| Knowledge of the topic | A document may be geared to people who are experts in a field or who know nothing about it. Even within an organization, several different audiences will exist. You may emphasize different aspects of a topic depending upon the readers' knowledge level. |
| Audience action        | What do you want your audience to do after reading? Click a link for more information? Call to take advantage now? You must have a clear vision of your goal in communicating for your writing to be effective.  |

**Step 2: Write**

Enter the second step of the writing process – writing a draft – knowing that it is not the last step. A draft by definition is not final. Its purpose is to transfer the information you have gathered onto the page. For short documents such as routine e-mails, consider composing offline. (It's too tempting to write and hit send without carefully going over your draft!) Begin by including the information you've gathered, making sure you include each point. For longer documents, use your outline. Write section by section, point by point. If you have trouble with one section, move to another.

Your goal at this stage of the writing process for both short and longer documents is to put something down on paper (or the screen) that you will revise later. It's a waste of your valuable time to labor over any individual word or sentence as you write your draft; the word or sentence may be eliminated by the final version. If you cannot think of the precise word you need, leave a blank and return later to fill it in. If you are having difficulty wording a sentence smoothly, leave a bracketed space or perhaps type a few words as a reminder of the gist of what you want to say. The important point to remember is that a first draft is one of several stabs you'll take at this work.

Avoid utilising someone else's words or thoughts without acknowledging them if you write with information from other sources. Plagiarism happens when you copy or closely duplicate another author's ideas or language without their permission. To avoid plagiarising, even if you paraphrase by rewording, you must still cite the source. It's tempting to cut and paste and call it a day with the wealth of content available to us with a few keystrokes. If you utilise words, photos, or any other copyrighted material, however, you expose yourself and your organisation to criminal prosecution under copyright infringement laws. Furthermore, if you use other people's words, you will never learn to express yourself.

Before you move to the next step, I advise printing your draft. But don't read it immediately. Let it marinate. It's too hard to edit our own copy immediately after we've written it. We need to let some time pass before we return to a draft so that we can be more objective when we edit.

**Step 3: Edit**

Editing is a multistep process and begins by looking at the overall effectiveness of the piece. As you read your draft, return to your audience and purpose analysis and ask yourself if the content meets the needs of the audience while it accomplishes your purpose in writing. Does the document provide all the information readers will need to do what you want? Does it make sense? Is it well organized? If not, go back and make changes.

It's time for paragraph and sentence level editing if you're sure the content is correct and thorough. Unless you're one of the rare people who can remember all grammatical rules, you'll need a decent style guide. Begin by assessing each paragraph's efficacy. A paragraph is defined as a collection of sentences regarding a single topic; the topic is usually specified in the first sentence of a paragraph and is referred to as a topic sentence. Good paragraphs contain unity, which means they stay on subject, therefore look for it in each one. Check to see whether your paragraphs are too lengthy. Readers are put off by long paragraphs.

Next, look for continuity in your paragraphs, which means that each phrase should flow naturally into the next. Jumping from one topic to the next without presenting a logical relationship between

them is a typical writing mistake. Your reader will be unable to follow until each notion stated in a phrase logically transitions to the next. Writers connect concepts in a variety of ways:

1. Using transitional words and phrases. Different types of Transitional words can be used like : adding information, contrasting information, comparing information, illustrating a point, and showing time.
2. Using pronouns that refer back to a specific noun.
3. Repeating keywords to remind a reader of a central idea.

### Types of transitions

| Type of transition                       | Words or phrases used   |
|--|---|
| Additive – used to augment an idea       | additionally, again, also, and, in addition, moreover, thus         |
| Contrast – used to show how ideas differ | although, but, conversely, however, instead, on the other hand, yet |
| Comparison – used to link similar ideas  | likewise, similarly   |
| Time – used to show a sequence           | after, finally, first, in the meantime, later, next, second, soon   |

Once all paragraphs are edited, examine each sentence. Now is the time to nitpick grammar and stylistic elements. Pay close attention to the following examples of serious errors:

1. Subject and verb agreement
2. Comma splices
3. Sentence fragments
4. Run-on sentences
5. Dangling modifiers

Find every pronoun to make sure it agrees with its antecedent and that the noun to which it refers is clear. Make sure you have written numbers in the correct way, using numerals and spelling out numbers appropriately. Stay in the same verb tense.

Also beware of dangling modifiers, phrases that confuse readers by saying something other than what is meant. They often appear in an introductory phrase at the beginning of a sentence but omit a word that would clarify meaning in the second part of the sentence. Look at the following sentence:



Example: After finishing the work, the site was difficult to understand.

The site did not finish the work; therefore the meaning is obscure.

Perhaps the sentence should have read:

After finishing the work, the writer found that the site was difficult to understand.

As you edit, take some time to read your document aloud and make marks next to areas that require editing. This is the single best way to improve your writing. Professional writing should sound natural. If you find yourself stumbling as you read your copy, the chances are good that you have a problem; your ears will not allow you to pass over stylistic elements that your eye will just ignore. Look for repeated words, short, choppy phrases, and sentences that start with the same word or phrase. Ensure that your sentences are varied in length, with a healthy balance of short, medium, and lengthy phrases. Make a note of how many phrases you've begun with there is, there are, this is, or

it is. Any skilled writer should revise if they utilise this wordy structure too often. Finally, double-check that you've utilised terms according to their denotation, or meaning. (To help you edit for conciseness, use the Avoiding Wordiness Checklist at the conclusion of this chapter.)

Proofreading is the final step in the editing phase of the writing process. Proofreading include correcting spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and mistakes in your text. Begin by double-checking that all names are spelled correctly. Then double-check that you've utilised often misunderstood words accurately (i.e., affect and effect, complimentary and complementary). If you've included a phone number or a URL in the material, call or check the link to make sure it's correct.

A warning about using your word processor's spell check function: Spell check is far from fail proof. Just the omission of one letter (say the last s in possess) can change the word's meaning, and the program won't pick that up. Posses is a word (it's the plural of posse), but it's not the one you're looking for. A spellchecker will also miss names that are misspelt or terms that aren't in its lexicon.

Punctuation proofreading is essential. The use of commas correctly may make a significant impact in the reading of a writing. Look for commas following opening phrases and between two separate sentences united by a coordinate conjunction in particular. Similarly, carelessly inserting a comma or semicolon, or omitting a comma or semicolon, are typical writing faults that detract from readability. Both can have an impact on the flow and meaning of a sentence. Take a look at how the comma affects these two sentences:



Example: Let's eat kids!

Let's eat, kids

The first sentence refers to eating kids however the second one refers to asking kid to eat.

Another aspect of the proofreading process is capitalization. Use your style guide to determine when nouns and titles should be capitalised, and be consistent. Next, go over what you've written to see how it looks. To optimise readability, remember that content must not only be effectively written, but it must also appear appealing on the page or screen. The Editing and Proofreading Checklist at the conclusion of this chapter may prove to be a useful aid in guiding you through this part of the writing process.

## 12.2 Professional Writing Characteristics

Writing for the world of work has certain characteristics that form the underpinning of anything you write, from an e-mail to your boss, to a resume for a new job, to a proposal for new business. Integrate the following elements into your work.

### Accuracy

Accuracy is one of the finest methods to demonstrate to our readers that we are professionals and experts. In a competitive, global environment, inaccuracies demonstrate a carelessness that few professionals or businesses can afford. Professionals must consequently pay close attention to correctness.

### Active Voice

To enliven your prose, avoid using passive voice construction when you can. Passive voice makes the object of an action the subject of a sentence, as the following example illustrates:



Example: Passive voice The report was written by me.

Active voice I wrote the report.

However, if you wish to obscure the person committing an action, you should use passive voice. You do so by avoiding naming the actor, as is illustrated below:

Passive voice The employees were given poor ranking.

Active voice The manager gave the employees poor ranking.

### **Avoiding Gender, Racial, or Age Bias**

Biases are difficult to avoid in English. Using the plural of a word is the greatest method to avoid the he or she problem. When writing, avoid preconceptions to prevent racial or age prejudices. Even if you think the remark is flattering, the person to whom you're referring may find it insulting.

### **Clarity**

You haven't done your job if a reader has to reread anything you've written to comprehend it. Every statement you write that will be read by another person should be simple to understand. Clarity is achieved by using terms that the audience will know and appropriately applying them. Keep jargon and SAT-prep terminology to a minimum. Giving your manuscript to someone who is unfamiliar with what you are writing is one technique to ensure that your work is clear. If the material is understandable to the reader, it is most likely clear.

### **Conciseness**

Professionals on the go are impatient and want brevity. No one wants to sift through dense text in order to get to the point.

### **Conversational Prose with Smooth Flow**

Any text should have a conversational and natural tone. Reading your text aloud and modifying until you can read it without hesitation is the greatest approach to generate good flow. In statements that are not difficult or confusing, use straightforward, plain language. Make sure your punctuation does not obstruct your reader's understanding by include superfluous pauses or avoiding pauses that will enhance comprehension.

When appropriate, utilise contractions to make your language more conversational. Use they'll instead of they'll. You can also use and or but to start your sentences, which many English professors taught as an unbreakable law. Beginning a phrase with a conjunction may sometimes provide text just the perfect pace to achieve that much-desired conversational feel.

### **Correctness**

Both the writer and the organisation seem sloppy and uninformed when they use poor language and misuse terms.

### **Parallelism**

Parallelism, or parallel organisation, is a method used frequently in good writing. Parallelism is instinctively used by writers because it appeals to our inherent yearning for symmetry. "Use XX for faster action, less stomach trouble, and more for your money." Parallelism pairs nouns with nouns, verbs with verbs, and phrases with phrases. Parallelism is expected in lists with two or three items, as well as in bulleted and enumerated lists. When it comes to writing in the business, knowing how to use parallel wording appropriately is crucial.

Correct: Every morning, she makes her bed, eats breakfast, and feeds the cat.

Incorrect: Every morning, she makes her bed, eating breakfast, and feeds the cat.

Correct: I will not prepare assignment, nor will I attend meeting.

Incorrect: I will not be preparing assignment, nor attend meeting.

### **Positive Voice**

Positive voice uses affirmative words to make a point.

For example, instead of saying, "We are out of orange shirts," we would emphasize the positive and say, "Order any size of our blue and gray shirts."

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Avoid downbeat words or words that can convey a negative connotation and rephrase in a positive way. Instead of, "No assignments will be awarded after April 29," say, "Assignments will be awarded through April 29."

### Reliance on Strong Nouns and Verbs

Good writing spares adverbs and adjectives for special circumstances and relies on nouns and verbs to perform the heavy lifting.

"Our beautiful lights will sparkle their way into your family's memories," instead of "Our beautifulcoloured, glittering lights will be reminders of the happiest, most unforgettable days you and your family will ever experience."

"Our auto insurance are competitive," replace with "Our auto plans outperform the competition's." Avoid utilising the English language's most dull and overused verb: to be. Examine your writing for misuse of the words is, are, were, and was, and see if you can replace them with a stronger, more precise verb. We can't completely eliminate adverbs, adjectives, or the verb to be, but we can be more conscious of how frequently we use them.

### Sentence Variety

There are two factors to sentence diversity in conversational prose. The first is the start of sentences. Examine the beginnings of your sentences as you edit. Start with three in a row. The? Do two sentences in two paragraphs start with the same word? Are there any? Avoid using the same word or phrase to begin each sentence. The second technique to achieve sentence variation is to change the length of the sentences. Prose becomes annoyingly staccato when sentences are short and choppy. Short, medium, and longer sentences are used to create natural-sounding language.

Examining how the periods line up is one approach to determine the length of your sentence. If you observe a vertical or slanted line of periods, some of the sentence lengths need to be changed. This can be done in a variety of ways. By embedding the gist of one statement into another, you may connect two sentences with similar meaning. To make a complicated sentence, combine two sentences using a coordinate conjunction. Alternatively, try a different sentence beginning, such as an opening phrase, to give variation to your sentences.

### Simple Words

Jargon should be avoided. Always select the shorter, more familiar term over the lengthier, more spectacular one. Say a cold instead of rhinovirus. Instead of sending an electronic message, use e-mail. In the battle of use vs. use, usage comes out on top! (Notice how the amount of words your reader needs to wade through decreases as the words become easier.)

### Shorter Paragraphs

Long paragraphs are fine for essays, but not for business papers. Readers are scared away by large blocks of text. The largest paragraph should be six to eight lines in length. Always be conscious of how a paragraph appears on a paper (or on a computer) and be considerate of your reader – don't make them dig through dense text.

### Style: Formal versus Informal

Writers must adapt different writing style (also known as voice or tone) to the work at hand. As previously said, we strive for a natural approach in professional writing. However, we must be even more particular about the design we select on occasion.

The audience and purpose of the paper determine whether an informal or formal writing style should be used. There is no easy way to know whether to employ each style; an e-mail may demand formality at times. E-mails, on the other hand, are usually casual. Understand that casual writing helps the writer and reader to connect on a more personal level, which will help you decide which style is best for you. It has the ability to communicate warmth. On the other hand, formal writing gives the idea of objectivity. Formal and informal writing styles

|                    | Formal Style            | Informal Style   |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Types of documents | Letters<br>Long reports | Most communication within the organization including e-mail, IM, memos, text |

|                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
|                 | Research<br>Proposals   | messages Routine messages to<br>outside audiences Informal<br>reports  |
| Characteristics | No personal pronouns (I, we)<br>No contractions<br>Objective voice or use of<br>passive voice<br>No figurative language or<br>clichés<br>No editorializing<br>Limited use of adjectives<br>No exclamation points<br>Longer sentences<br>Some technical language | Use of personal pronouns Use<br>of contractions Shorter<br>sentences, easily recognizable<br>words Limited use of warm,<br>inoffensive humor |

### 12.3 Avoiding Wordiness

| Wordy phrase and example  | Solution  |
|---|---|
| Avoid beginning a sentence with<br>There are or It is.<br>There are four points that should be considered.<br>It is clear that cashmere is warmer       | Begin sentences with the true subject.<br>Consider these four points or Four points<br>should be considered.<br>Cashmere is clearly warmer.         |
| Avoid beginning sentences with That or This.<br>Choosing teams should be done carefully. This<br>is because a good mix will generate better<br>results. | Connect to previous sentence.<br>Choosing teams should be done carefully<br>because a good mix will generate better results.                        |
| Use active voice rather than passive.<br>Rain forests are being destroyed by<br>uncontrolled logging.   | Passive voice depletes prose of vitality and can<br>almost always be rewritten in active voice.<br>Uncontrolled logging is destroying rain forests. |
| Omit that or which whenever possible.<br>The water heater that you install will last 15-20<br>years.  | Unless that or which is required for clarity, omit<br>it.<br>The water heater you install will last 15-20<br>years.                                 |
| Avoid prepositional phrase modifiers.<br>The committee of financial leaders meets every<br>Tuesday  | Avoid prepositional phrase modifiers.<br>The committee of financial leaders meets every<br>Tuesday  |
| Avoid be verbs.<br>New Orleans is one of the most vibrant cities in<br>the United States.   | Replace with a strong verb.<br>New Orleans vibrates with activity like no other<br>U.S. city.   |
| Tighten closely related sentences of explanation.<br>When hanging wallpaper, three factors need to<br>be considered. The factors are X, X, and X        | Join closely related sentences of explanation<br>with a colon to avoid repetitions.<br>When hanging wallpaper, consider three                       |

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|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | factors: X, X, and X  |
| Tighten closely related sentences.<br>MRIs are used to diagnose many ailments. MRIs create an image of organs and soft tissues to diagnose | Omit repetitious phrasing in second sentence.<br>MRIs diagnose many ailments by creating images of organs and soft tissues. |
| Tighten verb phrases with auxiliary + ing verbs<br>Management was holding a staff meeting.   | Replace is/are/was/were/have + verb with a one-word verb.<br>Management held a staff meeting.                               |
| Avoid using there is/are within a sentence.<br>When creating a mail list, there are many pitfalls.   | Find an active verb to replace there is/are.<br>When creating a mail list, many pitfalls exist                              |
| Remove redundancies.<br>An anonymous stranger may be dangerous.  | Know the true meaning of a word.<br>Strangers may be dangerous  |

### **12.4 Editing and Proofreading Checklist**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Check your draft for the following</b>  |
| Document content is tailored to meet the needs of the audience and attains writing purpose . |
| Copy is edited for conciseness.  |
| Body paragraphs have unity and cohesion and are shortened for visual appeal.                 |
| Transitions in and between paragraphs adequately link ideas.                                 |
| Grammar is correct Punctuation is used correctly.  |
| Copy has good rhythm and flow; uses a natural and conversational tone.                       |
| Sentences show variety in beginning and length.  |
| Names are spelled correctly; phone numbers and URLs are accurate.                            |
| Words are used correctly.  |
| Capitalization is consistent and adheres to specific stylebook guidelines.                   |
| Document adheres to specific genre formatting guidelines.                                    |
| Document shows professionalism.  |

### **Summary**

- Writing well on the job is key to career success. By breaking down writing into stages called the writing process, your end product is more likely to accomplish its ultimate purpose.
- When composing on the job, effective writers integrate many elements that will distinguish their work as professional, well-edited, and clear.

- Whether you choose hard copy or digital, use writing tools including a dictionary, thesaurus, and grammar guide to create professional documents.
- Doing so will help you excel in the workplace

### **Keywords**

- Anxious- feeling or showing worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome.
- Imperative- an essential or urgent thing.
- Persuade- induce (someone) to do something through reasoning or argument.
- Stimulate- raise levels of physiological or nervous activity in (the body or any biological system).
- Infringement-the action of breaking the terms of a law, agreement, etc.; violation.
- Egregious- conspicuously bad

### **SelfAssessment**

1. Writing, like any acquired skill, requires patience and.....
  - A. Persistence
  - B. Composing
  - C. Flow
  - D. Proposal
2. One must consider writing as a .....rather than simple putting it into words.
  - A. Hectic task
  - B. Process
  - C. Thought
  - D. Composition
3. It is crucial to define audience and.....of writing
  - A. Spectators
  - B. Surroundings
  - C. Purpose
  - D. Situation
4. If the audience is mixed, then writer may make different .....than they do for a homogeneous group.
  - A. language choices
  - B. word choices
  - C. both of the above
  - D. none of the above
5. A .....by definition is not final.
  - A. Process
  - B. Writing
  - C. Draft
  - D. Sections
6. If you cannot think of the precise word you need, leave a blank and return later to fill it in.
  - A. True
  - B. False

---

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7. Even if you .....through rewording, you should still cite the source to avoid plagiarizing.
- A. Paraphrase
  - B. Rewrite
  - C. Write
  - D. Imitate
8. ....is a multi stepped process and begins by looking at the overall effectiveness of the piece.
- A. Assessing
  - B. Writing
  - C. Editing
  - D. Printing
9. It is good idea to use .....words for smooth ride of sentences.
- A. Transitional
  - B. Vocabulary
  - C. Difficult
  - D. Rare
10. The final element of the editing portion of the writing process is.....
- A. Publishing
  - B. Proofreading
  - C. Analyzing
  - D. Finalizing
11. Proper use of ..... makes a huge difference in a document's readability.
- A. Punctuation marks
  - B. Lexical resources
  - C. Difficult words
  - D. Proofreading
12. ....show a carelessness that few professionals or organizations can afford in a competitive, global marketplace.
- A. Accuracies
  - B. Inaccuracies
  - C. Attention
  - D. Anxiety
13. Writers use .....instinctually because it appeals to our natural desire for symmetry.
- A. Cohesiveness
  - B. Parallelism
  - C. Dangling modifier
  - D. Personal pronouns
14. Avoid downbeat words or words than can convey a .....and rephrase in a positive.
- A. Positive thought
  - B. Certain thought
  - C. negative connotation
  - D. none of these
15. Once draft is prepared writer needs to check.....
- A. Punctuation
  - B. Transition words
  - C. Formatting

D. All of the above

### **Answers for Self Assessment**

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A  | 2. B  | 3. C  | 4. C  | 5. C  |
| 6. A  | 7. A  | 8. C  | 9. A  | 10. B |
| 11. A | 12. B | 13. B | 14. C | 15. D |

### **Review Questions**

1. It's important to assess your readers before you start writing. Comment.
2. Why draft plays crucial role in writing?
3. What kind of transitional words can be used in writing?
4. What are egregious errors and how it can be eliminated in writing?
5. Discuss different characteristics of Writing.



### **Further Readings**

1. The Many Reasons Why Writing Is Important for Everyone (srcxp.com)
2. The Importance of Professional Writing | The College People
3. The Importance of Writing in the Workplace (oregonstate.edu)
4. How to Brush Up your Writing Skills Now - SEO Content India
5. Cohesion Strategies: Transitional Words and Phrases (thoughtco.com)

## Unit 13: Writing

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### Objectives

After this unit students will be able to

- Identify strategies for successful writing.
- Demonstrate comprehensive writing skills.
- State the meaning and importance of paragraph
- Know the methods of constructing paragraph précis and Essay
- Describe different types of paragraphs
- Identify the features of précis

### Introduction

It's difficult to write well. Even professionals who write for a living have trouble getting their ideas down on paper. Even those who adore writing in general have days when they would rather do something else. Writing assignments may be difficult or even terrifying for persons who dislike writing or do not consider themselves to be competent writers. Of all, you can't get through college without writing – often a lot, and frequently at a higher level than you're used to. There is no secret technique that will make writing simple and quick. You may, however, employ tactics and tools to make managing writing tasks easier.

Managers have to write long reports as well as small paragraphs. Most often than not, the people they are addressing, do not have enough time to read what is presented to them. For this purpose, a manager should always be proficient in writing small paragraphs as well as précis for longer paragraphs. This develops and showcases their analytical and presentation abilities. At the same time, makes the work very easy. This section provides a high-level summary of the tactics and resources available.

### 13.1 Using the Writing Process

To complete a writing project successfully, good writers use some variation of the following process.

- Planning ahead of time. The writer creates ideas for writing and begins to refine these thoughts in this phase.
- Outlining a concept structure. The writer identifies the writing's overarching organisational framework and produces an outline to group ideas in this phase. This stage usually entails some further development of the concepts created in the previous step.
- Creating a first copy. The writer employs the work accomplished in prewriting to create a first draught in this phase. The draught incorporates the writer's brainstorming thoughts and adheres to the first step's organizational strategy.
- Making changes. The writer returns to the manuscript in this phase to examine and, if required, revise its content. This stage entails moderate to large adjustments, such as adding or removing a paragraph, rephrasing the primary argument, elaborating on a key concept, structuring information, and so on.
- Editing. The writer goes over the document again in this phase to make any necessary modifications. Making adjustments to enhance style and adherence to normal writing rules, such as replacing an ambiguous phrase with a more specific one or correcting grammatical and spelling problems, is what editing entails. When this step is accomplished, the work is complete and ready to be shared with others.

## **13.2 Paragraph Writing**

A paragraph is a collection of sentences written in order to make sense over a given topic. A paragraph should present the information as objectively as possible. The start of a paragraph is indicated by beginning on a new line. Sometimes the first line is indented; sometimes it is indented without beginning a new line.

### **Parts of a Paragraph**

A paragraph has primarily three parts. They are listed as under:

1. Topic sentence
2. Supporting details
3. Closing sentence Let us understand them one by one.

1. The topic sentence: The first sentence in a paragraph is the topic sentence. It introduces the paragraph's primary theme. You should summarize the key point of your paragraph to frame the topic phrase. Give the reader an idea of what your paragraph will be about.

2. Supporting details: The body of a paragraph is made up of supporting information that appears after the main sentence. They provide information to build and reinforce the paragraph's core concept. You should include evidence in the form of facts, descriptions, and instances.

3. The closing sentence: The last sentence in a paragraph is the closing sentence. It reiterates the essential point of employing various terminologies.

### **Types of Paragraphs**

**Descriptive paragraph:** In a descriptive paragraph, you describe the characteristics of a person, location, or item. You could mention the location of a location on occasion. When writing a definition paragraph, you clarify what something or a concept is.

**Explanatory paragraph:** You must describe how or why something occurs in an explanatory paragraph. You will be required to investigate the causes and consequences of various events in social studies class on a regular basis.

**Evaluative paragraph:** You make judgments about individuals, ideas, and prospective actions in an evaluative paragraph. You must base your assessment on a set of criteria that you create. You will give your opinion or recommendation in the paragraph and then back it up with your criteria.

**Classifying Paragraph:**-When writing a categorising paragraph, you organise items or thoughts into distinct categories.

**Comparative and Contrasting:** You write about the similarities and differences between two or more persons, places, objects, or ideas in a comparative and contrasting paragraph.

A sequencing paragraph is one in which you write to explain a sequence of events or a process in some form of order. Typically, this sequence is determined by the passage of time.

**Choice Paragraph** - In a choice paragraph, you must decide the item, thought, or action you like. You will be asked to provide your opinion on a variety of acts or occurrences on a regular basis.

### ***Developing a Topic Sentence***

Read the opening sentence of any article in any newspaper or magazine. Are you reasonably certain that you understand the remainder of the article? If that's the case, you've most likely read the topic sentence. A good subject sentence combines a key theme with the author's personal perspective or attitude. It assists to orient the reader and to give a hint as to what will happen next in the paragraph. Consider the following scenario.



Example: Creating nation wide standards for Science and English education will improve student learning in many parts of the country.

This subject sentence declares that standardizing science and English instruction is a good idea. A reader could fairly expect the writer to give supporting data and facts as to why standardized science and English instruction could boost student learning in many states after reading this line. The topic phrase is deceptive if the goal of the essay is to examine education in a single state or to discuss science or English instruction in particular.

Let's look at another example



Example: Topic sentence: There are numerous advantages to owning a hybrid vehicle.

### **Characteristics of a Good Topic Sentence**

1. A topic sentence gives a clear indicator of what the body of the paragraph will be about.
2. A good topic sentence includes a topic as well as a dominating concept or viewpoint.
3. A topic sentence needs to be simple and straightforward.
4. Supporting elements are not included in a good topic sentence.
5. Using fascinating terminology, a good topic sentence fascinates the reader.

### **Supporting details**

What kind of supporting sentence you choose will be determined by what you're writing and why you're writing it. If you're trying to persuade your audience to accept a certain perspective, for example, facts, figures, and concrete examples should be used instead of personal ideas. Consider the following scenario:



Example: There are numerous advantages to owning a hybrid vehicle. (Topic sentence)

First of all, they get 25 to 35 percent more miles per gallon than a gasoline-powered vehicle.

Second, they emit extremely little emissions when travelling at modest speeds in cities. (Supporting sentence 1: statistic) (Supporting phrase number two: fact)

Hybrid automobiles lessen reliance on fossil fuels by not requiring gasoline, resulting in cheaper gas costs. (Supporting sentence 3: justification)

Tisha purchased a hybrid automobile two years ago and has been blown away by its performance. (Example 4: supporting statement)

"It's the cheapest automobile I've ever had," she stated. "Compared to prior gas-powered automobiles I've had, the operating expenses are far reduced." (Quotation in supporting phrase5)

## Concluding Sentences

A strong conclusion sentence ties together all of the points you've made in your paragraph. It serves as a gentle reminder to readers of the primary point – the topic sentence – without repeating it verbatim.



Example: Topic sentence: Having a hybrid vehicle has various advantages.

Concluding sentence: Finally, given the cheap operating expenses and environmental benefits of owning a hybrid automobile, many more individuals are expected to follow Tisha's lead in the near future.

Without using the exact same words, the final statement reiterates the concept that having a hybrid is advantageous. It also covers two of the benefits discussed in the accompanying sentences: low operating costs and environmental advantages.

In your final statement, you should avoid adding any new concepts. The purpose of a conclusion is to give the reader a sense of completion. The reader will be confused and your writing will be weak if you introduce a subject that is not discussed in the paragraph.

A concluding sentence may do any of the following:

- Restate the main idea. Example: Childhood obesity is a growing problem in Australia.
- Summarize the key points in the paragraph. Example: Childhood obesity is caused by a variety of reasons, including a lack of good food options, bad parenting, and a video game addiction.
- Draw a conclusion based on the information in the paragraph. Example: These figures (can quote figures) show that unless anything is done, childhood obesity rates will continue to grow.
- Make a prediction, suggestion, or recommendation about the information in the paragraph. Example: According to this study, more than 60% of youngsters in Australia will be obsessed by 2030 unless we take preventative measures.
- Offer an additional observation about the controlling idea. Example: Obesity in children is a completely avoidable tragedy.

**Transitions:** -A well-written paragraph flows smoothly from the main sentence through the supporting sentences and finally to the conclusion sentence. Transitional words and phrases are used to assist arrange a paragraph and ensure that ideas flow logically from one to the next. A transition<sup>16</sup> is a term that expresses the relationship between two or more ideas.



Example: Take another look at the earlier example:

The benefits of having a hybrid vehicle are numerous. To begin with, they get 20 percent to 35 percent more miles per gallon than a gas-powered vehicle. Second, they emit extremely few pollutants when travelling in cities at modest speeds. Moreover, Hybrid automobiles lessen reliance on fossil fuels by not requiring gasoline, resulting in cheaper gas costs. Tisha purchased a hybrid automobile two years ago and has been blown away by its performance. She said, "It's the cheapest automobile I've ever had." "Compared to prior gas-powered automobiles I've had, the operating expenses are far reduced." Given the low operating expenses and environmental benefits of owning

a hybrid automobile, many more individuals are expected to follow Tisha's lead in the not-too-distant future.

Words such as to begin with are transition words that show sequence or clarify order. They help organize the writer's ideas by showing that he or she has another point to make in support of the topic sentence. Other transition words that show order include Second, Moreover. The transition word because is a transition word of consequence that continues a line of thought. It indicates that the writer will provide an explanation of a result. In this sentence, the writer explains why hybrid cars will reduce dependency on fossil fuels (because they do not require gas). Other transition words of consequence include as a result, so that, since, or for this reason.

### 13.3 Precis

A précis is a paragraph written as a short reconstruction. Thus it can be said to be a type of summarizing written in the writer's own words about a text source. A well-written précis should be a serviceable substitute for the original work. The goal is to preserve the core essence of the work in a manner that is both clear and concise. At a minimum, the précis should include the topic or main thesis, the purpose of the research, what was studied, what methods were used, what results (or insight) were gained, and a conclusion.

#### *Goals of a Précis*

1. Compress and clarify a lengthy passage, article, or book, while retaining important concepts, keywords, and important data.
2. Remove what is superfluous and retain the core essence of the work.
3. Give a brief description of key terms.
4. Give a brief description of methods - an idea of the general approach used by the researchers.
5. State the purpose of the research or piece of writing (why was it important to conduct this research or write on this topic?)

When finished, the précis should clearly state:

1. This is what was studied (argued, discussed).
2. This is how it was done (this was the focus).
3. This is what was learned.
4. This is what it means (why it is important)

#### **Features of a Précis**

Précis do not make any conclusions about the original, its audience, or anything related to the text. It must provide the reader an accurate, but brief, map of the original. What the writer thinks about the source text or the topic of the text is not relevant when writing a précis. Précis usually:

1. The précis keeps the original proportion.
2. The precis is readable, not a series of notes. Therefore, appropriate transitions must be incorporated.
3. The precis adds nothing of your own-no comments or interpretations at all.
4. The purpose is to condense the original, not to explain it.
5. As long as possible précis is written in past tense.
6. The précis have subheadings which are underlined or in italics

To write an effective précis, you must identify yourself with the author. This technique requires careful reading and thoughtful selection of words. Follow the steps below to accomplish this task:

1. Read the selection for meaning to ascertain the author's intended message.

2. Read the selection another time to discern the author's tone or attitude. Become the author; see through his eyes. Once you know the author's tone, be it aggressive, detached, or sympathetic, you are better equipped to represent this writing.
3. Introduce the title of the selection and the author's name in the first sentence of your précis
4. Use your own language in the précis. Certainly, words or even phrases from the original will crop up in your précis, but do not reproduce entire sentences. Carefully chosen synonyms should replace the author's wording whenever possible. By incorporating effective transitions, sentence combining, and sentence variety facilitate the task of writing a concise yet interesting précis.
5. Write your précis in third-person, even if the original is written in first- or second-person. You should also eliminate any BE verbs or grammatical errors and "Do's and Don'ts List" errors.
6. Preserve the author's organization, keeping the main points in the same order as the original. Keep the same sense of proportion as the original; for example, do not write one-third of your précis over one-tenth of the original.
7. Avoid use of phrases such as "in this article", "throughout history" or other clichés (big, good, bad, little, a lot)
8. Do not use contractions.



Example:-Being a good employee is essential in today's world, especially in these tough economic times when there are many seeking work. Consequently, it is important to keep in mind that no employee is irreplaceable. While hearing many complain these days about his or her job, one just needs to look around and be thankful that they have the means in which to survive and are able to work. There are many who are not only unemployed, but also unable to perform due to illness or a disability. Sometimes when a person is feeling in a mood to complain, they may need to sit back, relax and take a look around in order to appreciate what they have, and learn how to be a good employee. (125 words)

Precis:-In tough economic times, it is important to keep in mind that no employee is irreplaceable. While hearing many complain about their job, one just needs to look around and be thankful. There are many who are not only unemployed, but also unable to perform due to illness or a disability. (51 words)

### 13.4 Essay Writing

An essay is a short piece of writing that develops a point in a clear, welldeveloped manner. You might want to describe how exotic you found Thailand, what you enjoyed about the book you read, or why one computer is better than another. Whatever the point you want to make, you want logically and clearly lead your reader to understand your point.

#### *Parts of an Essay*

No matter which method of development you choose, every essay has five parts, each with a specific function in the essay:

The title gets the readers' attention and gives a clue as to what the essay will be about.

The introductory paragraph grabs the readers' interest and sets up your subject.

The thesis statement contains the subject of the essay and the controlling idea (what you plan to say about that subject) and is usually the last sentence in the introductory paragraph.

The developmental paragraphs develop the points of your essay. Each starts with a topic sentence that sets up the point to be developed in that paragraph.

The conclusion reinforces or summarizes your point in a final paragraph.

What You Need to Do In order to develop and write a top-notch essay you should include all of the following steps. Depending on the time you have to write – briefly in class or at length at home – some steps may be combined or abbreviated. On some level, however, it's important to complete each of them. Once you have been assigned or have chosen your prompt – the general subject of your essay – you will:

Step 1: Narrow your focus and determine your thesis statement

Step 2: Choose your method of development

Step 3: Develop your outline

Step 4: Write your first draft

Step 5: Prepare for your final draft

Step 6: Revise and finalize your essay

Step 7: Proofread your essay

Just like a topic sentence summarizes a single paragraph, the thesis statement summarizes an entire essay. It tells the reader the point you want to make in your essay, while the essay itself supports that point. It is like a signpost that signals the essay's destination. You should form your thesis before you begin to organize an essay, but you may find that it needs revision as the essay develops.

### *Elements of a Thesis Statement*

You must focus on a key theme in each essay you write. This concept originates from a topic you choose or were assigned, as well as a question posed by your teacher. It is insufficient to just discuss a broad topic or to respond to a question with a yes or no. You must first establish a precise opinion, which you must then express into a governing idea—the core notion on which your thesis is based. Remember that what a thesis is your perspective of the issue or subject, not the topic itself. "What do I want to say about it?" you must ask yourself for any topic your lecturer assigns. To develop a concise, strong, and confident argument, you must first ask and then answer this question. A thesis statement is a single sentence that occurs at the conclusion of your introduction. It's focused on one to three key elements of a single concept—things that may be conveyed using the body. It foreshadows the essay's subject and proposes how you'll organise your data. Keep in mind that a thesis statement does not summarise but rather dissects a subject.

### **A strong thesis statement contains the following qualities.**

**Specificity.** A thesis statement should focus on a single aspect of a larger issue. As you may know, the process of writing a thesis statement begins with the selection of a broad topic, which is subsequently narrowed down until a single feature of that topic is identified. For example, health care is a vast issue, but a good thesis statement might focus on a single aspect of it, such as possibilities for those who don't have health insurance.

**Precision.** A good thesis statement should be detailed enough to allow for a logical argument and keep the reader's attention on the issue. If the issue is possibilities for those without health insurance, your thesis statement should make a particular argument about it, such as that those who are uninsured by their employment have restricted options. You must also specify what you will address in relation to these restricted impacts, such as who they affect and what causes them.

**Ability to be argued.** A relevant and particular argument must be presented in a thesis statement. A true assertion is frequently not seen as debatable. Make sure your thesis statement includes a stance that can be backed up with proof.

**Ability to be demonstrated.** You must be able to back up each assertion you make in your thesis with evidence and arguments. You can achieve this by relying on own observations or consulting outside sources to prove that what you're saying is true. A strong argument is one that is supported by examples and specifics.

**Forcefulness.** A strong thesis statement demonstrates to readers that you are making an argument. The tone is strong, and it takes a position that others may disagree with.

**Confidence.** You must utilise confidence in your assertion in addition to force in your thesis statement. Phrases like "I feel" and "I believe" really erode the reader's faith in you because they indicate that you are the only one who feels the way you do. To put it another way, your position is unsupported. Taking a strong stance on the subject will encourage your readers to trust your reasoning and listen to what you have to say.

### ***Identify the Characteristics of Good Primary Support(Supporting details)***

In order to fulfill the requirements of good primary support, the information you choose must meet the following standards:

- Be specific. The primary statements you make regarding your thesis, as well as the examples you utilise to support them, must be precise. To give proof and to expand on your broad concepts, use

particular instances. These examples give your reader something specific to concentrate on, and if utilised correctly, they leave little question about your assertion. While general examples communicate the required information, they are not nearly as captivating or valuable in writing due to their obviousness and commonality.

- Be relevant to the thesis. As primary support is closely related to the thesis, it is deemed strong. Without digging into extraneous details, primary support should demonstrate, explain, or prove your major argument. When confronted with a large amount of data that may be utilised to support your thesis, you may believe that you must include it all in your body paragraphs. Effective writers, on the other hand, resist the urge to stray from the task at hand. Make sure your examples are relevant to your argument by selecting them carefully.
- Be detailed. Keep in mind that, while your thesis should be specific, it should not be overly comprehensive. The body paragraphs are where you create the debate that a comprehensive essay necessitates. Using extensive support informs readers that you've thought about all the facts and selected only the most relevant data to support your point of view.

### *General format for writing an Essay*

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

Primary supporting point 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting details: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary supporting point 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting details: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary supporting point 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting details: \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_

### Summary

- Timed writing assignments, such as essay tests, are likewise covered by the writing process. Before you begin writing, carefully read the question and consider the most important topics to add in your response. Create a very simple outline on scratch paper. As you compose your response, keep an eye on the clock to ensure that you have enough time to examine it and make any necessary changes before submitting your test.
- An excellent paragraph has three parts: a subject sentence, a body sentence, and a conclusion sentence.
- The topic sentence reflects the paragraph's major concept as well as the writer's attitude or view on the subject. Good topic sentences contain both a main idea and a controlling idea, are clear and easy to follow, use engaging vocabulary, and provide an accurate indication of what will follow in the rest of the paragraph.
- A paragraph's topic sentences might be put at the beginning, middle, or end. The topic phrase appears at the start of each paragraph in most academic writings.
- Supporting sentences include facts, reasoning, figures, quotes, or examples to assist explain, prove, or enrich the main phrase.
- Concluding phrases summarise a paragraph's essential elements and restate the core concept without repeating it word for word.
- Transitional words and phrases help arrange and demonstrate how concepts in a paragraph relate to one another.

### Keywords

- Terrifying- causing extreme fear

- Framework- a basic structure underlying a system, concept, or text.
- Brainstorming- a moment in which one is suddenly unable to think clearly or act sensibly.
- Manuscript- a book, document, or piece of music written by hand rather than typed or printed.
- Entails- involve (something) as a necessary or inevitable part or consequence.
- Ambiguous- not cleared
- Indented- divided or edged with a zigzag line.
- Reiterates- say something again or a number of times, typically for emphasis or clarity.
- Hybrid- a thing made by combining two different elements.
- Core- the part of something that is central to its existence or character
- Insights- an accurate and deep understanding.
- Superfluous- unnecessary, especially through being more than enough.
- Interpreters- a person who interprets, especially one who translates speech orally or into sign language.
- Detached- separate or disconnected.
- Aggressive- ready or likely to attack or confront; characterized by or resulting from aggression
- Sympathetic- feeling, showing, or expressing sympathy.
- Thesis- a statement or theory that is put forward as a premise to be maintained or proved.
- Confronted- face up to and deal with (a problem or difficulty).
- Extraneous- separate from the object to which it is attached
- Extensive- large in amount or scale.

### SelfAssessment

- 1) What is the first sentence of a paragraph called?
  - A. The introduction sentence
  - B. The topic sentence
  - C. The first sentence
  - D. The basic sentence
  
- 2) A paragraph should cover \_\_\_\_\_ topics.
  - A. two
  - B. one
  - C. three
  - D. five
  
- 3) The final sentence in a paragraph is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. conclusion sentence
  - B. topic sentence
  - C. supporting details
  - D. facts and figures
  
- 4) The sentences that tell more about the topic are called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. concluding sentences
  - B. topic sentences
  - C. supporting details

D. Detail sentences

5) what is a paragraph?

- A. a group of sentences that talks about the main idea of a text
- B. a group of sentences that explain the concluding sentence
- C. a group of sentences about one idea
- D. a group of sentences that describes different opinions

6) What is the best paraphrase of the following sentence?

Canada is the largest country in North America and Nevis is the smallest.

- A. The biggest country in North America is Canada, while the tiniest is Nevis.
- B. Canada and Nevis is the largest and smallest countries in America.
- C. The largest country is Canada and the smallest country is Nevis, and they are both countries in North America.
- D. None of these

7) Choose the sentence that BEST paraphrases this sentence:

A high school student usually has summer reading assignments.

- A. A high school student always has homework assignments in the summer.
- B. It is common for students in high school to have summer reading assignments.
- C. Usually school aged students have summer reading assignments.
- D. Most summer school students have high school reading to do.

8) What is a précis

- A. It is a shorter way to explain a text
- B. tells an opinion
- C. makes an educated guess
- D. is a shorter way to explain a text with important information or key points

9) What are the first steps in writing an essay?

- A. Close Reading for evidence
- B. Proofreading the passages
- C. Citing Evidence in your paragraphs
- D. Writing a rough draft

10) Which type of paragraph contains cited evidence?

- A. Body
- B. Beginning
- C. Conclusion
- D. Resolution

11) When citing evidence you must \_\_\_\_\_

- A. Credit or name the source
- B. Summarize ideas
- C. Copy exact words
- D. Retell in your own words

12) Which transition signals the conclusion?

- A. In addition
- B. Similarly
- C. For example
- D. As you can see

13) Which transition signals contrast?

- A. furthermore
- B. for instance
- C. as a result
- D. however

14) A strong .....demonstrates to readers that you are making an argument. The tone is strong, and it takes a position that others may disagree with.

- A. Introduction statement
- B. Supporting evidence
- C. thesis statement
- D. conclusion

15) The last sentence in a paragraph is the closing sentence. It reiterates the .....point of employing various terminologies.

- A. Essential
- B. Non-essential
- C. Main
- D. Supporting

### Answers forSelfAssessment

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. B  | 2. B  | 3. A  | 4. C  | 5. C  |
| 6. A  | 7. B  | 8. D  | 9. D  | 10. A |
| 11. A | 12. D | 13. D | 14. C | 15. A |

### Review Questions

1. Write a paragraph on 'achievement which you are most proud and explain why'?
2. Write a precis of the following:

The use of leaded gasoline in vehicles designed for unleaded can increase tailpipe emissions 200 to 800 percent, the EPA has determined. More than one million tons of hydrocarbons and 12 million tons of carbon monoxide were spewed from the tailpipes of cars with defective emission control systems during fiscal year 1983. Studies show that most people who engage in fuel switching do so to save money- -about seven cents a gallon; however, these people are victims of faulty economics, according to Joe Cannon,

EPA's assistant administrator for Air and Radiation. "In the long run, the use of leaded gas in the car will more quickly foul the spark plugs, wear out the exhaust system, degrade the oil, and foul the oxygen sensor in new cars, in addition to ruining the catalytic converter," he said. Cannon estimated that people who substitute leaded for unleaded gasoline will end up paying twelve cents a gallon in extra maintenance and repairs. (From "Autos and Air")

3. Explain different parts of a paragraph along with examples.
4. Paragraphs are of different types. Comment.
5. How Topic sentence can be developed?
6. Why transitions are important in Writing?
7. Write an essay on 'Importance of digital media in Business.'



### **Further Readings**

1. 99+ Paragraph Writing Topics, Format, Examples & Samples ([upsclubbuddy.com](https://www.upsclubbuddy.com))
2. Paragraph Writing Guide: Type of Paragraphs, Format to Write a Paragraph, How to Write a Great Paragraph? List of Paragraph Writing Topics with Examples - A Plus Topper
3. Precis-writing ([englishgrammar.org](https://www.englishgrammar.org))
4. What is Precis Writing | Precis Writing Tips | Sample Precis Writing ([hitbullseye.com](https://www.hitbullseye.com))
5. Precis Writing Format, Rules, Examples, Worksheet PDF - Leverage Edu
6. Essay Writing: How to Write an Outstanding Essay | Grammarly Blog
7. Essay: Introduction, Types of Essays, Tips for Essay Writing, Questions ([toppr.com](https://www.toppr.com))

## Unit 14: Business Correspondence

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### Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- State the characteristics of business correspondence
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of business correspondence
- Discuss the guidelines for writing general and business correspondence
- Know the basic format of a business letter, memo, report and proposal

### Introduction

A famous English writer Francis Bacon said, "Reading maketh a full man, writing an exact man, conference a ready man." In order to make himself 'exact' i.e., to say effectively what he wants to say, the writer has to make considerable effort.

While speech comes to us naturally and spontaneously, writing comes after serious practice and careful organization of thought. The word 'write' has been derived from the old English word 'writan,' that means to scratch, draw or inscribe. It shows that man learnt writing through a long process of drawing, scoring and incising symbols on rock faces, dried skins, tree barks and clay tablets. The power of writing is eloquently expressed in the saying "pen is mightier than the sword".

Written communication has come to acquire great significance in the lives of individuals as well as business organizations. It reaches out across vast geographical areas and targets readers around the world. Most businesses rely on records and written documents, rather than on verbal contracts and oral commitments above. It is impossible to think of business or an organization without such correspondence today. There are various reasons for this, namely:

1. In the first place, in an organization, there are too many people to have face-to-face communication with. They are generally spread over wide geographical distances, and are sometimes not even connected by telephone. Though the situation is changing fast, even then, the exchange of letters remains an important component of communication.
2. People have to function with defined limits of authority and responsibility. In the absence of written communication, it becomes difficult to fix responsibility. This therefore is an essential part of any manager's responsibility to communicate on paper.

### **14.1 Characteristics of Business Correspondence**

Business conversation has following characteristics: z

- Most formal type of communication: Usually most of the informal, casual conversation or friendly conversation is done orally. Whenever there is need for formal communication, it is the written mode in business conversation that is preferred.
- Used for documentation: Business conversation is mostly used for documentation. In an organization, documentation of records and decisions made from time to time are very important for future conversations, as well as rules and guidelines.
- Used for circulation of information: This is used for circulation of information in the organization. Business conversation circulates information without distortions and misrepresentations.
- Conventional by nature: There are not many rules of grammar for oral communication, as there are for written communication. And business conversation most often than not is only written. Written communication is conventional in the sense that it has to follow definite pattern as per rules laid down by the language.
- Presence of both sender and receiver is not necessary at the same time: It is an important feature of written form of business conversation that the presence of just the sender or the receiver is sufficient at a given point in time, to continue the process of communication.
- A creative activity: Written form of business conversation is essentially a creative activity which requires conscious and creative effort. The creativity of this effort comes from the stimuli produced by the mind. The stimuli of oral communication are picked up from outside by sensory receptors. In other words, written communication is more specifically, more carefully thought out than oral communication that is based on spontaneous reaction to signs picked up from outside.

### **14.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Business Correspondence**

"Documentation of knowledge and experience facilitates institutionalization of individual wisdom."

- Ready reference: First and foremost, the various forms of business conversation esp. those in written form have the advantage of providing records, references, etc. In the absence of ready reference, great confusion may be created and the working of the organization will virtually come to a halt.
- Legal defence: Maintenance of proper records, letters, reports and memos build up legal defense of the organisation. An organization is like a living organism. And like any organism even an organisation is vulnerable to offence, both from within and outside. Organizations usually have their legal advisors who cannot be of any help unless proper records are made available to them.
- Promotes uniformity: It promotes uniformity in policy and procedure. It is the only means of laying down clear guidelines for the working of the organization.
- Mass access: Written business conversation gives access to a large audience through mass mailing. It is a common practice on the part of a well known organization to reach out to

people at large and win customers through wisely drafted 'mail shots' or unsolicited Circulars.

- Suitable for distance communication: Written form of business conversation is most suitable when the receivers are spread over vast geographical distances and oral communication is either not possible or will cause the message to lose its effectiveness.
- Image building: Business conversation builds up the organization's image. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that the outgoing letters/messages of certain well known companies are cited as examples to be emulated.
- Accurate and unambiguous: Business conversation in written form has the advantage of being accurate and unambiguous. Great care has to be taken in drafting any letter, memo or notice so that the message is effectively conveyed. Oral communication may often give rise to confusion because every speaker has his own way of putting himself across.
- Permanent in nature: Written form of business conversation is permanent. The growth of an organization is promoted, to a large extent, by reference to its old, well-maintained records and minutes of meetings.
- Facilitates in order to assign responsibility: Business correspondence facilitates proper assignation of responsibilities. One may sometimes go back on the spoken word, but not on words which have been, put on paper. Moreover, the lower staff behaves with more responsibility, and also feels secure, when communication is sent in writing. There is greater pursuance and seriousness attached to something that is "in writing".
- Permits substitution and revision: While spoken words cannot be taken back or erased, since they have to be instantaneously and thoughtfully planned out, the sender of a written message gets time to conceive the idea and formulate his message after due substitution and revision of his text.

#### **Disadvantages of written communication are as follows:**

- Limited to literate world: Written communication is limited to literate people, who have the capability to read and write. Though, in spite of literacy levels rising across the world, there still remains a great chunk of people who are still devoid of this skill.
- Time consuming: Unlike oral communication, written communication takes time to reach the target. Both encoding and transmission of the message take time, resulting in delays. It is, therefore, a time-consuming process. Postal delays cause a lot of time to be elapsed between despatch of written message and its receipt by the target.
- Lot of paper work: Written communication creates mountains of paper cluttered around the premises of an organization. It is a common sight in offices, and the staff has a tough time trying to handle it. Very often valuable papers get lost. Managers, therefore, have to be extra careful to keep sensitive or confidential material in their own custody.
- Needs expertise in expression: Written communication runs the risk of becoming ineffective in the hands of people otherwise good in their job, but poor in expression. That is why it is a serious concern of a modern organization to recruit people who are very good in expression, especially in letter and report-writing ability.
- Lack of immediate feedback: Written communication is mostly handicapped by its inability to get immediate feedback. The receiver of the message takes his time to understand and respond to the message.
- Costly: Written communication is a costly process in terms of stationery and the number of people involved in typing and sending out letters.
- More man hours needed: By the same logic, it is costly in terms of man-hours lost in taking dictation, typing, entering in the diary, dispatching etc., The same job can be done more efficiently and expeditiously by harnessing modern technology like video conferencing, computers and e-mails.
- No immediate clarification: Written communication has another disadvantage. If the receiver of a written message at a distance seeks some clarification, he cannot have it, as

quickly as he would like to. He will also have to write back and wait for the reply to his query. Immediate clarification is also not possible in exchange of written communication.

### 14.3 Writing a Memo

Memos (or memoranda) are documents written within organizations, although they are sometimes used as a format for short reports sent to a recipient outside of the organization. They can be as short as one page or much longer and are used in situations that require a permanent or formal record. Types of memos include short reports, proposals, or other informational correspondence. Sometimes memos are printed; other times, they are sent as an attachment to an e-mail. The writing strategy for routine memos is the same as that used in routine e-mails and letters. Begin with the purpose of the memo; use the body paragraphs to provide any details or explanations to support the main point; end with a forward looking closing that either summarizes the message.

Memos are generally written on stationery with the organization's name on top. Full letterhead is unnecessary when the memo is going to an internal audience. Under the company name, the word Memo or Memorandum is centered. On the left margin, use the guidewords

Date:,

To:,

From:,

Subject:.

Skip three lines and then begin the memo. Use graphical devices such as headings, bulleted or enumerated points, and white space to break up text and to guide your reader. If a memo is longer than one page, number the pages.

And of course, memos do not need to be signed, since the sender's name appears in the guidewords. However, you may write in your initials next to your name in the From line.



**Example**

#### MEMO

Date: September 9, 2017

To: Connexion Ltd. Staff

From: Gina Salerno, VP Communications

Subject: Social Media Guidelines We are all excited to begin our social media campaign and have great confidence your contributions will generate more interaction with our stakeholders. Please follow these guidelines whenever you contribute to Connexion's social media sites:

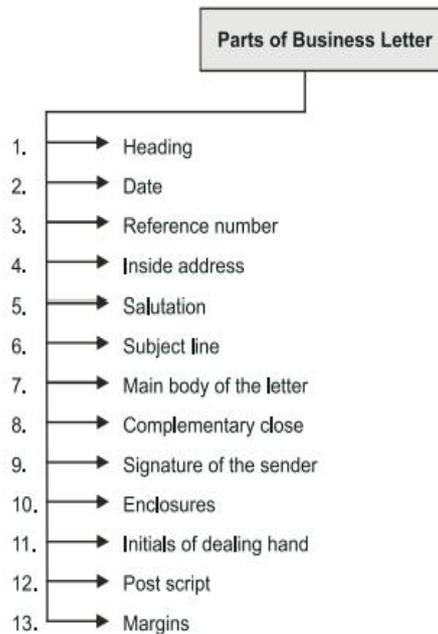
1. Identify yourself and your position at Connexion.
2. Write using a natural, respectful tone.
3. Use language your reader will grasp; avoid jargon.
4. Think carefully before posting; think through possible reactions and remember you are a representative of our organization.
5. Revise if you make an error.
6. Contribute thought-provoking, meaningful content. Following these guidelines will help assure that our social media campaign will bring the kind of results we have outlined. If you have any questions about posting or about content, contact me at 123456789.

### 14.4 Formal Letter Writing

A formal letter is distinguished by its distinct 'form' or format. Most formal letters aim at transferring a message to another person and make him/her do something in a particular way. The

message is however transferred in a style, layout and format that are fixed by convention for almost everyone who wants to write a letter of that sort. In order to write an effective formal letter, you must use a standard format which is very different from your informal letter formats. You should know that although the language and subject matter of every commercial letter written to parties and clients may differ, but the basic form and structure remains the same. A special feature of the business letter is that it must create an impression on the mind of receiver as from where and from whom the letter has come, in what subjects with it. This unit introduces you to the basic formal letter formats that will help you in drafting effective official letters.

#### The Basic Format of a Business Letter



**Salutation:** After writing inside address, salutation word is written below it. This is a word of respect to the receiver. In business correspondence, the words “Dear Sirs”, “Honorable Sir”, or “Honorable Madam” is used. After the salutation, semicolon is put.

**Subject heading:** Subject heading is the brief statement of the main body of the letter. For the convenience of the reader, subject heading is written. This helps the reader to understand the contents of the letter and the department to which it is related, at the first sight. This will enable to direct the letter to the person or department concerned without any delay and initiate action immediately. A few examples of subject heading are given below:

Subject: Enquiry of prices

Subject: Regarding damages of goods

Subject: Payment of outstanding money, etc.

**Body of the letter (contents):** This is the major part of the letter. The subject matter is explained in this part. This part should be written very carefully using simple language in very effective manner. All the facts should be stated in order of priority so that the reader could understand every point clearly. The body of the letter has mainly three parts:

1. **Introductory part or opening paragraph:** In case a reply is being sent against a letter just received, the introductory part gives that letter number and date (reference). If a reply to some earlier letter or letters is being sent, the reference of that letter is also made in the introductory part.

2. **Main body of the letter:** The main body of the letter states the subject matter in detail. Every point is explained in different paragraphs. It is written legibly using good words and phrases to attract the attention of the reader, so that he may act upon immediately on the letter.

3. **Conclusion or closing paragraph:** Concluding part is the third and final part of a letter. In this part the writer of the letter makes it clear cleverly what he expects from the other party.

The conclusion is usually expressed in any of the following ways:

- (a) I am confident that you will give me an opportunity to serve you better.
- (b) An early reply is much awaited.
- (c) Please oblige us by taking personal interest in executing our purchase order, etc.

Complementary close: The way in which a letter begins with saluting, in the same manner a letters closed with complementary close. Complementary close is written at the right hand side below the body of the letter. The words like, "Yours sincerely", "Yours faithfully" is quite a common term.



Example

2930 Shattuck Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
Ph: 5 1 0. 9 3 6. 4 9 0 0 fax: 5 1 0. 9 3 6. 4 9 1 0  
February 5, 2016  
Mr. Gary Berg,  
Assistant Director  
Holistic Healing 6643  
Byland Avenue,  
Suite 300 Oakland, CA 94602

Dear Mr. Berg:

Thank you for choosing AdWorks to represent Holistic Healing in its marketing and advertising efforts. We are confident our plans will effectively boost Holistic Healing's visibility in the booming alternative medicine arena.

Enclosed are two copies of the marketing representation agreement, which include the revised advertising and social media plan schedules we discussed on the phone today. Please sign both copies of the agreement and return them, along with the retainer mentioned in Section II, Point A, no later than February 10 so we can meet the aggressive deadlines we have set. We will return an executed copy to you as soon as we receive your signed agreements.

We look forward to working closely with you and the rest of the Holistic Healing team over the next year.

Sincerely,

Rich Gold  
Richard Gold,  
President AdWorks

## 14.5 Report Writing

Some reports aid the planning process; some come after it, reporting on progress or results. They cover events large and small – meetings, trips, competition, developments, good news, bad news. An intelligent appraisal of actual conditions is essential to progress. Report what is happening, and what you think should be done about it.

1. Make it clear why you're writing the report:-Every report is written for a purpose. A conference report, for example, has only one purpose: to record decisions taken at meetings. It does not restate arguments, offer opinions, or confer praise or blame. It records what was shown or discussed. What was decided (not why). What action is required and who will be responsible for it. When it is due. What money was authorized. It covers actions and decisions – nothing else. A competitive report covers competitive activity, a progress report covers progress, and so on. What is the purpose, and why should anybody care? Try to engage the reader's interest in the first sentence.

For example:-This reports on a management meeting at which a new salary policy was decided. The purpose of this report is to assess new competition – a product that could cut our sales in half.

2. Give your report a structure:-Whether you start with your recommendation or lay out the facts before you reveal it, make clear where you are going. Here is a structure that often works:

Purpose – why the reader should pay attention

Summary – no surprise endings

Findings – what facts can you marshal?

Conclusions – what patterns do you see?

Recommendations – what action do you propose?

Next steps – costs, timing, issues to be resolved

There is no need to parade all your information unless the reader needs every detail to understand your report. Put into the body of your report only those facts that are essential to your point.

3. State the facts fully and accurately:-An effective report states all the facts, unpleasant as well as pleasant. It never inflates their validity. If you only visited ten stores in two cities, don't refer to an "extensive store survey." Firsthand observations lead to better reports. Get out of the office and see for yourself what's going on. A field trip often gives you more realistic answers than any amount of statistics. Or it can lead you to the right questions to ask. Generals go to the front to get a firsthand sense of the action, because seeing things gives them a feeling for what's going on, against which to judge the thousands of faceless facts that pour in to their headquarters behind the lines. Field trips are also a source of ideas. Just as important, they supply the details that add the breath of life to your reports. Never trust your memory when collecting material for a report. Write down everything you want to remember.

## 14.6 Planning for Report Writing

Planning is the first stage of any organized activity. Even for drafting a formal report, planning is a must. The planning stage is the most crucial one. Spend as much time as possible in collecting material, synchronizing details, and ensuring that nothing has been left out. If the planning is done in a detailed manner, there are few chances of missing out errors at the final stage. In fact, planning for a report is an important as the process of writing itself. The various steps involved in report planning are as follows:

1. Define the problem and the purpose: The problem and purpose had already been identified at the stage when the answer to the question what and why were attempted. It is essential at this stage to understand the nature of the report – whether it is informational or analytical. In an informational report, the writer would stress factors contributing to comparison of information at the time of stating the purpose. However, in an analytical report the writer would need to prepare a problem statement, the analysis of which becomes the thrust area of the report. With a variance in the type of the report, a difference is bound to arise in the definition of the problem and purpose.
2. Outline the issues for investigation: A problem solving or analytical report has issues, pertaining to the problem which need to be highlighted in the initial stage. None of the alternatives or variables should be ignored or sidetracked. Once the issues have been clarified, delineation of the points becomes easier. Further, if the report is of an informational nature, all issues to be exemplified have to be understood. There should be a basic pattern that has to be observed and it should clearly emerge in the reading of the report.

3. Prepare a work plan: What is the best procedure to collect the data? How should the writer proceed? What are the strategies that need to be observed? These are a few of the questions that need to be well answered before taking the final plunge into conducting research on the topic.
4. Conduct research, analyse and interpret: The modus operandi at the time of conducting research should be well examined. This should, however, be taken care of at the stage of preparing a work plan. The manner in which research is conducted is contingent upon the problem defined in the initial phase of report writing. Once the research has been conducted, begins the process of analysis and subsequent interpretation, which happen to be the toughest parts in report making. An attempt should be made to bring about accuracy in the analysis and make the interpretation objective and unbiased, as far as possible.
5. Draw conclusions: Subsequent to the stage of interpretation of data, certain conclusions need to be drawn and recommendations or suggestions made. This comprises the last stage of the report and the tone of it, is determined by the position held by the report writer. For instance, if it is a report, being written by a subordinate, he can only make suggestions. However, if it is one being written by superiors, it would definitely have in Notes the terminal section, a rather well developed part, comprising recommendations.

### **14.7 Report Writing Process**

Prior to commencing work on a report, a few queries should be raised by the report-writer and satisfactorily answered. This enables the writer to produce a highly focused report. The queries are central on the five W's and the one H. What is the problem? What is it that needs to be ascertained? Clarity along these lines helps in eliminating any redundancies that might crop up. Identification of the genesis of the problem helps in streamlining the approach.

The five W's and One H are:

Why, What, Who, When, Where and How.

Questions like the following pertaining to these W's and H are to be answered before writing the report:

1. Why is it important to study the problem?
2. Why (purpose) should the problem be analyzed?
3. What is its relevance and significance to the department in specific, and organisation in general?
4. What are the benefits that will be obtained as a result of this particular report - to the department, the organisation, and the self?
5. Who is involved in the situation? This could take into account both the reader(s) and the writer. In case there is a third party involved, it would also account for that.
6. Who is going to be the reader of this report? With a change in the reader, a change is visible in the manner of approach in the report.
7. When did the trouble start? In case it is an analytical report, one would also need to Notes address oneself to the source and time of the problem before reaching any conclusion.
8. When am I going to write the report? The time factor is very important.
9. Where would the reader be at the time when he receives the report? Would the reader read the report in a meeting or read it within the confines of his room? There would definitely be a difference in the manner of approach.
10. Finally, how would the report be written? What information is to be included and what is to be excluded/which graphs and chart would be used/avoided?

*Sample of Report*

**Magro Toys – Report on productivity**

The purpose of this report is to summarise changes in productivity at our Spanish subsidiary, Magro Toys, over the last ~~of~~ five years and to suggest reasons why productivity gains were achieved up until two years ago have not been maintained yet.

**Automation**  
Five years ago, it was decided to reduce the payroll costs by automating our labour-intensive manufacturing facilities where possible and thereby in shedding workers. The implementation of this decision had involved reducing our labour force through natural wastage and a voluntary redundancy scheme. This was carried out over a three-year period.

**Financial performance**  
The automation of our Villena plant resulted in a reduction of payroll costs of an 8.7%. Furthermore, a vigorous marketing campaign, aided by a booming world economy, which gave rise to a 15.7% increase in turnover, though interest payments and capital depreciation costs resulting from the automation programme kept profits low. Productivity, however, rose up by 15.3% over this period.

**Labour costs**  
One consequence of our successful marketing campaigns it has been a considerable increase in sales. This, in turn, has meant that we have had to hire on more staff, especially, due to the increased automation of our production facilities, are more technically qualified and therefore more expensive staff. While the sales have remained buoyant and profitability has improved, productivity has undergone a slight decrease.

**Conclusion**  
Productivity is forming only one measure of our company's performance. Financially, and in marketing terms, our company continues to perform ahead of the competition companies. While we should be continue to look for ways to streamline production, this should not be allowed to interfere with our broader objectives.

**14.8 Notice Writing**

A formal, written, or printed notification for a group of people is known as a notice. It is written in a crisp language that avoids any unnecessary information. Notices are essentially a technique for conveying information about any occasion or topic. They reach a big number of individuals in a short amount of time, which is why they are accurate and succinct. If it isn't exact, readers will be less likely to commit so much time to reading it. And it must be a writer's art to be able to convey a complex message with the fewest words feasible. Being straightforward is also advantageous. Make sure you don't add any unnecessary information that might lead to a misinterpretation of the true message.

**Format of Notice**

Name of the Organisation - It refers to the name of the institution of which the person writing a notice is a part. It is written on the top of the page, it helps the readers identify who issued the notice.

Title - 'Notice'- This title says" notice', It lets the readers know that they are going to read the notice.

Date - The date is written on the left corner of the notice after leaving a tile. As the notices are formal communication, the date of issuing a notice is very important. The date should be written in a proper format, which is clear and easily understandable.

Heading - Heading explains what the notice is about in brief. Heading should reflect the content of the meeting. It is just like a 'subject' of an email, which gives a synopsis or purpose of the communication

Body - The body of the notice includes the main content for which the notice was issued. The body should contain all the necessary information required in the notice like the time of an event, venue of the event, and a date and it should be written in a passive voice without the use of first-person.

## 14.9 Business Proposal

An excellent business proposal is a document used by a B2B or business-to-business (or business-to-consumer) organization to persuade a potential buyer to acquire their goods or services. A business proposal template, such as this content marketing strategy, lays out what your company does and what you can do for your customer.

### *What should you include in a business proposal?*

A business proposal usually aims to answer the following questions:

Who you are and what your company does

The problem your buyer is facing

The solution your company offers to alleviate the problem

How your company will implement this solution effectively

An estimate of resources (time, money, etc) required to implement the solution

### *Sample of Business Proposal*

#### **Proposal for relocation of offices**

The purpose of this proposal is to put forward the case for relocating our offices to an out-of-town site and ~~for~~ to suggest how this could be financed.

#### **Our current premises**

At present, our offices that are situated in the centre of Southampton, occupying a two-storey building which we own near of the port. They are located in an area where:

- rates are high
- property prices have been risen by 100% in the last seven years
- parking for staff and customers is expensive and access at the peak travelling times is much problematic.

#### **The need for new offices**

There are several reasons for needing our new offices:

- Our staff were surveyed earlier this year and were overwhelmingly favoured a move to a new site on the outskirts of Southampton in an area surrounded by countryside.
- Overheads such like as rates would be drastically reduced.
- Our present offices are urgently in need of the renovation.

#### **Costs**

There are a number of rising costs involved in moving. The main ones are:

- the actual cost of the move and the loss of time and operational efficiency during make the move
- the cost of changing addresses on stationery, informing to customers and suppliers of our new address, etc.

#### **Recommendations**

I recommend that we do go ahead with the change of offices for the following reasons:

- It would be so welcomed by our staff.
- By selling our present offices and moving out of town, then we would make a considerable profit, which would finance more than suitable, purpose-built offices.
- Our costs in the medium-term period would be appreciably lower.

## Summary

- Much of your day-to-day writing will be routine and will therefore conform to a direct writing strategy. There are many types of routine messages including requests, responses, claims, adjustments, and goodwill.
- Choosing the right channel for routine messages—e-mail, letter, memo, or texting—depends on the urgency and formality of the message itself. These everyday messages require a high degree of clarity and conciseness and therefore can be surprisingly challenging to write.
- A business report is an orderly, unbiased communication of factual information that serves some business purpose. Report writing makes the complex thing simple.
- Reports provide feedback to the manager on various aspects of organisation.
- The information is needed for reviewing and evaluating progress, planning for future course of action and taking decisions. Reports may be Business Reports or Academic Reports.
- Business report writing need extensive research. Business Reports may be: Routine Reports, Special Reports, Informational Reports or Analytical Reports. Clarity about why, what, who, when, where and how of the report help to draft an effective report. If the planning of a report is done in a detailed manner, there are very few chances of missing out errors at the final stage.
- A special feature of the business letter is that it must create an impression on the mind of receiver as from where and from whom the letter has come, in what subjects with it.
- A business letter contains the following (in the given order): heading, date, reference number, inside address, salutation, subject heading, body, complementary close, signature, enclosures, typist initials, Post script and margin.

## Keywords

- Academic Report: Academic reports are the reports which are prepared by students in their course of study or obtaining a degree.
- Business Report: A report is a presentation and summation of facts, figures and information either collected or derived. It is a logical and coherent structuring of information, ideas and concepts. A business report is an orderly, unbiased communication of factual information that serves some business purpose.
- Five W's and One H of Report Writing: What, Why, Who, When, Where and How of the matter for which the Report has to be written. These elements help to write an effective report.
- Heading: The name of the firm printed in the letter pad in an attractive form.
- Inside address: It is the name and address of the person or institution to which the letter is addressed

## SelfAssessment

1. What is the first thing that you write in the report?
  - A. Key Features
  - B. Introduction

- C. Conclusion
  - D. Title
2. What should a lead paragraph explain?
- A. The opinions of eyewitnesses to the story.
  - B. How and why the story is being written.
  - C. Who, what, when, and where the story happened.
  - D. Quotations from the people the story is about.
3. Reports should be written using ..... language.
- A. Descriptive
  - B. Informal
  - C. Persuasive
  - D. Formal
4. Which of the following statement is not true?
- A. A proposal is a document that presents a plan for a project
  - B. A proposal shows that the researcher is capable of successfully conducting the proposed research project
  - C. A proposal is an unorganized and unplanned project
  - D. A proposal is just like a research report and written before the research project
5. Good business proposals will always .....
- A. Consider all possible research that had previously been done on the topic
  - B. Provide respondent names and addresses
  - C. Focus on the Harvard style
  - D. Focus on addressing the research objectives
6. A notice is
- A. a letter
  - B. information for a large number of people
  - C. private information for a person
  - D. All the above
7. The first thing written in the notice is
- A. name of the writer
  - B. heading/title
  - C. date
  - D. name of the organization
8. The last thing written in notice is
- A. name of writer
  - B. signature of writer
  - C. designation of writer
  - D. address of writer

9. The purpose of the notice is to \_\_\_\_\_
- A. announce and display information to a specific group of people
  - B. give reports of an event
  - C. announce and display information to the whole world
  - D. summarize an event
10. One of the following is not part of the notice
- A. body
  - B. date
  - C. heading
  - D. greetings
11. Whenever there is need for .....communication, it is the written mode in business conversation that is preferred.
- A. Formal
  - B. Informal
  - C. Descriptive
  - D. General
12. It is an important feature of written form of business conversation that the presence of just the .....or the..... is sufficient at a given point in time, to continue the process of communication.
- A. Sender, receiver
  - B. Audience, spectators
  - C. Writer, sender
  - D. None of these
13. Written business conversation gives access to a large audience through.....
- A. Organizations
  - B. mass mailing
  - C. reports
  - D. memos
14. Written communication creates mountains of paper cluttered around the premises of an organization
- A. True
  - B. False
15. Full letterhead is unnecessary when the .....is going to an internal audience.
- A. Email
  - B. Note
  - C. Memo
  - D. None of these

### **Answers for Self Assessment**

- |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. D  | 2. C  | 3. D  | 4. C  | 5. D  |
| 6. B  | 7. D  | 8. C  | 9. A  | 10. D |
| 11. A | 12. A | 13. B | 14. A | 15. C |

### **Review Questions**

1. How do you plan to write a business report?
2. What types of research may be needed in writing business reports?
3. While drafting a report, what technicalities should be kept in mind?
4. You had placed an order for 100 cartridges with ABC Company which you now want to cancel. Write a letter to the company for the same.
5. What are the essentials of a good business letter?
6. Write a letter to Fire Insurance Company for the payment claim due to loss because of fire



### **Further Reading**

1. Business Correspondence: Meaning & Types of Business Correspondence (toppr.com)
2. 5 Common Types Of Business Correspondence | Founder's Guide (foundersguide.com)
3. Types of Business Correspondence (savvy-business-correspondence.com)
4. Business Letters | Business Letter Format, Types, Examples (successcds.net)
5. Report Writing | Report Writing Format, Topics, Examples (successcds.net)
6. Report Writing: Format, Tips, Topics & Examples - Leverage Edu
7. Notice Writing | Notice Writing Format, Topics, Examples, Samples (successcds.net)