

WRITING TIPS

1.- Writing a composition

- a- Choose the topic of the composition you wish to write.
- b- List all the ideas that you can think of connected to that topic.
- c- Choose the main idea and write your topic sentence from it. (First paragraph= introduction)
- d- Underline two supporting ideas and write the body of your composition. (Your next paragraphs= 'the middle', where the 'meat' goes)
- e- Paraphrase the topic sentence to conclude the composition (Last paragraph: conclusion/summary)

2.- Logical order

It is important to put your ideas into a logical order, for example, chronological order, comparison and contrast or cause and effect. Each kind of order has its own special words and phrases which show how the ideas link together.

3.- Writing a full sentence

Always remember to check you have written a full sentence and not just part of one. A full sentence must contain one main clause. Pay attention to conjunctions and connecting words, they often introduce subordinate clauses only. Look at the examples below:

- Because the food was very bad in the restaurant. (a subordinate clause, not a full sentence)
- Because the food was very bad in the restaurant, we refused to pay the bill. (a full sentence)
- For instance, the price of a meal in a fast-food restaurant (a subordinate clause which needs a main verb)
- For instance, the price of a meal in a fast-food restaurant is relatively cheap today. (full sentence)

4.- 'Choppy' sentences

Students often write 'choppy' sentences, that is, sentences that are too short and simplistic. It is considered poor writing style to use short sentences all the time. The solution is to use conjunctions and connectors to form more complex sentences.

- Some students study at private schools. Some students study at government schools.
- Some students study at private schools **while** others study at government schools.
- I will have to buy a computer soon. I am going to study computers at university.
- I will have to buy a computer soon **because** I am going to study computers at university.

5.- Adjectives and adverbs

You can expand a basic sentence by adding adjectives and adverbs. The use of adjectives and adverbs will add interest and variety to your writing. Remember not to use the same adjective or adverb too often.

6.- Using expressions

Using certain expressions can improve the style and quality of your writing. Some expressions also act as connectors and link ideas together.

7.- Paraphrasing

One of the keys to writing a good summary is the ability to paraphrase the main idea in your own words. Remember that we often paraphrase a text when we answer a comprehension exercise. Always check your grammar when you paraphrase.

8.- Using personal experience

Very often our personal experience influences our opinion. Therefore, we can use it in an essay to support our argument. Describing a personal experience can help to persuade the reader to agree with your point of view.

9.- Organization

One way of writing an argumentative composition is to present all the similarities first and then all the differences, or all the advantages and then the disadvantages- and to close the composition with a concluding comment. Another way is to make the comparison point by point throughout the composition.

10.- Formal and informal words

Use formal or informal language according to the kind of writing you have to do; for instance, you can choose from the word *money* (informal) or *financial* (formal), *tell* (informal) or *inform* (formal).

11. **Proofreading**: Before submitting your contribution, look for grammatical and spelling errors (a spell-checker is recommended) and correct them.

12. **Revising**: Make sure everything flows smoothly.

LIST OF CONNECTORS

Contrast or opposing ideas	Although/even though/ though Whereas, while, despite, in spite of, but, yet, however, nevertheless, on the one hand... on the other (hand), in contrast to/contrary to, unlike
Comparison	Like, be the same as, similarly, both, likewise
Reason, cause and effect	Because, since, as, because of, due to, owing to, in order to, so that/in order that
Time and sequence	When, while, whenever, first of all/firstly, secondly... finally, later, next, in short, in conclusion
Result and consequences	Therefore, consequently, thus, as a result (of)
Addition and example	Moreover/ furthermore/ in addition

	For example/for instance, such as, as well (as), in addition to, also
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