

## WRITING EFFECTIVE ACADEMIC ESSAYS

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**Abstract:** This article discusses the perspective that writing is a recursive, explanatory, and generative process and thus, the objective of practicing writing in classroom is to help the learners develop practical strategies for getting started, drafting, revising, and editing. Consequently, the researchers investigated whether a process-oriented approach to teaching writing, with its emphasis on practicing strategies for each stage of writing, was more successful than a product-oriented approach in improving essay writing.

**Key words:** effective, assignment, thesis statement, feedback, cognitive writing, drafting, revising, and editing.

Writing is a complex and multifaceted process that can pose challenges for many children. A student's potential to improve and master the writing process can be attributed to their family and literacy practices at home, a willingness to improve, and the learning environment at school. Academic writing presents a unique set of challenges due to its formal style, rigorous standards, and specific conventions. Here are some common challenges faced by academic writers:

**Complexity of Language:** Academic writing often requires the use of formal and specialized language, which can be challenging to master, especially for non-native speakers. **Clarity and Precision:** Balancing complexity with clarity is crucial in academic writing. Writers must convey their ideas clearly and precisely while still maintaining academic rigor. **Critical Thinking:** Academic writing typically involves analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information from various sources. Developing strong critical thinking skills is essential for effectively engaging with the material. **Structural Organization:** Academic papers must follow a specific structure, such as introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion,

and conclusion. Ensuring smooth transitions between sections and coherence throughout the paper can be challenging. Citing Sources and Referencing: Accurately citing sources and adhering to the required citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) is crucial in academic writing. Managing citations and references can be time-consuming and require attention to detail. Time Management: Researching, drafting, revising, and editing an academic paper can be time-intensive. Managing time effectively to meet deadlines while ensuring the quality of the work is a significant challenge. Audience Awareness: Academic writing often targets a specific audience, such as scholars, researchers, or students in a particular field. Writers must tailor their language, tone, and level of detail to suit the intended audience. Peer Review and Feedback: Receiving constructive feedback from peers, advisors, or reviewers is essential for improving academic writing. However, incorporating feedback and revising drafts can be challenging and time-consuming. Overcoming Writer's Block: Generating ideas and overcoming writer's block can be challenging, particularly when working on complex topics or facing tight deadlines. Developing strategies to overcome writer's block, such as brainstorming, outlining, or taking breaks, is essential.

At school, writing instruction typically begins in earnest in second grade (age 7 years), when students are to create more elaborate connected texts, moving beyond learning words and their meanings and spellings, seeing and reading them in story books, and writing single sentences. The role of teachers in the instructional choices, the use of curriculum materials, the monitoring of student progress, the offering of strategy instruction to help students who struggle with writing, and the assessment of the students' writing skills across the different genres are fundamental to the opportunities of students to improve. For students who struggle with writing, reading high-quality texts provides a means to observe how good writing is organized and demonstrated in words, sentences, and paragraphs. If decoding is a challenge for the student, e-readers are really helpful tools for this purpose. Students should choose texts that are of interest to them

across different genres. Story books, novels, magazine articles, and informational texts about a news story are some examples. If the student is expected to write a specific genre of text for a university course, for example, it is best that they first spend time reading and reviewing high-quality examples of that genre. After reading a text, the student should think about what the text aimed to say and discuss the ideas and the text's structure with someone else. The student could also learn more about the ideas on the web or from other sources at a library, for example. Developing familiarity with the genre of text, a lab report's components, the types of content and sentences, and how research questions are posed and answered all help the student to apply these ideas in their own writing and improve this skill over time. After reading and reviewing texts, the student can then begin thinking of a topic and components for their own writing. Each student will have their own ideas and practices to outline their ideas. Making notes of each idea can help. Some writers like to use graphic organizers or webs to define key ideas, and then subpoints or examples. This author has found illustrating ideas to be helpful for students who struggle with writing. With a topic and outline of ideas, the student can then begin drafting text. This prompts a new level of complexity for the student in the writing process. Concurrently, the student needs to manage ideas, text structure (the progression of ideas and events from the beginning to the end), word choice (e.g., using a key word only once in a sentence), spelling, the vocabulary associated with the topic, varying sentence types, paragraphing, punctuation, and grammar. As mentioned earlier, to be a good writer, one needs to be reading high-quality texts. Teachers and parents at home should devote time each day (e.g., 30 min or more) for reviewing high-quality texts with their children, thinking about the text's message, how the author organized the text, the progression of ideas, word choice, etc. Teachers spending even a few minutes per day on phonemic awareness activities, for example, can significantly help struggling readers improve. These practices also map well to writing with daily practice, the reviewing and revising of drafts, receiving feedback, etc. Technology

can also be a real help to a struggling writer, who likely is a struggling reader. E-readers can help a student by decoding the text for them, offering a means for the student to read along with the recording, adjust the speed, and review the meanings of unknown words. Writing effective academic essays involves several key steps. Here's a guide to help you:

1. **Understand the Assignment:** Make sure you fully comprehend the essay prompt or assignment requirements. Identify the purpose of the essay, the audience you're writing for, and any specific guidelines provided by your instructor.
2. **Research:** Conduct thorough research on your topic. Use credible sources such as academic journals, books, and reputable websites. Take notes and organize your research materials effectively.
3. **Develop a Thesis Statement:** Craft a clear and concise thesis statement that presents the main argument or point of your essay. Your thesis should be specific, debatable, and supported by evidence from your research.
4. **Create an Outline:** Outline your essay before you start writing. This helps you organize your ideas and ensures that your essay flows logically from introduction to conclusion. Include main points, subpoints, and supporting evidence in your outline.
5. **Write the Introduction:** Start your essay with an engaging introduction that grabs the reader's attention and provides context for your topic. Introduce your thesis statement and outline the main points you'll discuss in the body paragraphs.
6. **Develop Body Paragraphs:** Each body paragraph should focus on a single main point that supports your thesis. Start with a topic sentence that introduces the main idea of the paragraph, then provide evidence and analysis to support your argument. Use transitional phrases to connect ideas and maintain coherence.
7. **Provide Evidence:** Support your arguments with evidence from your research. Use quotations, statistics, examples, and scholarly references to strengthen your claims. Be sure to properly cite your sources using the appropriate citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).

8. Counterarguments and Rebuttals: Anticipate and address potential counterarguments to your thesis. Acknowledge opposing viewpoints and provide evidence or reasoning to refute them. This demonstrates critical thinking and strengthens your argument.
9. Write the Conclusion: Summarize the main points of your essay and restate your thesis in the conclusion. Avoid introducing new information in this section. Instead, reflect on the significance of your argument and suggest avenues for further research or discussion.
10. Revise and Edit: Proofread your essay for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Ensure clarity and coherence by revising your sentences and paragraphs. Consider the overall structure and organization of your essay, making revisions as needed to improve clarity and effectiveness.
11. Seek Feedback: If possible, have someone else read your essay and provide feedback. Consider their suggestions and make revisions accordingly.
12. Finalize Formatting: Format your essay according to the guidelines provided by your instructor or the academic institution. Pay attention to font, margins, spacing, and citation style.

By following these steps and practicing regularly, you can improve your academic writing skills and create more effective essays.

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