



Chapter 1

Review of Writing Process

In this chapter, you will know:

- ✓ Reasons of writing academic essays,
- ✓ Features of academic writing,
- ✓ Types of support in academic essays,
- ✓ Writing process.



1

Critical Thinking Questions

Directions: Work in small groups and discuss the following open questions.

- What is academic writing? Can you list some differences between general writing and academic writing?

General Writing

Academic Writing

- What are the major reasons why college students write academic essays?

- What are the general types to support or develop academic paragraphs or essays? (e.g.)
cause/effect

- What kinds of possible punishments will be given for academic plagiarism? Please list them and tell the reasons.

2

Introduction to Academic Writing

Academic writing is a formal style of writing which is done by students or scholars. The main purpose of academic writing is to inform and not to entertain like novels. Both academic writers and academic readers are eager to know the useful information they are looking for in academic writings. Academic writing is often complex and abstract, partly due to the academic subject matter and academic language itself.

Usually, academic writing can take many forms: journal articles, essays, theses, group project reports, research reviews, and etc. Although college students are increasingly being asked to write in different forms, the formal-essay or dissertation (paper) still remains the most popular type of academic writing. Essays written by students are likely to be read by their tutors as the assignment form. The essay can be set as a coursework assignment to assess a student's understanding of a subject, or as an exam question. And thesis (paper) is written by students as an evaluation of student college study in four academic years.

Features of academic writing

A written piece of academic work is linear, which means it has one recognizable central subject or theme. It relates to the craftsmanship of certain rules and procedures of correct quoting and evidencing of sources, with a precise formulation of objectives. As well, it is in the standard written form of the language, without digressions or repetitions. Consequently, there are five main features of academic writing as follows. (Els Van Geyte, 2013)

(1) Complexity

Academic written language is relatively more complex. It is lexically denser and it has a more varied vocabulary. It uses more noun-based phrases than verb-based phrases. Usually, written texts have long complex sentences, and the language has more grammatical complexity, including more subordinate clauses and more passives.

(2) Formality/Objectivity

Academic writing is relatively formal and its written language is usually objective rather than

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Basic Information
for Research Paper



personal. In general, the student should avoid colloquial words and expressions. Further, it has impersonal tone, usually avoiding some intimacy words such as “you”, “we” or “I”, but rather using “he”, “she”, “researcher”, and so on. It can also be understood as avoiding subjectivity.

(3) Clarity

Academic writing is explicit about the relationships in written texts. Furthermore, the academic writer or student should be responsible to make it clear to the readers how the various parts of the text are related. These connections can be made clear by the use of different signaling words. Simply, the ideas and information are explicit, accurate and precise.

(4) Coherence

Academic writing should be coherent about text parts and paragraph sentences. Coherence means unmistakably clear and reasonable connection between academic parts or paragraphs and their relationships. In academic essays, coherence implies the orderly progression of facts and ideas in logic and consistent sequence, and writers usually use transitional signals, substitution of pronouns, parallelism and logical order to achieve writing coherence.

(5) Responsibility

In academic writing, students must be responsible and be able to provide evidence and justification for any claims or statements they make. Students are also responsible for demonstrating the understanding of any source texts they use. They need to document and reference for any information included in academic writing — do not plagiarize.



Activity 1 >>

Directions: Work with a partner. Discuss and evaluate which of the following sentences are academic language, and which are colloquial language. Write changes that would make them stronger academic language.

- (1) In my opinion, this is very interesting.
- (2) You can easily know how different life was 50 years ago.
- (3) Human beings are inherently competitive, eager to be happy.
- (4) Whenever I'd visited there before, I'd ended up feeling that it would be a miracle.
- (5) We don't really know what language proficiency is, but many people have talked about it for a long time.
- (6) Some economists have recommended taking some measures against financial crisis.
- (7) As Hill (2008) observed, human beings are inherently competitive.
- (8) It is easy to know how different life was 50 years ago.
- (9) By 2014, over 111,000 Saudi students had been studying in the United States, and the number continually increased.
- (10) It may be said that the commitment to some social and economic concepts was less strong than it is now.
- (11) Researchers have suggested ways of making second language teaching and testing more "communicative" (Canale & Swain, 1979) on the grounds that a communicative approach better reflects the nature of language proficiency.
- (12) Many participants in the study reported that they slept well while they had a job to work, but experienced more sleep disruption after they retired.

Activity 2 >>

Directions: Work in a small group and discuss these open-answered critical thinking questions.

- (1) What are the distinctions between academic essays on Arts and Science?
- (2) What are the differences between English academic papers and Chinese academic papers?



3

Review: Types of Support in Academic Essays

If an academic essay is well written and organized, its academic parts or paragraphs should be supported by some methods. Normally, academic writing requires that writers support their ideas and opinions with these supporting details:

- a) Related examples
- b) A comparison with a similar situation
- c) A contrast of opposite situation
- d) Quotations from experts
- e) Facts
- f) Statistics or other numerical data
- g) Common knowledge
- h) Causes/effects to explain
- i) Definition
- j) Classification
- k) Logical reasoning
- l) Personal knowledge

Consequently, good writers will get these kinds of supporting details from outside sources such as books, magazines, newspapers, websites and personal interviews. Also, writers may find it necessary to use a combination of methods in academic writing in order to support their ideas in a well-organized and cohesive manner.

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Introduction
to Paragraph
Development



Activity 3 >

Directions: Read the academic essay below. After reading, work with a partner and answer the following questions.

- (1) How many major points are there in this academic essay? What are they?
- (2) What kinds of supporting methods are used by the writer in the essay? Please underline and explain them.

Coca is Not the Enemy

—— Elizabeth Leontiev

To most people, the word *cocaine* evokes images of the illegal white powder and those who abuse it, yet the word has a different meaning to the coca farmers of South America. *Erythroxylum coca*, or the tropical coca plant, has been grown in the mountainous regions of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru since 3000 BC. The coca plant has been valued for centuries by



indigenous South American cultures for its ability to alleviate pain and combat fatigue and hunger (Forero, “Bolivia’s Knot”). Just as many Americans drink coffee every day, natives of the Andes Mountains chew coca leaves and drink coca tea for a mild stimulant effect. Easy to grow, not addictive, and offering many medicinal benefits, coca is part of the everyday lives of the people in this region.

Aside from its medical and cultural value, coca is also important to Andean farmers economically, as a result of a long history of illegal drug trafficking. Dried coca leaves mixed with lime paste or alkaline ashes produce cocaine — a highly addictive substance that delivers euphoric sensations accompanied by hallucinations (Gibson). Supplying the coca for the illegal drug trade accounts for a tremendous portion of the Bolivian, Peruvian, and Colombian economies. In Bolivia, for example, it has been estimated that coca makes up anywhere from one-third to three-quarters of the country’s total exports (Kurtz-Phelan, 108). In 1990, the Bolivian president even asserted that 70% of the Bolivian gross domestic product was due to the coca trade (Kurtz-Phelan, 108).



Despite such statistics, for most farmers in the region growing coca is about making a living and supporting their families, not becoming wealthy or furthering the use of cocaine. More than half of Bolivians live in poverty, with a large portion earning less than \$2 a day (the U.S. Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Div. 2). In the words of one coca farmer, “the U.S. says ‘Coca is cocaine, coca is cocaine,’ but it isn’t,” says Argote. “Coca is the tree of the poor” (qtd. In Schultz and Gordon). Can we reduce cocaine trafficking without eliminating coca? Evo Morales, the current president of Bolivia, believes the answer is “yes” and has advocated a “zero cocaine, not zero coca” policy in his country. This policy would allow native Andeans to maintain their cultural practices, boost South American economies, and channel coca into a new market, away from cocaine traffickers. For all of these reasons, the Morales plan should become a model for other coca-growing countries.

Morales gained recognition for his “zero cocaine, not zero coca” program during his 2005 presidential campaign. His policy aims to legalize the coca crop but not the cocaine that is produced from that crop. He also expressed a desire to get the United Nations to rescind its 1961 convention declaring coca an illegal narcotic. In December 2005, Morales won the election with over 50% of the vote, and made history as the first indigenous Bolivian president (Forero, “Coca”).



Morales’s plan promotes the best interests of the Andean farmers and offers multiple economic and social benefits. First, South American countries would be able to export non-narcotic coca-based products, such as soaps, toothpaste, tea, alcohol, and candies (Logan). Products like these are already being produced for local use in Bolivia, and manufacturers would like to seek an international market for them. These new coca products would stimulate the Bolivian economy and put money in the pockets of coca growers to support their families, rather than in the pockets of the drug lords. Second, if the market for legal coca were to increase, farmers would be able to make a legal living from a crop that has long been a mainstay of their culture. With legal coca products, the indigenous people of the Andes would not have to sacrifice their way of life. Finally, an increase in the demand for legal coca products might also result in less cocaine being trafficked illegally around the world, since more of the raw material for cocaine will be used for new legal coca products.

In order to understand the benefits of Morales’s plan, we must first investigate the failures of the alternatives. The United States has been waging various “wars on drugs” for decades,

spending up to \$1 billion trying to control cocaine trafficking from South America (Forero, “Bolivia’s Knot”). In the 1990s, the United States shifted its efforts from fighting the trafficking of cocaine to eliminating the source of the drug—the coca plants growing in Bolivia, Columbia, and Peru. Coca eradication has taken two main forms. In Bolivia, bands of soldiers move through the countryside, using machetes to hack away coca plants. This process is slow and dangerous, and there have been reports of human rights abuses and extreme violence against the peasant farmers who grow coca (Gordon 16). In nearby Columbia, the United States funded aerial fumigation programs to poison the coca fields; native farmers complain that the herbicide used in the fumigation is causing health problems and environmental pollution (“the U.S. Weight Cost”). By destroying coca plants in Colombia, the United States has “left 500 million people poorer” (Padgett 8). It is unclear whether fumigation results in any benefit, since farmers respond by moving farther and farther into the jungle and replanting their crops there (Otis). Such dense areas are harder to see and therefore harder to fumigate effectively.

Another the U.S. effort encouraged farmers to replace coca with other crops, like coffee, bananas, and pineapples. Alternative crop programs seem like a good idea because they will get rid of the coca farms, but they have own drawbacks. First, as coca grower Leonida Zurita-Vargas noted in her 2003 *New York Times* opinion column, transporting heavy fruits like pineapples from the mountainous coca-growing regions was expensive and difficult. Second, growers are seldom willing to give up coca farming because they can make more money by selling coca than any other crop. Even with government incentives for alternative cropping, coca remains more profitable, a big inducement for poor farmers who can barely support their families and send their children to school. The *Houston Chronicle* reports that even in areas where farmers have planted alternative crops, the farmers are being lured back to the coca plant by larger profits (Otis). One coca farmer asserted that by growing coca, he could “make ten times what he would make by growing pineapples or yucca” (Harman). Ultimately, alternative cropping means less coca production overall, which will drive up coca prices and encourage more farmers to abandon their alternative crops and return to coca.

After decades of legislation and various eradication programs, cocaine trafficking remains a major problem. The most recent data show that coca cultivation throughout the region remains steady. Contrary to dire predictions, there has been no major spike in Bolivian coca production since Morales was elected at the end of 2005. Furthermore, critics argue that cocaine is no less available in the United States than before eradication began, and street prices remain low (Forero, “Columbia’s Coca”). Instead of curbing cocaine trafficking, America’s war on drugs has turned



out to be a war against the peasants of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru.

Throughout the years, the various wars on drugs have failed to produce effective results for the United States. The programs of alternative cropping and eradication did not succeed due to the legislators' inability to see life through the eyes of the coca farmers—something Evo Morales was able to do. In 2006, Morales addressed the UN General Assembly and waved a coca leaf in the air, “This is a green coca leaf, it is not the white of cocaine. This coca leaf represents Andean culture; it is a coca leaf that represents the environment and the hope of our peoples.” Through his bold program of “zero cocaine, not zero coca”, Morales aims to improve the lives of Andean farmers and the economies of South American countries, while still remaining committed to controlling the illegal drug trade. Morales's example illustrates that it is time to work with coca farmers, rather than against them.

4

Plagiarism

Before creating an academic work, college students or academic writers must provide evidence and draw on sufficient information sources of other researchers to the readers. They need to document for any information they include in academic writing.

In Webster online dictionary,

“plagiarism/”plā-jə-, ri-zəm/” (noun) means:

- 1) an act or instance of plagiarizing;
- 2) Something plagiarized.

“Plagiarize” is to be defined as:

- 1) to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own;
- 2) to use (another's production) without crediting the source;
- 3) to commit literary theft;
- 4) to present as new and original an idea derived from an existing source.

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Plagiarism

Do not plagiarise. So, what is plagiarism?

Many people think plagiarism is copying another person's work or borrowing someone else's original words or ideas. But simple terms like "copying or borrowing" cannot clarify the seriousness of plagiarism.

As is seen, plagiarism is one act of using someone else's work or ideas or words without giving that person credit. In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

Even after you study a definition of plagiarism in online dictionary, it is not easy to define and judge plagiarism precisely. Additionally, different cultures have different definitions of what constitutes plagiarism in academic settings.

However, for universities or research institutions, they have set various definitions of plagiarism consequences. Possibly, these can be found in different institutions' websites or official documentations.

Activity 4 >>

Directions: Work in small groups. Read the following list of punishments for academic plagiarism. **Discuss:** a) Which of these are used in universities or academic institutions? b) Which are used in companies or larger social institutions? c) Which are used both? Give examples to illustrate.

- (1) Failure of one assignment
- (2) A warning from a professor
- (3) Expelling from one course
- (4) Loss of bachelor degree
- (5) Expulsion from college or university
- (6) A monetary fine
- (7) A legal penalty
- (8) Banning to enroll in academic institution
- (9) Loss of entire academic career
- (10) Being sued for plagiarism
- (11) Limited or destroyed career opportunities
- (12) Failure of paper
- (13) Suspension from college or university
- (14) Prison



Consequently, every student should be ethically and legally obligated to give credit and acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. For academic writing, most cases of plagiarism can be avoided for students by citing sources. There are some common methods to avoid plagiarism.

Methods to avoid plagiarism:

- 1) Express your own idea in your own way and in your own words.
- 2) Use some "common knowledge" as information even if you have learned by researching.
- 3) Paraphrase what you have read in order to avoid directly copying from the source.
- 4) Quote directly by giving credit.
- 5) Provide clear references to all sources quoted or cited.
- 6) Document all sources quoted in the reference section.

Simply, acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed and providing your readers with the information source, students can easily avoid plagiarism. The two safest methods to avoid plagiarism are: 1) to avoid them altogether, and 2) to paraphrase, quote or cite them properly. Please read Chapter 7 for more information about how to cite or quote information sources properly.

Activity 5 >>

Directions: Work with a partner and discuss how to avoid plagiarism for the following extracts.

(1) Women give birth to children and still do most of the work of bringing them up. To do a demanding job of managing family and social life simultaneously is extremely difficult for women (Wajcman, 1981).

(2) Data show that women professionals still assume the primary responsibility of home and child-care activities (Googins and Burden, 1987; Jick and Mitz, 1985).

(3) Career women in India had work and family dilemmas, which are often different from those reported by women in the West (Sekarn, 1992).

5

Writing Process of Academic Writing

Brainstorming: Academic writing terms

These words are important for understanding the academic writing process. Work in small groups and match each word with the correct definition.

a. topic	1) A short piece of writing, at least three-para long.
b. edit	2) To change or correct a piece of writing.
c. brainstorm	3) A subject; what the piece of writing is about.
d. organize	4) To arrange in a clear, logical way.
e. proofread	5) To check a piece of writing for errors.
f. revise	6) A first version of a written work.
g. draft	7) Put forward as many ideas as one can think of.
h. essay	8) Judge the worth of some information sources.
i. review	9) A plan for a piece of writing in which each new idea or fact is separately written down.
j. publish	10) Read for errors.
k. outline	11) A careful examination of a situation or process.
l. evaluate	12) Have work printed and be available to the public.

When writing, students do more than just put words together to make sentences or just search some information from Internet. The reason is that academic writing is a process and not a one-shot act. Thus, the writing process of academic writing usually has the following general principles (Allan Glantthorn, 1991):

- 1) Being complex with involving memory, cognition, language, and psychomotor behaviors.
- 2) Being multiphase with involving several different stages and many sub-processes, like drafting and revising.



3) Being recursive and interactive with each stage related closely and affected by each other.

To create effective academic essays, good writers must spend time extracting information and thinking critically. This means that strong academic writing process begins with solid planning, having different stages from the start to final draft.

Generally, the process of academic writing is divided into six steps or stages: 1) brainstorming and choosing a topic, 2) doing research and evaluating information, 3) organizing ideas and developing an outline, 4) writing the first draft, 5) reviewing and revising the first draft, and 6) editing the final draft and publishing.



1) The first step is **brainstorming and choosing a topic**. This means that students should intensely but randomly think about the topic, make a list of appropriate ideas, design a word map, and discuss with partners or teachers to make a quick decision about the topic. It is advisable to go from the general to the specific in choosing a topic. An inappropriate topic may lead to the failure of the whole academic essay or at least a waste of time.

2) The second step is **doing research and evaluating information sources**. After choosing a topic, students will think about what they will write about that topic. Next, students will identify an audience and the purpose for

writing, determine the appropriate form for the piece, and then gather ideas and data. Decide and evaluate which of the ideas they want to use and where they want to use them. Choose and circle which idea to talk about first or last; cross out inappropriate ideas.

3) The third step is **organizing ideas and developing an outline**. After choosing a topic and researching deeply, students will know to choose which idea to talk about first, which to talk about next and which to talk about last. Organize the useful ideas and then write an outline logically. If the outline is very detailed, students will write the first draft quickly and smoothly, otherwise failure of written essays will be possible.

4) The fourth step is **writing the first draft**. During the drafting stage, students will write their essay from start to end. Use the finished outline and notes to get their ideas down. They should search for words and try out pieces of sentences and think about paragraph shape. A “free flow” of ideas is encouraged, without letting concern about correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar get in the way of composing. Students need to be aware that the first draft is not a finished product and that any piece of writing can be improved. It is advised that drafting must be done, as far as possible, in one sitting.

5) The fifth step is **reviewing and revising the first draft**. During this stage, students should review the written work’s structure and content. Check and revise what they have written, looking for errors, rethinking choices, trying out other words and sentence forms. Totally, students will revise the whole written structure and content, involving adding, substituting, deleting, and moving ideas and words around as writers rework and polish their pieces. They might need to explain something more clearly, or add more details. They may even need to change the organization so that the written text is more logical. Also, read your writing silently to yourself or share with a friend. Getting a reader’s opinion is a good way to know if your writing is clear and effective.



6) The final step of the writing process is **editing the final draft and publishing**, which occurs when a completed text is reworked and revised. Editing is the process of getting the piece ready for the audience. The writer is expected to read the text again and make final corrections. Editing can appear in different layers — editing for clarity of ideas and language, editing for grammar conventions, or editing for punctuation, mechanics, and spelling. In other words, editing is a proofreading by the author before the write-up is ready for publication. When a completed text is reworked and edited to the satisfaction of the author, publishing written essay may be possible. However, publishing can appear in various forms, such as submission to the tutor, presentation to the colleagues, or submission to the publisher.

Activity 6 >>

Directions: Work in small groups. Complete the chart together and review to summarize the six steps of academic writing process.

Prewriting

Step One: Choose _____

Step Two: Do _____

Step Three: Develop _____

Drafting

Step Four: Write _____

Reviewing and revising

Step Five: Review _____

Revise _____

Editing and publishing

Step Six: May need to do:

Clarify: _____

Submit: _____



Activity 7

Directions: Work in a small group and give your presentation to other group members according to the following questions. Your presentation should be given in the PowerPoint form and you should have a good cooperation with group members.

(1) Think of a creative writing process involving the six steps. The topic is the one which you are interested, such as planning a holiday, cooking a meal, friendship, the value of social relationship, writing a poem, decorating a room, surfing internet, online shopping, and WeChat.

(2) Write a short description of what a student would do for each step of academic writing process. For example, at the first step of academic writing, the student presenter should describe carefully how he will brainstorm and choose a suitable subject, which is connected with online shopping.



6

Self-Evaluation

For each statement below, circle the word which is true for you.



1. I understand what academic writing is.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
2. I know the features of academic essays.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
3. I know the differences between informal writings and academic writings.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
4. I understand the writing process or procedure.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
5. I know useful support types in academic essays.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
6. I can find key words in titles and understand what I am expected to write.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
7. I know whom to visit in university if I need advice about an academic essay.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
8. I know punishments for academic plagiarism.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
9. I know how to choose an appropriate topic.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
10. I understand what revision is.	Agree	Disagree	Not sure