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Г. В. ЛОВГАЧ, Е. В. ВИЛЬКОВСКАЯ, К. М. ДЕЙКУН

**ACADEMIC WRITING:
THE ESSAY**
(Classification; Process; Comparison / Contrast Essays)

**ОСНОВЫ ПИСЬМЕННОЙ РЕЧИ:
ЭССЕ**
(классифицирующие эссе; эссе, описывающие процесс;
эссе, построенное на сравнении и контрасте)

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для студентов 1 курса специальности
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Рецензенты:

кандидат филологических наук И. Н. Пузенко;
кафедра теории и практики английского языка
учреждения образования «Гомельский государственный
университет имени Франциска Скорины»

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Л 686 Основы письменной речи: эссе : (классифицирующие эссе;
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В данном практическом пособии по курсу «Основы письменной речи»
представлены упражнения и задания для формирования навыков и умений
написания эссе: классифицирующих; описывающих процесс; построенных
на сравнении и контрасте. Приводятся также образцы текстов эссе, дается их
структурный анализ.

Практическое пособие предназначено для студентов 1 курса
специальностей 1-02 03 06 - 01 «Английский язык, Немецкий язык», 1-02 03
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Введение

Практическое пособие предназначено для занятий по дисциплине «Основы письменной речи» со студентами I курса специальностей 1-02 03 06 - 01 «Английский язык. Немецкий язык»; 1-02 03 06 - 03 «Английский язык. Французский язык».

Актуальность и необходимость подготовки практического пособия обусловлены отсутствием учебной литературы по курсу «Основы письменной речи». Оно разработано в соответствии с практической направленностью обучения иностранному языку как средству общения, информационного обмена и познавательной деятельности.

Целевое назначение пособия – развитие и совершенствование навыков письменной речи студентов, формирование их коммуникативной компетенции (языковой, социолингвистической, социокультурной, прагматической), обеспечение корректного пользования английским языком как средством письменной коммуникации во всех сферах общения, обучение основным функциональным типам письменных сообщений и их структуре (абзац, эссе), лингвистическим особенностям жанрово-стилистических разновидностей письменных текстов.

Практическое пособие предлагает систему упражнений и заданий по обучению основам коммуникативно-ситуативной и жанрово-стилистической вариативности письменной продуктивной речи, включающую усвоение речевых образцов, теоретического и практического материала по тематическому разделу: «The essay (Classification; Process; Comparison/Contrast Essays)».

Упражнения и задания составлены в соответствии с лингвистическими и методическими принципами, положенными в основу издания. Они имеют единую систему, что облегчает работу с ними и способствует развитию языковых и речевых умений студентов. Упражнения носят коммуникативно-функциональную направленность и представляются по степени нарастания трудности. Материалом для упражнений служат актуальные аутентичные тексты, заимствованные из англоязычных источников. Виды упражнений определяются характером материала, подлежащего тренировке. В практическом пособии представлен материал, касающийся структуры сочинения, принципов построения, видов сочинений (Classification Essay, Process Essay, Comparison / Contrast Essay).

Практическое пособие может быть использовано студентами как на практических занятиях, так и во время самостоятельной работы.

Seminar 1

Theoretical materials for revision.

The Essay:

The thesis statement: direct and indirect statements;

The Essay introduction;

The body of the essay;

Essay conclusions;

A Classification Essay.

Consolidation exercises

✓ An essay is a group of paragraphs about one topic. Like a good paragraph, a good essay is unified and coherent. Each essay has three parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

Ex. 1. From Paragraph to Essay:

a) Read the paragraph and answer the question.

Job Skills

One way in which career counselors classify jobs is according to the broadly-defined categories of the skills that the jobs require. Counselors like to try to match these categories with areas of strength for those who seek the job. Counselors today consider three major skill categories: interpersonal skills, mental skills, and physical skills. Interpersonal skills help us establish and maintain personal relationships. We put them to use when we communicate with others, either in person or by other means. Mental skills are the skills of the mind. We use these skills when we process information, come up with and think through ideas, and plan how to transform ideas into actions. We rely on our physical skills when we use our hands and bodies. These are skills that we need when we engage in the variety of physical activities that occur in our working lives. According to today's career counselors, it is important to think about our strengths in all three of these skill areas when we are trying to find a career that fits our needs.

The three categories of skills in this paragraph support the controlling idea, but they provide limited information. What kinds of details could the writer add to expand each category and make it more clear for the reader? Jot down some of your ideas here.

Interpersonal skills:

Mental skills:

Physical skills:

b) Read the essay, which is an expanded version of the paragraph in part a. Then answer the questions.

Job Skills

Are you looking for a job? How do you go about sifting through the seemingly endless stream of information available to find that one job for you? Well, career counselors, who are trained to help people find their ideal jobs, can be very helpful in your job search. One way in which career counselors try to match people with their ideal jobs is according to the broadly-defined categories of skills that the jobs require. Counselors today consider three major skill categories: interpersonal skills, mental skills, and physical skills.

Interpersonal skills help us establish and maintain personal relationships. We put them to use when we communicate with others, either in person or by other means. For example, people who work in retail sales, real estate, or other merchandising areas need highly developed interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills are also very important for people in the so-called «helping» professions – doctors, nurses, teachers and social workers. In fact, today's medical schools are giving almost as much weight to the interpersonal skills of their applicants as they do to their mental skills when evaluating these candidates acceptance into their training programs.

Mental skills are the skills of the mind. We use these skills when we process information, come up with and think through ideas, and plan how to transform ideas into actions. Mental skills are obviously important for writers, academics, and researchers. But these are not the only careers that demand high-level mental skills. Any job that involves helping people solve problems – from what color hat to choose to how to cope with stress, depression, or insomnia – demands mental skills. These skills include such general abilities as synthesizing, analyzing, perceiving, and visualizing and are thus important in many fields.

We rely on our physical skills when we use our bodies. These are the skills that we need when we engage in the variety of physical activities that occur in our working lives. Physical skills involve such things as stamina, dexterity, and physical strength. These skills are especially important for people who spend their time moving, carrying, and lifting things. Athletes, mail carriers, truck drivers, farmers, ranchers, and others who work outdoors often must rely on their physical skills.

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Few jobs involve only one of the three major skill types; most jobs need all of them, at least to a certain extent. Even a computer programmer, who may sit for hours at a time in front of her computer needs a key physical skill. Without finger dexterity, her job would be quite challenging! However, most jobs do require greater competence in one of the three skill areas than they do in the others. According to today's career counselors, it is important to think about our strength in all three skill areas when we are trying to find a career that fits our needs.

- 1 Find the thesis statement of this essay and write it.
- 2 Underline the topic sentence in each supporting paragraph.
- 3 How are the skill categories introduced in part A expanded upon and supported in the essay?
 - a) by telling a story;
 - b) by giving examples and explaining them;
 - c) by introducing more major categories;
 - d) by describing the steps in process.
- 4 Does the author use any of the ideas you suggested in part A to expand this paragraph into an essay? If so, which ones?

✓ **The thesis statement** of an essay is similar to the topic sentence of a paragraph. It presents the topic and the controlling idea for the entire essay. The thesis statement also often acts as a guide to other important information:

- the purpose and corresponding organizational structure of the essay;
- the writer's point of view or opinion about the topic.

Ex. 2. Read each thesis statement and answer the questions.

- 1 Four major components make up the marketing mix of any successful business: the product itself, the product price, the means of product distribution, and the means of product promotion.
 - a) What is the topic of this essay?
 - b) What subtopics will be discussed?
 - c) Is this a direct or indirect thesis statement?
 - d) How many paragraphs will there probably be in the body of this essay?
 - e) Does the writer express an opinion in this thesis statement? If so, what is it?
- 2 Depression strikes an increasing number of people each year, and its effects can be devastating.
 - a) What is the topic of this essay?
 - b) Is this a direct or indirect thesis statement?
 - c) What is the purpose of this essay?

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РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ ГГУ ВШ

3 You only have to scratch the surface to see how damaging competitive sports really are to the overall psychological development of children.

- a) What is the topic of this essay?
- b) Is this a direct or indirect thesis statement?
- c) Does the writer express an opinion in this thesis statement? If so, what is it?

✓ **The introduction** is what readers read first, so it is very important. The introduction should include a «hook», something that grabs readers' attention and makes them want to read further. You can use many techniques for writing introduction, such as

- posing an interesting or controversial question or questions;
- employing the funnel method;
- using a relevant quotation;
- making a startling or dramatic observation or describing a scene in a dramatic, humorous, or otherwise interesting way;
- turning an argument «on its head».

Ex. 3. Study the following introductions, define the types of techniques and comment on them.

1 What if you were to wake up tomorrow morning and have no memory of the past? How would you function? Would you even know who you were? As unlikely as this may seem, it is not impossible. More and more Americans are finding themselves suffering from memory loss, some of it quite fast and without warning. Although one contributor to memory loss is Alzheimer' disease, there are other major causes as well, which can be classified according to the symptoms they produce.

2 Life in the twenty-first century is full of new changes and opportunities. The pace of change in all areas of daily life makes it difficult to put these challenges and opportunities into perspective. Nevertheless, as the new millennium begins, it is important to take stock of where we have been, where we are today, and where we are going. One of the most obvious places to begin this process is by reviewing the evolution and impact of technology - the technology of the past, technology today, and, perhaps most important of all, the likely technology of our future.

3 American children are exposed to and take part in competitive sports starting at a very early age. By participating in such sports as football, tennis, and basketball, proponents claim, children learn the skill necessary to survive in today's fiercely competitive world. You only have to scratch the surface, however, to see how damaging competitive sports really are to the overall psychological development of children.

proponent: someone in favor of something
overall: general

4 «Life is just a bowl of cherries». This well-known, anonymous quotation is the motto of the optimist, the well-adjusted. It implies that life is full of good things, ripe for the choosing, if only you avail yourself of the opportunity to pick from among them. However, what if you can not? What if life's cherries are there for the picking, but they always seem out of your reach. What if, for reasons you can not comprehend, you can not bring yourself to take advantage of the goodthings in life. Such is the world of the clinically depressed. Depression strikes an increasing number of people each year, and its effects can be devastating.

devastating: very harmful

5 He pounds down the court, ball in hands. Deftly sidestepping every obstacle in his path, he barrels toward the net. Nothing can stop him now. He leaps. For a split second, time stops, and this incredible athlete appears to be suspended in mid-air, his feet at least five feet above the floor. Then, suddenly, time starts again and the crowd begins to roar. Michael Jordan has done it again. He has made an extremely difficult feat seem effortless and natural, as though he were born with the ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound. The true story of this athlete's rise to stardom, however, is one of long suffering, hard work, and seemingly endless obstacles.

deftly: with great skill

barrel: move forward with strength

feat: achievement

✓ **The body** of an essay contains enough paragraphs to explain, discuss, or prove the essay's thesis statement. In each body paragraph the writer should discuss one aspect of the essay's main topic.

Ex. 4. Read each thesis statement. Then write two possible topic sentences for body paragraphs based on the thesis statement.

1 Four major components make up the marketing mix of any successful business: the product itself, the product price, the means of product distribution, and the means of product promotion.

Topic Sentence for Body Paragraph 1: _____

Topic Sentence for body Paragraph 2: _____

2 Depression strikes an increasing number of people each year, and its effects can be devastating.

Topic Sentence for Body Paragraph 1: _____

Topic Sentence for body Paragraph 2: _____

3 You only have to scratch the surface to see how damaging competitive sports really are to the overall psychological development of children.

Topic Sentence for Body Paragraph 1: _____

Topic Sentence for body Paragraph 2: _____

✓ **The conclusion** in an essay is the last paragraph or two. One purpose of all conclusions is to signal the end of the essay. Here are some other purposes for conclusions:

- to add coherence by summarizing or restating the essay subtopics;
- to add coherence by restating the essay thesis;
- to leave the reader with the writer's final opinion;
- to make a prediction or suggestion about the topic of the essay.

Ex. 5. Read the introduction and the conclusion. Then answer the question.

Introduction: American children are exposed to and take parting competitive sports starting at a very early age. By participating in such sports as football, tennis, and basketball, proponents claim, children learn the skills necessary to survive in today's fiercely competitive world. You only have to scratch the surface, however, to see how damaging competitive sports really are to the overall psychological development of children.

Conclusion 1: As it has been demonstrated above, competitive sports can cause severe psychological damage to children. Research shows that, in a society that overvalues the «competitive edge», children can easily lose self-confidence and self-motivation when they are forced to engage in competitive sports at which they cannot succeed. In addition, children who are particularly successful in the competitive arena can develop aggressive tendencies which can manifest themselves in adult life as hostility and lack of empathy.

- 1 What purpose does this conclusion have? (Circle all that apply).
- a) To add coherence by restating the essay's thesis statement.
 - b) To add coherence by restating important essay subtopics.
 - c) To leave the reader with the writer's opinion.

Conclusion 2: As it has been demonstrated above, competitive sports can cause severe psychological damage to children. In a society which overvalues the «competitive edge», children can easily lose self-confidence and self motivation when you are forced to engage in competitive sports at which they cannot succeed. In addition, who are particularly successful in the competitive arena can develop aggressive tendencies which can manifest themselves in adult life as hostility

and lack of empathy. In my view, this concentration on competition has become an epidemic in American culture. If something is not done in the near future to curb the American appetite for competitive sports, the youth of today will be unable to function as caring, productive members of the adult world tomorrow.

2 What new purpose(s) have now been added to this conclusion? (Circle all that apply).

- a) To restate the essay's thesis statement.
 - b) To make a prediction about the essay's topic.
 - c) To leave the reader with the writer's opinion.
- 3 Which of these two conclusions do you find the most interesting and effective? Why?

Ex. 6. Read each thesis statement, the topic sentences for the body paragraphs of the essay, and the conclusion. Some conclusions have unity. Others include sentences that introduce new topics and do not have unity. Cross out any sentences in the conclusion that do not belong. (If you want further practice with paragraph writing, develop the topic sentence for each body paragraph into a full paragraph.)

1 *Thesis statement:* Many facts about the personal life of Albert Einstein surprise us when we first learn about them.

Topic sentences for body paragraphs.

- a) His treatment of women is surprising.
- b) His social awkwardness is surprising.
- c) Some of his political views are surprising.

Conclusion: People are often quite surprised to hear these aspects of Einstein's personal life. When they learn of them, they sometimes ask themselves such questions as: How could such a great scientist have such disregard for the women in his life? What caused this super-intellect to be so awkward in the most basic of social situations? And, how could this man whose science led almost directly to the development of the atom bomb be so opposed to war? Einstein, who loved all things simple, would be pleased with the simplicity of the answers to these questions: for all his greatness, Albert Einstein was still a human being subject to all of the same strengths and weaknesses as the rest of humankind. Nobody is perfect. Many other scientists, including Robert Oppenheimer, also had imperfect personal lives.

2 *Thesis statement:* According to health and fitness experts, snowshoeing has recently become a favorite winter sport among college students for three reasons: it is inexpensive, it is not dangerous, and it is a quiet, calming activity.

Topic sentences for body paragraphs.

- a) Snowshoeing costs very little, making it affordable even for students with no income.
- b) Compared to skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing is quite safe.
- c) Finally, many students like snowshoeing because it is a quite sport that allows them to appreciate the calm and peacefulness of winter outdoors.

Conclusion: For all of the reasons discussed above, snowshoeing is becoming more and more popular among college-age as a winter sport. Health and fitness experts recommend it to anyone who is looking for an affordable, safe, and quiet way off energy and enjoy the great outdoors during the long winter months.

3 *Thesis statement:* There are five important, albeit time-consuming, steps to successfully painting a room.

Topic sentences for body paragraphs.

- a) First, all exposed surfaces that you don't want to paint need to be protected.
- b) Next, you need to prepare the surface that you do want to paint.
- c) «Cutting in» with a small brush is the first step in the actual painting.
- d) Once you have cut in, you can use a roller to paint the large surface.
- e) Cleaning up is the final step, and it is also very important.

Conclusion: As you can see, it is important to work carefully and methodically when you are painting a room. If you patiently follow the five steps outlined, you will have a beautiful product to show for your labor, and you can sit back, relax, and enjoy your beautiful room for years to come. The initial investment of a little extra time makes it all worthwhile in the end.

Classification Essay



✓ Writers use **classification essays** to group items according to their similarities and differences.

Ex. 1. Determine the principle of organization for each of the following items and their categories. The first one is done for you.

1 **boats:** fiberglass, wood, metal

Boats can be classified according to *what they are made of*.

2 **cities:** more than 5 million people, between 1 million and 5 million people, between 500,000 and 1 million people, fewer than 500,000 people

We can classify cities into four groups according to _____

3 **beds:** twin, double, queen, and king

There are four major _____ of beds.

4 **chocolate:** sweet, semi-sweet, bitter

Chocolate can be classified into three types according to _____

5 **chocolate:** white, milk brown, dark brown

Chocolate can be classified into three types according to _____

Ex. 2. For each group, think of two different principles of organization and list several categories for each. The first one is done for you.

1 **dogs**

a) Principle of organization 1: *size*

Categories: *miniature, small, medium-sized, large*

b) Principle of organization 2: *hunting breeds*

Categories: *Spaniels, Labradors*

2 **friends**

a) Principle of organization 1: _____

Categories: _____

b) Principle of organization 2: _____

Categories: _____

3 **teachers**

a) Principle of organization 1: _____

Categories: _____

b) Principle of organization 2: _____

Categories: _____

✓ To maintain **unity** in classification essays, it is important to use only one organizing principle when you classify items in the group.

Ex. 3. Determine the principles of organization for each list. Write it on the blank. Draw a line through the category that does not belong. The first one is done for you.

1 **houses:** brick, stone, wooden, concrete, small
Principles of organization: according to what they are made of

2 **letters:** personal, business, long
Principles of organization: _____

3 **television programs:** dramas, interesting, soap operas, talk shows, mini-series, newscasts, sports shows
Principles of organization: _____

4 **sports:** contact, team, individual
Principles of organization: _____

5 **coffee:** Espresso, Brazilian, Colombian, Hawaiian, Kenyan
Principles of organization: _____

✓ Writers use many techniques for adding coherence to paragraphs and essays. Effective use of transition expressions is one of the most important of these techniques. For the classification essay one can use the following **transition expressions:** *one/another/a third (fourth, etc.)* + classifying word.

Ex. 4. Read the classification essay and answer the post-reading discussion questions.

Ten Thousand Teas

1 An eighth century Chinese literary man poetically numbered the different types of tea at «ten thousand and a thousand». The Chinese for 10,000 is the vernacular for something more than mere numbers, however. It conveys greatness and superiority. «Ten thousand and a thousand» expresses «super-excellence», and tea, an evergreen plant in the Camellia family (*Camellia Sinensis*), is considered by much of the world's population to be the most excellent beverage available.

How many types of tea are there, really, and what determines these types? Are there really «ten thousand and a thousand» different teas, as the Chinese poet claimed? Is the Earl Gray you drank this morning different from the English Breakfast you drank this afternoon?

In fact, there are only three major types of tea – black, green, and oolong – and the difference among them lies not in their origins but in the methods by which they are processed.

2 Making black tea is an involved process and takes great skill. First the leaves are withered in the sun. Then they are usually rolled, often by hand.

The rolling breaks down the membranes of the leaves to activate a natural chemical reaction. The leaves are next fermented by letting them dry on woven trays, or by laying them out in a cool place. Oxygen works on the leaves, helping to release their essential oils. This drying takes several days, during which the leaves become reddened and let off a nutty aroma. Once the leaves have fermented for a sufficient length of time, the tea is fired in large woks or in an oven; this process causes the fermentation to cease. At this point, the leaves which are about 80 percent dry, are then completely dried with more firing of wood or charcoal. Black teas are rich and full-bodied. Perfecting tea that gives just the right amount of light pungency and full flavor while allowing for multiple infusions is an art form.

3 Green teas are not dried before processing, nor are they fermented. The fresh tea leaves that are used for green tea are quickly steamed to halt bacterial and enzyme action common in fermentation. Next, the leaves are machine rolled lightly to give them a curl, to break up leaf cells, and to free juices and enzymes. Green tea leaves are fired or heat dried. Throughout this process, leaf color is preserved as yellowish-green or green. Because the green tea leaf is not fermented, its chemical makeup is not altered as in black tea processing. This preserves the medicinal and natural flavors so cherished in green teas.

4 Oolong teas fall in between green and black teas in the degree of fermentation. Tea leaves used for oolong are wilted in the sun just as those for black teas are. They are then tossed by spinning in cylindrical bamboo woven baskets. This «bruises» the leaves, which helps promote a brief fermenting process. These two processes are repeated until the leaves become almost transparent and start to yellow or redden along the edges, which is a sign of the beginning of fermentation. The centre, however, remains green and the degree of fermentation is far less than that of black tea. As a final step, oolong tea processors roll the large leaves into nugget shapes that unfurl when they are steeped. Oolong teas are known for their flowery aromas that soothe and heal.

5 Since ancient times, tea has been a preferred beverage for much of the world's population. As its popularity has grown, its basic makeup has been enhanced to suit the «ten thousand and a thousand» different human tastes. The three basic types of tea have been blended, scented, and packaged in many different ways. They can now be found flavored with flowers and herbs or adorned with berries and grains. They are sometimes perfumed with oils and sometimes even speckled with tiny flakes of precious metals. It is somehow reassuring to know that each of these «ten thousand and a thousand» types of tea nevertheless comes from one of only three possible humble beginnings, each of which can be trusted for its soothing and healing properties.

- 1 What is the thesis statement of these essay?
- 2 How many subtopics are there? What are they?

3 Where does the writer use questions? Do you think they are effective in this position in the essay? Why or why not?

4 Underline the controlling idea of each body paragraph in the essay. Does each body paragraph address one of the subtopics?

5 Does the conclusion successfully signal the end of the essay?

6 What are the other purposes of the conclusion? Does it achieve these purposes?

7 Does the entire essay have unity and coherence? If not, what should be done to add unity and coherence?

8 What is classified in this essay? What principle of organization does the writer use?

9 What is primarily used in this essay to give details about the categories?

- a) Examples; c) description of a process;
b) details of a story; d) the author's opinion.

✓ Sometimes the **passive voice** is needed to keep the topic in the subject position.

Ex. 5. In each item below, decide which statement a or b better follows the sentence above it by keeping the topic in the subject position. Circle your choice. The first one is done for you.

1 How would it feel to have the same name as a celebrity? Just ask Indiana University Professor Jack Nicholson.

a) He has often been mistaken for the famous Hollywood actor who has the same name.

b) People have mistaken him for the famous Hollywood actor who has the same name.

2 Once, when he went to pick up a pizza that he had ordered over the telephone,

a) he was met by fans who wanted his autograph.

b) fans who wanted his autograph met him.

3 They were surprised when they saw him.

a) but he was asked by them to sign autographs anyway.

b) but they asked him to sign autographs anyway.

4 He signed «Best wishes, Jack Nicholson» on several slips of paper.

a) Then his pizza was taken home.

b) Then he took his pizza home.

5 Another time, he made reservations at an exclusive resort. When he arrived there,

a) he was told that he did not have a reservation.

b) someone told him that he did not have a reservation.

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6 The woman at the reservation desk had thought that Dr. Nicholson was joking about his name.

a) For that reason, the reservation had been canceled by her.

b) For that reason, she had canceled the reservation.

7 Despite all the problems it causes, Dr. Nicholson seems to have a good sense of humor about his name.

a) He hasn't been stopped by it from enjoying life.

b) It hasn't stopped him from enjoying life.

Optional Practical Exercises

Ex. 1. Learn how to write a classification essay.

✓ In a classification essay, we organize things into categories and give examples of things that fit into each category. For example, if you choose to write about types of computers (PCs and servers), each of your developmental paragraphs will define the characteristics of a different computer type.

✓ Before writing, it is necessary to decide on the classification criteria. We should think according to what properties we are going to classify things. The criteria must be discriminating and the emerging classes should be non-overlapping.

In the sample essay about types of computers, the computers are classified according to their functions and capabilities, as:

Sample essay analysis

topic: 5 types of computers	criteria: their functions	and capabilities
1. PC	general use by a single person	desktop: permanent laptop: portable
2. Workstation	used for 3D graphics, game development	powerful microprocessor, additional memory and enhanced capabilities
3. Server	used to provide services to other computers	have powerful processors, lots of memory and large hard drives
4. Main frame	used in business	enables hundreds of people to work together
5. Super computer	used for jobs that take massive amounts of calculating	very powerful

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Установа адукацыі
"Гомельскі дзяржаўны ўніверсітэт
імя Францыска Скарыны"
БІБЛІЯТЭКА

✓ The introduction of a classification essay is quite straightforward. In the thesis statement, you mention that *there are (number) types of (something) according to their (properties)*.

In the developmental paragraphs, you need to define each type you mentioned in the thesis. You may also need to show the similarities and/or differences of these types. Giving examples would enable your readers to understand better.

The common transitions used while classifying are *the first kind / type / group, the second kind / type / group, the third kind / type / group*.

Types of Computers

There are a lot of terms used to describe computers. Most of these words imply the size, expected use or capability of the computer. While the term «computer» can apply to virtually any device that has a microprocessor in it, most people think of a computer as a device that receives input from the user through a mouse or keyboard, processes it in some fashion and displays the result on a screen. Computers can be divided into five according to the purpose they are used for and their capabilities.

The most familiar type of microprocessor is the personal computer (PC). It is designed for general use by a single person. While a Mac is also a PC, most people relate the term with systems that run the Windows operating system. PCs were first known as microcomputers because they were a complete computer but built on a smaller scale than the huge systems in use by most businesses. A PC can come in two types (three if we include the Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) that differ from PCs not by the working policy but in appearance as well.): Desktop and laptop. The former is not designed for portability. The expectation with desktop systems is that you will set the computer up in a permanent location. Most desktops offer more power, storage and versatility for less cost than their portable brethren. On the other hand, the laptops – also called notebooks – are portable computers that integrate the display, keyboard, a pointing device or trackball, processor, memory and hard drive all in a battery-operated package slightly larger than an average hardcover book.

Another purpose for using a microprocessor is as a workstation. The computers used for this purpose have a more powerful processor, additional memory and enhanced capabilities for performing a special group of tasks, such as 3D Graphics or game development.

A computer can also be used as a server. For this, it needs to be optimized to provide services to other computers over a network. Servers usually have powerful processors, lots of memory and large hard drives.

A fourth type, a main frame is the heart of a network of computers or terminals which allows hundreds of people to work at the same time on the same data. It is indispensable for the business world.

Sometimes, computers can be used for specialized fields as well. The supercomputer is the top of the heap in power and expense. It is used for jobs that take massive amounts of calculating, like weather forecasting, engineering design and testing, serious decryption, and economic forecasting.

With the increasing demand in different specialties, new adjustments are being made to microprocessors and new types of computers that serve different purposes emerge. In this ongoing process, it would not be possible to put a full stop here. What we suggest is that it is better to keep an eye on the development of science in this field and keep updating our knowledge in order not to be out-of-date like the computers of old times that were as big as a room.

Ex. 2. Write a classification essay using the following topics. These classification essay topics are based on the classifying approach.

- 1 Classify the representatives of flora and fauna into groups. i.e. birds, insects, animals, trees, shrubs, flowers.
- 2 Classify linguistic phenomena, i.e. parts of speech sentence. Devide them into groups and subgroups.
- 3 Classify inventions according to their significance for the mankind, frequency of usage and influence on the development of the human race.
- 4 Classify historical events chronologically, for instance wars Belarus participated in.
- 5 Classify lodgers of your house according to the age rate.
- 6 Classify countries according to the density and quantity of their population.
- 7 Classify cars by their trade marks.
- 8 Classify countries according to the quantity of beautiful people living in these countries.
- 9 Classify countries according to the quantity of chocolate consumers.

Ex. 3. Write a classification essay using the topics which are based on the rating and evaluating approach.

- 1 Rate your favourite TV programs, movies, talk shows according to your personal likes and dislikes.
- 2 Rate countries from the most economically prosperous to the economically unstable.
- 3 Rate hotels according to the quantity of stars they have got.
- 4 Rate airlines from best to worst leaning on your personal experience.
- 5 Evaluate malls and supermarkets according to the quantity of services they offer.
- 6 Evaluate cafes, bars, restaurants according to the frequency you visit them with your friends.
- 7 Rate higher educational establishments in Belarus by tuition fee they require.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ ГГУ ВИН

Seminar 2

Theoretical materials for revision.

A Process Essay
Comparison/Contrast essays



Consolidation exercises

✓ Writers use **process essays** to explain the steps or stages in processes or procedures. A process essay is organized *chronologically*, that is in order of time. Process essays describe steps or stages that follow each other in time.

✓ Process essays can be of two types: **instructional** and **analytical**.

Ex. 1. Identify each process essay thesis statement as instructional (I) or analytical (A). The first one is done for you.

- 1 Follow this recipe and you'll end up with a heavenly angel food cake. ... I.
- 2 The digestive process involves several related steps.
- 3 All it takes to build a beautiful deck is the right tools and these easy-to-use guidelines.
- 4 To test the chlorine in your swimming pool water, use this test kit and follow the instructions carefully.
- 5 By 7.00 in the morning, a sheep rancher has already completed a series of very demanding chores to get his sheep ready for the day.

✓ It is sometime a challenge to make your process essay unified -- to decide what to include and what to omit. Your process should be complete and not leave out any important steps.

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Ex. 2. In each list of steps below, one important step or stage is missing. Insert it where it belongs.

1) Planting a tree.

- Find a place for the tree.
- Dig a hole the width and depth of the root ball.
- Remove any covering from the root ball of the tree.
- Put the tree in the hole.
- Fill the hole back up again, and tamp the soil down around the tree.

1) Repairing a scratched compact disk (CD).

- Listen to the CD and note where the worst skips are.
- Take out the CD, hold it by the edge, and wipe the shiny side gently with mild soap and water to remove dust and fingerprints. Rinse carefully.
- Using a lint-free cloth, dry the CD surface from the center to the other edge. Do not use a circular motion.
- Now, hold the shiny side of the CD under a bright light and look for whitish scratches.
- Dampen the cloth and put some white toothpaste on the cloth.
- _____
- Listen to your CD and see if it is fixed. If not, start the process over.

2) The water cycle.

- Warmth from the sun causes water to evaporate from surface of lakes, oceans, and rivers.
- This water vapor rises and cools.
- _____
- The clouds become heavy with moisture.
- The cycle begins again.

Ex. 3. Each list includes one or more irrelevant steps or stages. Underline the sentence with the irrelevant information. The first one is done for you.

1) Basic steps that scientists follow in using the Scientific Method of inquiry.

- They formulate a hypothesis and base a prediction on this hypothesis.
- They test the hypothesis using one of the number of techniques.
- They usually enjoy their work.
- They analyze the results of the tests.
- They draw the conclusions about the hypothesis.
- They end the experiment or revise the hypothesis and begin again.

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2 How to make a vinaigrette salad dressing.

- Gather the following ingredients: 3-4 tablespoons olive oil, 2 teaspoons mustard, 1 tablespoon vinegar, salt and pepper to taste.
- Next, gradually add the oil, stirring it slowly into other two ingredients.
- Contrary to popular opinion, olive oil is good for you.
- Finally, add salt and pepper to taste.
- We eat this almost every night.

3 The beating of the human heart.

- The auricles contract, squeezing as much blood into the ventricles as they will hold.
- The ventricles contract. Pressure of blood within them forces the cuspid valves (which open inward from the auricles) to close and the semilunar valves (which open outward into the arteries) to open.
- Blood spurts into the arteries.

At this point, the beating of the human heart and the beating of the cat heart begin to differ.

- The ventricles relax and pressure in them falls. Pressure of the blood just pumped into the arteries closes the semilunar valves.
- Pressure of blood in the arteries opens the cuspid valves, and blood flows into the ventricles.

Blood continues to flow into the arteries and into the ventricles as the entire heart is relaxed and rests briefly.

- Contraction begins again.

Ex. 4 :

a) The following essay was written by a «cat lover». The paragraphs in this process essay are not all in the correct order. Number them from 1 to 7 to indicate the best order.

Cat Bathing as a Martial Art

Many people think that bathing a cat is difficult, but it is really quite easy if you follow a few simple steps.

1 First of all, keep in mind that although the cat has the advantage of quickness and lack of concern for human life, you have the advantage of strength. Capitalize on that advantage by selecting the battlefield. Don't try to bathe him in an open area where he can force you to chase him. Pick a very small bathroom with a tightly-closing door.

2 Now it is time to bring in the cat. To do this, use the element of surprise. Pick up your can nonchalantly, as if to simply carry to him to his supper dish. Once you are inside the bathroom, speed is essential for your next move. In a single motion, shut the bathroom door, step into the tub enclosure, dip the cat in the water, and squirt him with shampoo. You have begun the wildest 45 seconds of your life.

3 Once your cat has gotten wet and soapy, do not expect to be able to hang on to him for more than a few seconds. He will be slippery and will wiggle free and fall back into the water. This will rinse him off. You can try shampooing him a second time, but check your helmet first and make sure that it is tightly fastened in case he makes a grab for you.

4 Once you have chosen the site of the crime, it is time to prepare everything. There will be no time to go out for a towel when you have a cat sinking its claws into your leg. Fill the bathtub with warm water, put the kitty shampoo within easy reach, and dress yourself in heavy protective clothing (I recommend combat boots, a helmet, and heavy overalls) before you begin.

5 In a few days, the cat will relax enough to be removed from your leg. He will usually have nothing to say for about three weeks and will spend a lot of time sitting with his back to you. You will be tempted to assume that he is angry. This isn't usually the case. As a rule he is simply plotting ways to get through your defenses and injure you for life the next time you decide to give him a bath.

6 Next, the cat must be dried. Novice cat bathers assume that this part will be the most difficult, for humans generally are worn out by this time. However, drying is actually simple compared to what you have just been through. That's because by now the cat is semipermanently affixed to your right leg. You simply pop the drain plug with your foot, reach for your towel, and wait. After all the water is drained from the tub, it is a simple matter to reach down and dry the cat.

7 At least now he smells a lot better.

b) Read your reordered essay to your partner.

Does your new order make this essay coherent?

Did you both choose the same order?

✓ **Transition expressions** in the Process Essay: *First (second, third etc.), next, now, then, and finally; before, after, once, as soon as, and while; during, over between* – noun phrase.

Ex. 5. Read the process essay. Fill in the blanks with transition expressions from the list below. Use each expression one time only. Then answer the post-reading discussion questions.

While finally during over next before after between

Baby Talk

1 For many parents, a child's first words, uttered at around one year of age, mark the first real evidence of language development – the child has «started to talk». However, this ignores a great deal of early progress during the first year, without which no first word would emerge at all. This progress is made in several areas, including sound production, speech perception, and speech interaction. Sound production is one of the easiest to recognize and one of the most fascinating. Sound production begins at birth, and by the age of eighteen months, the average child has gone through five unique and important stages of growth in the production of the sounds which eventually open up to her the wonderful world of communication through language.

2 The first stage of sound production, Stage I (0–8 weeks), consists of basic biological noises. _____ the first few weeks of life, a baby's vocal sounds directly reflect her biological state and activities. States of hunger, or discomfort that cause crying and fussing are common at this stage.

3 _____, the baby enters Stage II (8–20 weeks). _____ six and eight weeks, the first cooing sounds are produced. These sounds gradually become more frequent and more varied as the child responds to the smiles and speech of adults. Cooing is more musical and quieter than crying. Later in this same period, cooing sounds are strung together – often ten or more at a time. Some of these sequences such as [ga] and [gu] begin to resemble the syllables of later speech. _____ the baby is learning to coo, she is also learning to laugh. The first chuckles and laughs emerge at about four months of age.

4 _____ the baby learns to coo and laugh, she enters Stage III (20–30 weeks). _____ this stage, vocal play begins. The sounds of vocal play are much steadier and longer than those of cooing. They are also quite varied as the baby begins to experiment with different sound combinations. In addition, there seems to be a strong element of practice in the activities of this period. Anyone who has observed it will also recognize that it usually provides a great deal of enjoyment for parents and child alike as they play together with the sounds of language.

5 _____ the baby begins to show the signs of using real language, she passes through one more stage – stage IV (25–50 weeks). This is the babbling stage. Babbling is much less varied than the sounds of vocal play. A small set of sounds is used with greater frequency and stability to produce sequence like [bababa], which repeat themselves. Later, this babbling becomes complex, often including more sounds. Most babbling consists of a small set of sounds very similar to those used in the early language to be spoken by the child.

6 _____, the child enters Stage V (9–18 weeks). While babbling continues during the stage, a new vocalization also emerges. The Stage V baby begins

to produce «proto» words. Parents begin to sense intentions behind these utterances, with their more well-defined shape, and often feel they have meaning such as questioning, calling, greeting, or wanting. These are the first real signs of language development, and it is at Stage V that children growing up in different language environments begin to sound increasingly unlike each other.

7 People who do not know about the stages of language development in children often recognize «progress» only at Stage V. How much they are missing! Each stage in a baby's journey to language production is distinct and interesting. Each is important in helping the baby take her «baby steps» toward being a competent communicator in her first language.

- 1 What kind of process essay is this, instructional or analytical?
- 2 In the first paragraph, notice the progression of information from general to specific. What introductory technique is the writer using?
- 3 Underline the thesis statement. Does it introduce the process that will be discussed in the essay? What is this process?
- 4 Just looking at the thesis statement, how many paragraphs do you think this essay will contain?
- 5 Does the entire essay have unity? If not, what should be done to add unity to the essay?
- 6 List and label the stages covered in this essay.
- 7 Are these stages described in the correct chronological order to make the order coherent?
- 8 Check the purpose(s) of the conclusion to this essay:
 - _____ to add coherence to the essay by summarizing or restating the essay subtopics;
 - _____ to add coherence to the essay by restating the essay thesis;
 - _____ to leave the reader with the writer's final thoughts;
 - _____ to make a prediction or suggestion about the topic of the essay.
- 9 Does the conclusion sum up the process and discuss its results?

Optional Practical Exercises

- ✓ The process pattern of organization is especially important in scientific writing. For example, it is used to describe biological processes such as T cell lymphocyte production, chemical processes such as the interaction of drugs, and technical processes such as a colonoscopy.

Ex. 1. Learn how to write a process essay.

A process of digestion

Introduction

- 1 Thesis: Ingestion, digestion, and absorption are the three major steps involved in the digestive process.
 - 2 Food is ingested.
 - a) Food enters the mouth.
 - b) Food is chewed.
 - c) Food is ready to travel to the stomach.
 - 3 Food is digested.
 - a) Food is mixed with acidic gastric juices in the stomach.
 - b) The partially liquid food moves from the stomach to the small intestine.
 - c) Enzymes are secreted.
 - 4 Absorption.
 - a) The digested food passes through the walls of the small intestine.
 - b) The digested food is absorbed into the bloodstream.
 - 5 Conclusion.
- Paraphrased Thesis: The digestion process involves three major steps: ingestion, digestion, and absorption.

Process Essay Pattern of Organization

Introduction

1 State what the process is and why it is important.

The digestive process is important in maintaining the lives of living organisms and in providing them with needed energy.

2 Give background information, and define the process.

Groups of organs, such as the mouth, esophagus, stomach, and intestines, work together to perform this complex task. Digestion is the process of breaking down food from large molecules into small ones to make it easier for absorption.

3 State the thesis sentence to include the purpose and the main idea of the essay.

The three major steps involved in the digestive process are ingestion, digestion, and absorption.

Body Paragraphs

A paragraph consists of the following:

- Topic sentence.

Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, is the first step in the digestive process.

- Major supporting sentence(s).

After food enters the mouth, the teeth chew it.

AND

Saliva, which is produced by the salivary glands, plays a major role in breaking down the food into smaller pieces.

- Minor supporting sentence(s).

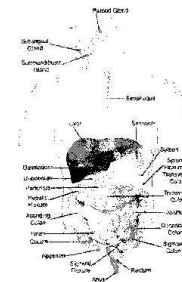
These small pieces travel to the stomach through the esophagus.

When you write an essay body paragraph, you need to remember two points. First, each topic sentence must not only contain the main idea of the paragraph, but also that main idea must be a main point of the thesis sentence. Furthermore, the body paragraphs must be written in the order that the main points are listed in the thesis sentence. For example, if you write that *the three major steps involved in the digestive process are ingestion, digestion, and absorption*, then your first body paragraph must be about ingestion, the second about digestion, and the final body paragraph about absorption.

Concluding Paragraph

- 1 Paraphrase the thesis sentence.
- 2 Summarize the main steps of the process.

The Completed Essay
A PROCESS OF DIGESTION



The digestive process is important in maintaining the lives of living organisms and in providing them with needed energy. Groups of organs, such

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ ГГУ ИИ

as the mouth, esophagus, stomach, and intestines, work together to perform this complex task. Digestion is the process of breaking down food from large molecules into small ones to make it easier for absorption. The three major steps involved in the digestive process are ingestion, digestion, and absorption.

Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, is the first step of the digestive process. After food enters the mouth, the teeth chew it. Saliva, which is produced by the salivary glands, plays a major role in breaking down the food into smaller pieces. These small pieces travel to the stomach through the esophagus.

In the stomach, the second step of the digestive process begins. When the chewed food reaches the bottom of the esophagus, a valve lets the food enter the stomach. Contraction of the stomach wall mixes the food. Acidic gastric juices, which are secreted by the gastric glands in the stomach, help in mixing the food and in turning it into a partial liquid so it will have the ability to move into the small intestine. In the small intestine, enzymes are secreted, and digestion is completed.

The last step in the digestive process is absorption. Absorption takes place in the small intestine. The wall of the small intestine is lined with small, finger-like projections called villi. Small molecules of food are absorbed by the huge number of villi. Some of these absorbed molecules enter the bloodstream to be distributed throughout the whole body.

In conclusion, the digestive process involves three major steps: ingestion, digestion, and absorption. Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, helps to increase the surface area of the food particles and prepares them for digestion. In the stomach, digestion begins, and it continues until it reaches the small intestine, where absorption takes place. The digestive process maintains organisms' lives by providing them with energy needed for different functions.

Ex. 2. Write a process essay choosing one of the topics written below.

- 1 How to lose weight without losing your mind.
- 2 How to choose a major.
- 3 How to find the perfect roommate.
- 4 How to get rid of a roommate – without committing a crime.
- 5 How to succeed in (or flunk out of) college.
- 6 How to pitch a knuckleball.
- 7 How to plan the perfect party.
- 8 How to survive a night of babysitting.
- 9 How to pitch a tent in the rain.
- 10 How to housebreak your dog.
- 11 How to kick a bad habit.
- 12 How to overcome insomnia.
- 13 How to stay sober on a Saturday night.

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- 14 How to rent your first apartment.
- 15 How to avoid a nervous breakdown during exams.
- 16 How to keep peace with a spouse or a roommate.
- 17 How to bathe a cat.
- 18 How to complain effectively.
- 19 How to survive a recession.
- 20 How to toilet train a baby.
- 21 How to develop self-confidence.
- 22 How to use Twitter.
- 23 How to wash a sweater.
- 24 How to end a relationship.
- 25 How to select the best portable media player.
- 26 How to take decent photographs with your cell phone.
- 27 How to quit smoking.
- 28 How to survive without a car.
- 29 How to make the perfect cup of tea.
- 30 How to save money while saving the environment.
- 31 How to build a great sandcastle.
- 32 How to edit a video.
- 33 How to make (and keep) friends on Facebook.
- 34 How to insert a contact lens.
- 35 How teachers make up exams.
- 36 How parents (or children) make us feel guilty.
- 37 How an iPod works.
- 38 How ice cream is made.
- 39 How a cell phone takes pictures.
- 40 How a magician saws a woman in half.

Comparison/Contrast Essays

Consolidation exercises

✓ Writers use **comparison/contrast essays** when they want to either compare or contrast or both compare and contrast two (or more) things. Writers can emphasize the similarities, the differences, or both the similarities and differences of the things they are comparing and contrasting.

✓ **Transition expressions for comparison/contrast essays:**

Both (noun) *and* (noun), *not only ... but also ... nevertheless, on one hand ... on the other hand, in contrast, whereas, unlike + noun, like + noun, conversely, although, even though, though.*

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Ex. 1. Read each topic and outline below. Decide whether the method of organization for the essay is comparison, contrast, or contrast / comparison.

- 1 *Topic:* basketball and tennis.
a) Tennis requires a great deal of stamina, and basketball does, too.
b) In both sports, there is a great deal of action, and players score numerous points.

c) Tennis and basketball are popular in countries all over the world.
Method of organization _____

2 *Topic:* the female characters in children's stories and the male characters in children's stories.

- a) The male characters usually play the hero roles while the females usually play the helpless roles.
b) The female characters are usually described in terms of their physical appearance, but the male characters are described in terms of their abilities.

c) Though female characters often have to make some sort of sacrifice, male characters rarely do.
Method of organization _____

3 *Topic:* Spanish and English.

a) Spanish and English use a similar alphabet. In addition, the basic grammar of the two languages is very similar.

b) Spanish verb conjugation is much more detailed than that of English. In addition, English nouns have fewer forms than Spanish nouns.

Method of organization _____

4 *Topic:* Switzerland and Bolivia

a) Neither Switzerland nor Bolivia has a coastline.
b) Mountains make up a large area of both countries.

c) The inhabitants of both countries have been relatively isolated over the past few centuries.
Method of organization _____

Ex. 2. Work with a partner For each topic and organization listed, complete the outlines with appropriate supporting points. The first one is done for you.

1. A. Cats as pets and dogs as pets (compare).
Similarity 1 : *Most cats and dogs are friendly animals.*
Similarity 2 : *Caring for cats and dogs is a fairly easy task.*

Similarity 3 : *Cats and dogs live relatively long lives.*

- B. Cats as pets and dogs as pets (contrast).
Difference 1 : *Dogs like to be petted, but cats are often very aloof.*
Difference 2 : *Dogs need to go outdoors often, but cats can live indoors.*
Difference 3 : *Dogs do not scratch furniture, but cats do.*

2. A. _____ (your native language) and English (compare).

Similarity 1 : _____

Similarity 2 : _____

Similarity 3 : _____

B. _____ (your native language) and English (contrast)

Difference 1 : _____

Difference 2 : _____

Difference 3 : _____

3. A. _____ using the library for sources to write a research paper and using the Internet (compare).

Similarity 1 : _____

Similarity 2 : _____

Similarity 3 : _____

B. _____ using the library for sources to write a research paper and using the Internet (contrast).

Difference 1 : _____

Difference 2 : _____

Difference 3 : _____

Ex. 3:

a) Choose the two people and two places to compare and contrast. Then decide on three categories for each that you will use to compare and contrast. For example, for two people, the categories might be personality, looks, and accomplishments. Then fill in details for each category.

Person A and person B (Be sure the two people are «equivalent», i.e., they are both politicians, actors, historical figures, athletes).

Person A: _____

Person B : _____

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important ways. First of all, both Vivian and Erin are poor, a fact that motivates their actions to some degree. _____, Vivian and Erin are underdogs who are able to overcome tremendous obstacles to reach their goals. Finally, both characters are able to accomplish all of this while maintaining a certain level of grace. Despite the differences in these characters, perhaps it is their similarities that have attracted so many millions of moviegoers to *Pretty Woman* and *Erin Brockovich*.

Postreading Discussion Questions

- 1 What is the thesis statement of this essay?
- 2 Is the writer comparing or contrasting?
- 3 What is being compared or contrasted?
- 4 Complete this list of paragraph topics:
Paragraph 1: introduction.
Paragraph 2: the poverty of both characters.
Paragraph 3: _____
Paragraph 4: _____
Paragraph 5: conclusion.
- 5 Unity: A good writer can achieve unity by providing appropriate supporting details. In paragraph 4, what examples of problems and grace does the writer give for each character?

Examples of problems	Examples of grace
Vivian _____	_____
Erin _____	_____

- 6 Does the conclusion offer a suggestion, opinion, or prediction?

Ex. 5:

a) Answer the pre-read discussion questions

- 1 Have you studied mostly American or British English? Why?
- 2 In what ways are American English and British English different?
- 3 Can you write a sentence that would have a very different meaning for a speaker of American English than it would be for a speaker of British English?

b) Read the comparison / contrast essay and answer the questions.

Two Kinds of English

1 Most of us are familiar with the song lyrics «You say poTAYto and I say poTAHto, you say toMAYto and I say toMAHto». These lyrics exemplify one of the differences between American and British English, the two most widely

spoken varieties of global English. Despite the seemingly endless number of similarities between the two, significant differences between American English and British English in these specific linguistic areas make each one quite distinct from the other.

2 Pronunciation is perhaps the first difference that people notice between American and British English. Some individual sounds are consistently different. For example, PoTAYto in American English comes out as poTAHto in British English. WateR in American English is pronounced as wateH in British English. Tuna in American English comes out as TYUna in British English. Furthermore, certain whole words are pronounced quite differently. *Schedule* is pronounced with a «k» sound in American English but with a «sh» sound, as *schedule*, in British English. The stress in the word *aluminum* in American English is on the second syllable, so it is pronounced aLuminum by Americans. Stress in this same word in British English is on the third syllable, so British English speakers pronounce it aluminum. These pronunciation differences, though noticeable, do not impede real communication. In addition, neither American English had a better pronunciation than the other; they are simply different.

3 A second difference is spelling. One example of this is the spelling of the vowels preceding the letter *r* in certain words. Americans write *color* and *endeavor*. In British English, however, these same words would be written *coloUr* and *endeavoUr*. Another obvious spelling difference is in the final syllable in words that finish in -er in American English and -re in British English. Example of this include *center* in American English with *centRE* in British English. Another common example is *theater* versus *theatre*.

4 Finally, perhaps the most striking difference between American and British English is vocabulary. For whatever reason, people tend to notice vocabulary much more than they do pronunciation or spelling. Some words exist in American English but not in British English, and vice versa. For example, *traffic circle* and *windshield* are American English words while *mackintosh* (raincoat) and *queue* (a line of people) are British English words. In addition, there are words that exist in both varieties of English, but they have totally different meanings. For example, in British English *biscuits* are sweet (American English translation: cookies), but biscuits in American English are small, salty rounds of bread. In British English, a *bonnet* is a trunk of a car, while in American English, a *bonnet* is a kind of women's hat.

5 All the languages have local dialects or regional variations, but for historical, geographical, and perhaps political reasons, English has two influential varieties: American English and British English. These varieties are different, yet they are similar enough that the differences that do exist in pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary rarely hinder communication. With

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modern technology making the world a smaller place, it is likely that these two varieties of English will gradually lose most of their unique characteristics and therefore become more similar.

Postreading Discussion Questions

- 1 What is the thesis statement of this essay?
- 2 How many subtopics are there? What are they?
- 3 Is this a comparison, contrast or comparison / contrast essay?
- 4 Complete this list of paragraph topics.

Paragraph 1: _____
Paragraph 2: _____
Paragraph 3: _____
Paragraph 4: _____
Paragraph 5: _____

5 Hook. Write the quotation that this essay begins with. Explain how this quote is related to the content of this essay.

6 Unity: A good writer can achieve unity by providing appropriate supporting details. Reread the supporting details in paragraph 4 about the two kinds of vocabulary differences between American English and British English. What are the two types of differences and what examples does the author use to support them?

Difference 1: _____
Examples of 1: _____

Difference 2: _____
Examples of 2: _____

7 Does the conclusion offer a suggestion, opinion, or prediction?

Optional Practical Exercises

Ex. 1. Read and analyze Mark Twain's then-and-now comparison essay excerpted from his autobiographical *Life on the Mississippi*. American humorist Mark Twain considers what may be lost as well as gained through knowledge and experience.

Two Ways of Seeing a River by Mark Twain (1835–1910)

Now when I had mastered the language of this water and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the

letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river! I still keep in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous; in one place a long, slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy flush was faintest, was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced; the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the sombre shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like silver; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendor that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances; and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it, every passing moment, with new marvels of coloring.

I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I should have looked upon it without rapture, and should have commented upon it, inwardly, in this fashion: «This sun means that we are going to have wind to-morrow; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of these nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling 'boils' show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that troublesome place is shoaling up dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the 'break' from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?».

No, the romance and the beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to a doctor but a «break» that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not

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all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn't he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade?

(1883)

Ex. 2. Write a comparison/contrast essay choosing one of the topics below.

- 1 Two stages of a person's life.
- 2 Two places you have visited.
- 3 Two perspectives on the same place: past and present.
- 4 Two perspectives on the same place: morning and night.
- 5 Two fast-food restaurants.
- 6 An online class compared to a traditional class.
- 7 The Toyota Camry hybrid and the Camry sedan.
- 8 Two candidates competing for public office.
- 9 Two pets in the same household.
- 10 Two professional athletes.
- 11 Two views of your parents: before and after you left home.
- 12 Your experiences before and after giving up a bad habit.
- 13 Two neighborhoods.
- 14 Two ways to break a bad habit.
- 15 A real vacation and a dream vacation.
- 16 Two video games.
- 17 Two classes in the same subject: one in high school and the other in college.
- 18 The car you own and the car you dream of owning.
- 19 Two types of exercise.
- 20 Two ways of studying for an exam.
- 21 Two sports fans.
- 22 Two ways of losing weight: one healthy, the other dangerous.
- 23 Your family home and the house of your dreams.
- 24 Harry Potter - on the page and on the screen.
- 25 Two memorable teachers or professors.
- 26 Two workplaces.
- 27 Two coffee shops.
- 28 Two close friends.
- 29 Two ways of downloading music or movies.
- 30 An active student and a passive student.

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