General Writing Skills

BBI 2421

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MODUL PEMBELAJARAN : BBI 2421 GENERAL WRITING SKILLS disediakan dalam bentuk bahan pengajaran dan pembelajaran kendiri di bawah program Pendidikan Jarak Jauh, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Sebarang pertanyaan dan cadangan untuk memperbaiki gaya penyampaian dan isi kandungan modul ini bolehlah dikemukakan kepada penulis dengan menggunakan alamat Pusat Pendidikan Luar.

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54200 Kuala Lumpur.
OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

Name of Course        General Writing Skills
Course Code           BBI 2421

Credits
This is a three credit (2+1) course on developing skills in writing.

Prerequisites
Students must have MUET Band 3 and above or have passed BBI 2420 Oral Interaction Skills

Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students are able to:
1. construct correct sentences in their writing
2. organise ideas to develop coherent paragraphs
3. write various types of short texts
4. review their own written texts with peers effectively

Course Synopsis
This course covers sentence patterns and types, paragraph development, making transitions between ideas, using correct grammar and structure, identifying and correcting common errors, drafting, editing and revising various types of short texts. Students will be actively involved in the process of planning, writing, and revising texts to meet their academic and professional needs.

Course Content
1. Sentence patterns and types
2. Grammar and structures
3. Paragraph development
4. Transitions between ideas
5. Writing processes
6. Types of texts: short reports and letters

Course Organisation
This module contains fourteen units. Every unit comprises notes and activities which are
designed to help you develop the required skills and language for writing skills for
academic purposes. In addition, doing the activities will help you to complete your
assignments tasks. Answers to exercises on each unit will be given. You are advised to
spend at least three hours each week on the module.
REFERENCES / RESOURCES


LEARNING SCHEDULE

The Learning Schedule is a guide to help you pace your study. You are encouraged to follow the schedule so that you would be well prepared to complete all the assignments for this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK/UNIT</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SENTENCE PATTERNS AND TYPES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – TOPIC SENTENCE</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – SUPPORTING SENTENCES</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – CONCLUDING SENTENCE</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – OUTLINING AND DRAFTING</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – UNITY AND COHERENCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7         | TRANSITION SIGNALS – TRANSITIONS BETWEEN IDEAS  
|           | - TRANSITIONS BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS |
| 8         | EDITING AND REVISION – COMMON ERRORS |
| 9         | WRITING SHORT TEXT – INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH |
| 10        | WRITING SHORT TEXT – BODY AND CONCLUDING PARAGRAPHS |
| 11        | TYPES OF SHORT TEXT – COMPARISON AND CONTRAST |
| 12        | TYPES OF SHORT TEXT – CAUSE AND EFFECT |
| 13        | WRITING LETTERS – JOB APPLICATION |
| 14        | WRITING LETTERS - COMPLAINTS |
**ASSESSMENT**

You will be assessed in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Writing Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Test 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Writing Skills Assessment</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Self-directed learning portfolio</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Final exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABOUT THE WRITERS

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Currently, she is a language instructor with the English Language Proficiency Unit, Department of English, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, UPM and the Coordinator of Proficiency Unit.

She has approximately twenty years of teaching experience at UPM.

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List of Icons Used in the Module

- Objective
- Overview
- Review
- Important facts
- Activity
- Answer
UNIT 1

SENTENCE PATTERNS AND TYPES

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about patterns and types of sentences in English writing.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
  o write sentences that agree in term of subjects and verbs
  o differentiate phrases, clauses and sentences
  o write simple, compound and complex sentences

When you need to write, you need to make sure that readers will as far as possible understand your thoughts easily and completely. You are not in front of them to clarify your ideas. Thus, your words represent your thoughts.

Your thoughts are clear if you can express them in clear and complete sentences. So, what is a sentence? On the other hand, your thoughts may be vague if they are either phrases or clauses. So, what is a phrase? What is a clause?

In this course, you will learn about sentences, clauses and phrases. You will learn the patterns of sentences; types of clauses, examples of phrases.

SENTENCE PATTERNS

A sentence is a group of words that contains at least a subject and a predicate. The subject is usually a noun, pronoun or noun phrase which clarifies what or whom the speaker is talking about. The predicate explains what is said or asked about the subject. It usually comes after the subject and includes at least a single subject. The subject and predicate can be single words or group of words.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My father</td>
<td>drinks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The children</td>
<td>enjoy playing badminton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many patients</td>
<td>waited patiently for their turns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sentences express complete thoughts. They may end with a full stop (.) to mark a statement, a question mark (?) to mark a question or an exclamation mark(!) to mark a command.

**Basic Sentence Patterns**

Subjects and verbs should agree in number. The following are sentence patterns as the bases to create a wide variety of sentences:

- **Subject (S), Verb (V)**
  
  Alan reads.
  
  S  V (predicate)

- **Subject (S), Verb (V)**
  
  The students jog.
  
  S  V (predicate)

- **Subject (S), Verb (V), Object (O)**
  
  Alan reads journals.
  
  S  V  O
  ~~~~~~~~~ (predicate)

- **Subject (S), Verb (V), Complement (C)**
  
  Alan reads an interesting topic.
  
  S  V  C
  ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ (predicate)

- **Subject (S), Verb (V), Expansion (E)**
  
  Alan reads during leisure time.
  
  S  V  E
  ~~~~~~~~~~~~~ (predicate)
The predicate is classified into a few components.

i. Verbs – describe a state of being, an action or an occurrence
ii. Objects – refer to nouns, pronouns or noun phrases
iii. Complements – refer to adjectives and nouns, pronouns or noun phrases
iv. Expansions – single words or group of words to make complete sentences longer

**SENTENCE TYPES**

Sentences are formation of clauses. A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a predicate with a grammatical unit. A phrase is also a grammatical unit of phrases but it lacks a subject-predicate structure. Clauses are the basic elements of a sentence. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrases</th>
<th>Clauses</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the mother rushed back</td>
<td>The mother rushed back from her day job daily.</td>
<td>The mother rushed back from her day job daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her day job</td>
<td>The mother wanted to see her children.</td>
<td>to see her children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see her children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two types of clauses: independent clause and dependent clause.

**Independent clause (IC)**

An IC or also known as a main clause contains a subject and verb which can stand on its own to form a complete sentence. An IC expresses a complete thought. For example:

- Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) officers will help.
- Customs Department director made the request, and ACA director approved.
- The officers will check cases, which were reported to be 28 last month.

**Dependent clause (DC)**

A DC or also known as a subordinate clause has a subject and/or a verb, but it does not express a complete thought. It also cannot stand on its own. Usually, a DC begins with a subordinating conjunction (refer to the table below). Nevertheless, a complete sentence can be formed if a DC is joined to a main clause. For example:

- Before deciding to build a bridge, Malacca should consider all aspects.
- Everyone is advised to seek knowledge as to develop the community.
Important notes

In both sentences above, the dependent clauses are not complete sentences because they do not answer the questions “What happens before deciding to build a bridge?” and “What happened as to develop the community?” As solutions, combine both the dependent clauses with the independent clauses respectively to form complete sentences.

Another example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cooked dinner</td>
<td>Mother cooked dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verb noun</td>
<td>subject predicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>before Mother cooked dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subject predicate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring to the above example, clause 1 expresses a complete thought or an idea which can stand by itself. It is an IC. However, clause 2 gives an incomplete thought or idea which cannot stand by itself. The conjunction before changes the meaning, making the thought incomplete. After reading clause 2, we are left hanging. We may ask, “What happened to Mother before cooked dinner?”

In writing English sentences, we need to know the three patterns which are simple sentences, compound sentences and complex sentences.

Simple sentences

A simple sentence is an independent clause (IC). The sentence expresses a complete thought. The simple sentence is in the form of:

Subject (S) + verb (V)

or

subject (S) + verb (V) + complement

The subject tells who or what did something. The verb tells the action (jump, work, think) or condition (is, was, seem).

For example:

i. Many students dislike afternoon lectures. (S V)
ii. Aderi and Nasrul attend field work every Wednesday evening. (S S V complement)
iii. Junaidah studies in the mornings and attends classes every day. (S V V complement)

**Compound sentences**

A compound sentence consists of at least two simple sentences joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction, *and, but, or, so, yet, for* and *nor*, or separate the two sentences with a semicolon. For example:

i. I play bowling, and my husband plays badminton. (S V, and S V)
ii. Anwar played rugby, so Ida went shopping. (S V, so S V)
iii. Syahidan did the gardening; the flower trees need to be trimmed. (S V; S V)

The sentences above:
- contain two independent clauses;
- are joined by a coordinating conjunction; and
- a comma precedes the second IC.
- a semicolon is used between both IC if coordinating conjunction is not used.

**Complex sentence**

A complex sentence consists of one independent clause (IC) and one or more dependent clauses (DC); either IC + DC or IC + DCs. Usually, the clauses can be in any order but the punctuation is different.

When the first sentence is a dependent clause, a comma is before the independent clause. When the independent clause comes first, no punctuation is used. However, subordinating conjunctions (refer to the table below) or subordinators are used to join these clauses. For example:

i. Since he left his home, he has been an independent man. (DC, IC)
ii. She becomes more responsible after their mother passed away. (IC after DC)
iii. After the son wakes up, the mother prepares the breakfast. (DC, IC)
iv. When Irfan goes home next week, he plans to bring a bouquet of flowers for his mother. (DC, IC)
There are different kinds of subordinators. Each subordinators is under the categories of adverb or adjective clauses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinating Conjunctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adverb clauses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Condition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparison</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contrast</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjective clauses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1

*The following are complete sentences and non-sentences. Identify each as P (phrases), C (clauses) or S (sentences).*

1. Mrs Ilyana walked into the classroom. _S_
2. Into the classroom. _P_
3. Before Mrs Ilyana walked into the classroom. _C_
4. Miss Ida strolled using a walking stick. _S_
5. Miss Ida was strolling. _C_
6. A walking stick. _P_
7. In a traffic-jam. _P_
8. Anwar is wandering along the beach. _S_
9. At the beach. _P_
10. Along the beach. _P_
Activity 2

Underline each independent clause. Circle each dependent clause.

1. When Aida gets home, she'll make a telephone call.
2. Aqmar threw a 40th anniversary party for his parents.
3. Syikin is trying to save money because she is flying to Mecca next month.
4. The children arrive home before their parents.
5. While I was studying, my father read the newspaper.

Activity 3

On the line, write S (simple sentence), CP (compound sentence) and CX (complex sentence).

1. The students are doing revision in the public library. ___
2. Since they are a caring couple, they decided two adopt the two young boys. ___
3. During school holiday, I used to accompany my grandparents in the village. ___
4. My head and neck hurt. ___
5. Whenever Min Yin remembers her mother, he cries. ___
6. She was often sad, and sometimes she refused to take any food. ___
7. You can buy me a stack of VCDs, or you can lend me yours everyday. ___
8. Though he stooped at the red traffic light, another vehicle slammed into his car. ___
9. The dress that my husband bought did not fit me, but soon I started on a crush diet. ___
10. The *Orang Misai* still wandered in the streets while police chased him.

**Review**

We have come to the end of Unit 1. In this unit, you have learned:

- the differences of phrases, clauses and sentences
- the classifications of clauses
- the patterns of sentences
UNIT 2

PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – TOPIC SENTENCES

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about writing the development of body paragraphs.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- develop body paragraphs
- state topic sentences in body paragraphs

Definition – What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a collection of sentences that describe, discuss, or explain one central idea. Generally, paragraph is composed of one topic sentence and a number of other sentences that either support or describe the topic sentence. As you will learn later in this book, just as sentences can be combined into paragraphs; paragraphs can be combined into essays.

To better understand what paragraph is, we must look at its individual parts. The three main parts of paragraph are (1) the topic sentence, (2) the supporting detail sentences, and (3) the concluding sentence. The topic sentence and concluding sentences enclose the supporting sentences. A diagram below illustrates this explanation:

<table>
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| SUPPORTING SENTENCES |
| CONCLUDING SENTENCE |
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<tr>
<td>CONCLUDING SENTENCE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
As you read a paragraph, think about a piece of cake. Although, we think of a cake as one food, it is actually made up of different parts. No single part is the cake; it is a good cake only when it includes all of the parts in the right amount. As you read about the parts of a good paragraph, remember this simple analogy to the parts of a good cake.

**Topic sentences**

A topic sentence tells the reader the main idea or thought that the writer is trying to convey. It is a one-sentence summary of the entire paragraph. Thus, it is the most important sentence in a paragraph. It has two parts: a main subject and a controlling idea. The main subject names the subject of the paragraph. The controlling idea tells what the paragraph says about the topic.

The organisation of a paragraph is based on the topic sentence. Although it can be found in any part of the paragraph, the topic sentence is frequently the first sentence in the paragraph. This will give readers an idea what they will read and understand the paragraph more easily.

Study the following examples:

**Cars can be used in many different situations.**

- main subject: Cars
- controlling idea: situations where people use cars

In this sentence, we know that the paragraph is going to discuss something about cars (main subject). It will explain how people use cars in different ways (controlling idea).

**Cars have changed enormously in the past 50 years.**

- main subject: Cars
- controlling idea: the change of cars over time

In this sentence, we know that the paragraph is going to explain how cars have changed over time.
Different cars can appeal to different people.

Here, we know that the paragraph is going to explain how different kinds of people like different cars.

Now look at the next example:
Cars were invented in the 20th century.

In this sentence, the information is a simple fact. It has no good controlling idea that writer can discuss in a paragraph. This is not a good topic sentence because there is no indication of anything more to say about the topic.

Activity 1

In each pair, choose the better topic sentence. Be prepared to explain your choice.

1. a. Bilingual dictionaries can help non-native learners in two very important ways.
   b. In bilingual dictionary, the information is presented in two different languages.

2. a. An accused person has to appear in court as part of a successful trial process.
   b. An accused person must do three important things to ensure a successful trial.
3. a. Fossils are the remains of plants or animals that died a long time ago.
   b. There are three techniques that scientists use to discover the true age of a fossil.

4. a. Computers have changed people's communication patterns.
   b. Computers are expensive.

5. a. Dogs have very specific traits that make them a popular pet.
   b. Chihuahuas, poodles, German shepherds, terriers, and beagles are popular pets.

**Important notes**

A well-written topic sentence controls or guides the whole paragraph. It lets the reader know what the rest of the paragraph will be about. Good writers, on the other hand, know that a topic sentence has the following features:

1. **guide the whole paragraph**

2. **not a well known fact**

   A good topic sentence is not a general fact that everyone accepts as true. For example, *Cars use gasoline* is not a good topic sentence because there is no much more to say about the topic.

3. **specific**

   A good topic sentence is specific. *Minivans are useful* is not a good topic sentence because it is too general. The does not know exactly what to expect. *Minivans are useful to parents with three or more children* is a good topic sentence because it is specific. It gives a reason why minivans are useful and for whom.
4. **not too specific**

5. **controlling idea**

A good topic sentence has a controlling idea, a group of words or a phrase that helps to guide the flow of ideas in the paragraph. *A Toyota Corolla* is the best car for a small family. The underline words are the controlling idea.

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**Activity 2**

Consider what you already know about topic sentences. Then read each of the following groups of sentences. Write the general topic in the space provided. Put a check (√) next to the best topic sentence.

1. **General Topic: digital cameras**
   
   √ a. Digital cameras have more features than film cameras.
   
   ______ b. Digital cameras are expensive.
   
   ______ c. You can delete the pictures on the digital camera.

2. **General Topic: ______________________________**

   ______ a. Some cats are grey
   
   ______ b. Cats are quite, friendly, unique, beautiful, and smart.
   
   ______ c. Cats are easy to take care of.

3. **General Topic: ______________________________**

   ______ a. Pepperoni and mushrooms are two favourite toppings on a pizza from Nino's.
   
   ______ b. Nino's pizzeria has a wide selection of delicious food.
   
   ______ c. Nino's makes good chicken-finger submarine sandwiches.
4. General Topic: 
   ______ a. Few people know the interesting history of snowboarding.
   ______ b. Snowboards are made of fibreglass and have sharp metal edges.
   ______ c. Snowboarding is a winter sport.

5. General Topic: 
   ______ a. My favourite seashell is the size of a football.
   ______ b. It is easiest to find seashell in the morning.
   ______ c. Seashells make great souvenirs.

Important notes

Here are some examples of topic sentences. The main subjects are **bolded**, and the controlling ideas are **underlined**.

1. **SUVs** are becoming more popular than compact cars.
   The reader expects to learn why SUVs are becoming popular.

2. **Electric staplers** are easier to use than other types of staplers.
   The reader expects to learn why electric staplers are so easy to use.

3. **Las Vegas** is a very popular vacation destination in the United States.
   The reader expects to learn why it is a popular vacation destination.

4. There are **three things that people need to be aware of** before **swimming in the ocean**.
   The reader expects to learn about the three things, and this controlling idea in turn limits or narrows the topic.
Activity 3

Read each group sentences. Put a check (✓) next to the best topic sentence. Underline the controlling idea in that sentence.

1.   a. American drinks about 350 million cups of coffee every day.
       b. Coffee is the drink of choice for many Americans.
       c. Most Americans drink coffee in order to wake up in the morning.

2.   a. Yesterday was the tenth of April.
       b. Yesterday I spilled spaghetti sauce on my shirt during my lunch break.
       c. Yesterday I had a terrible day at work.

3.   a. My girlfriend and I had a wonderful time at Busch Gardens theme park yesterday.
       b. We rode three different roller coasters.
       c. My girlfriend and I enjoyed seeing the tigers and the monkeys.

4.   a. In the United States, 721,000 high school athletes participated in track and field last year.
       b. The sport of track and field is very old.
       c. The sport of track and field has increased in popularity in recent years.

5.   a. My iguana’s trip to the vet’s office was a catastrophe.
       b. My iguana scratched the vet when she tried to pick it up.
       c. People do not like iguanas.
Activity 4

The following topic sentences are too general. Rewrite them and add controlling ideas.

1. Smoking is bad.

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

2. It is important to work hard.

   __________________________________________________________

3. The Smithsonian Institution’s museums are located in Washington, D.C.

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

Activity 5

Read each paragraph and write a topic sentence in the space provided. Be sure your sentence includes a controlling idea.

Paragraph 2 (cause-effect)

1. __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________
It burns calories more quickly than any form of exercise. In fact, running burns
twice as many calories as swimming, the second best calories-burning activity.
While swimmers burn around 600 calories per hour, runners can burn up to
1200 calories per hour. Running is also great form of exercise because it can
be done almost anywhere. Finally, running is budget-friendly activity; the only
thing a runner needs to purchase is a good pair of running shoes.

**Paragraph 3 (process)**

2. 

First, you can start by looking in the help wanted section of the newspaper,
you may want to look at online job sites, such as Monster.com or Jobs.com.
After you find an interesting company, try visiting the company in person. Ask
whether there are any openings even if no positions are advertised. Do not
forget to have a good resume ready to give to a prospective employer. Make
sure that it highlights all of your previous employment and education. Finally,
remember that persistence is the key to getting the job you want. By following
these steps, rest assured that you will find a job sooner rather than later.

**Paragraph 4 (classification)**

3. 

Perhaps the best-known type of acting is television acting. This type of acting
generally takes the form of television programs produced on studio lots.
Another form of acting is stage acting. Plays are performed in many different
venues: from large halls to small theatres. The third type of acting is film
acting. Film acting begins with a screenplay, which includes all the written
information about the set and the actors’ dialogues, and grows into a movie. Regardless of the type of acting, it is safe to say that the spectators appreciate the craft of acting and the many hours of enjoyment it provides.

Review

We have come to the end of Unit 2. In this unit, you have learned:

- the main parts of a body paragraph
- the specifying of writing topic sentences
- to identify controlling idea of a paragraph
UNIT 3

SUPPORTING SENTENCES

Overview

In this unit, you will learn how to support topic sentences of paragraphs. As you already know, a topic sentence expresses general idea of a paragraph. Since you have learned how to write good sentences, you are prepared to write supporting sentences to form an effective paragraph.

Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- Elaborate the topic sentence in a variety of forms
- Give specific details about the topic
- Write a complete and effective paragraph

A paragraph begins with a topic sentence. The topic sentence is then expanded into paragraphs by telling how, what, when, where, why, how much, or how many. This information can be discussed in the forms of examples, observations, descriptions, facts or figures, known as the supporting sentences.

A paragraph is considered underdeveloped if the topic sentence is not fully supported. First, you should identify the main idea in a topic sentence. Then, you should provide enough support to elaborate this main idea. Your topic sentence is effective only when the supporting sentences give specific details about the topic; in contrast to vague supporting sentences. At the same time, you must make sure that all the supporting details in the paragraph relate to the topic sentence.

You may encounter problems to write supporting sentences. Try rephrasing the topic sentence as a question, and then answer that question with sufficient details, examples or reasons. Another way is to ask yourselves this question: How can I prove this? Your supporting sentences should provide certain facts or examples which will prove your topic sentence is true.

So, in order to develop your topic sentence, you need to write supporting sentences that prove, or support, your idea. Remember to apply the good sentence structures in writing.
to make your paragraph clear and interesting to be read. Consequently, this shows that you manage to reveal maturity in expressing your ideas.

Activity 1

Write three supporting sentences for each of the following topic sentences.

1. During my leisure hours I prefer swimming than picnicking.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

2. In this era, social problems cause parents to worry a lot.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

3. The alarm spray is a smart security system that can detect intruders and spray immediately.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

4. The most expensive piece of songket was sold during the Umno General Assembly.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

5. *Karnival Geger*, part of the Visit Malaysia 2007 campaign was organised to promote local tourism.
   a. 
   b. 

Activity 2

Expand each of the following topic sentences to form complete paragraphs. Give specific details, examples or reasons to support the topic sentence.

1. Jogging is healthful for several reasons.
2. The violence on television can affect children’s emotional well being.
3. It is difficult to quit smoking for three reasons.

Review

We have now come to the end of Unit 3. The activities in this unit have taken you through the development of paragraph writing from a topic sentence to expanding the controlling idea by giving supporting details. Supporting sentences list the main points of the paragraph.

To be able to write an effective paragraph, you should understand the different sentence patterns and apply them in your writing. Once you have identified the controlling idea of a paragraph, you decide the structure to use to expand your ideas clearly and interestingly.
UNIT 4
PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – CONCLUDING SENTENCES

Overview
In this unit, you will learn how to conclude a paragraph to signal the end of discussion of a topic sentence.

Objectives
By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- understand different features of a concluding sentence
- differentiate the different functions of a concluding sentence
- write simple, compound and complex sentences

A concluding sentence signals the end of the paragraph and reminds the reader of the main idea. At the same time, you should note that a concluding sentence has two main features that are:

1. It is usually the last sentence of a paragraph.
2. It lets the reader know that the paragraph has ended.

A concluding sentence can:
1. restate the main idea of topic sentence.
   This is done by repeating the idea in the topic sentence in different words or summarise the main point or points of the paragraph.

2. reach a logical conclusion by offering a suggestion, giving an opinion, or making a prediction.
Suggestions, opinions or predictions are in relevance to the discussion earlier and never introduce a new idea.

3. A concluding sentence can begin with the transitions consisting of transitional words or phrases which begin the sentence. Refer to the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitions with Concluding Sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>because of this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>certainly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clearly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example of concluding sentences:

1. In conclusion, successful businesses are the result of the actions of good workers.
2. Clearly, buying a used car has more advantages than buying a brand-new car.
3. To summarise, Japanese food is both beautiful to look at and delicious to eat.
4. Indeed, many U.S. cities and regions have a special food for everyone to enjoy.
5. It is clear that fad diets don’t work and may even damage a dieter’s health.

Activity 1

From the choices listed, choose the best concluding sentence for this paragraph. Be prepared to explain your choice to the class.

Animals living in modern zoos enjoy several advantages over animals in the wild. The first advantage is that zoo animals are separated from their natural predators. They are protected, so they live without risk of being attacked. Another advantage is that
someone feeds them regularly, so they do not have to hunt for food. Also, they do not suffer times when food is hard to find. A third advantage of living in zoos is that veterinarians give animals regular checkups, and sick animals get prompt medical attention.

1. In conclusion, because all their needs are taken care of, most zoo animals are healthy and contented.
2. In conclusion, living in a zoo has many advantages or animals, but it also has some disadvantages.
3. In conclusion, zoos keep animals safe from predators.

Activity 2

The following sentences are a scrambled paragraph. Put the sentences in order. This is how to proceed.

Step 1 Find the topic sentence. Write number 1.
Step 2 Find the concluding sentence. Write number 9.
Step 3 Decide which sentences are supporting points and arrange them in order. Look for the words First, Second, Third, and Finally.

Fast Food, Unhealthy Food

a. For example, a 6-inch Pizza Hut Personal Pan pepperoni pizza has 660 calories, and a McDonald’s Big Mac has 560 calories. _____
b. In conclusion, a quick meal at a fast-food restaurant may be delicious and convenient, but it is definitely not a healthy way to eat. _____
c. Second, a lot of the calories from fast food are from fat. _____
d. Third, fast-food items such as hamburgers and French fries contain high amounts of salt.

e. Fast food is extremely popular in the United States, but it is not very good for you.

f. First of all, most fast food is very high in calories.

g. A typical meal at McDonald’s contains as much as 1,370 milligrams of sodium.

h. Finally, add a sugary soft drink to your fast-food meal, and you pound the last nail into the heart of any nutritionist.

i. For instance, a portion of Nachos Supreme from Taco Bell contains 26 grams of fat, and a Big Mac contains 30 grams.

Review

We have come to the end of Unit 4. In this unit, you have learned:

- The necessary elements of a concluding sentence
- The various ways to end a concluding sentence
- To develop a body paragraph with from the topic sentence to the concluding sentence

We hope that the activities in this unit have given you a clear format the development of a body paragraph. You need to practice regularly on the development of a paragraph by implementing the lessons from Unit 1 till Unit 4. Writing requires skills to deliver your ideas in writing form. You may have good ideas in mind but the problem will be when you begin to hold a pen. Reading will also help you a lot in elaborating points in relation to chosen topics.

Find time to read and practice writing paragraphs a lot before you write an essay.
UNIT 5
OUTLINING AND DRAFTING

Overview
In this unit, you will learn about outlining and drafting essays.

Objectives
By the end of this unit you should be able to:
  o understand and apply the process of writing
  o do prewriting
  o organize your ideas
  o form an outline
  o Write the first draft

Writing involves a process of planning, transcribing and finally reviewing your ideas. During this process, many activities will happen from prewriting, to writing and more often than not, rewriting.

There are four steps in the process of writing. Firstly, you do prewriting; second, you organize the ideas; third, you write a rough draft; and finally, you edit and revise the rough draft before you write the final draft.

Prewriting
This is the first step involved in a writing process. After you have known the topic you need to collect ideas to explain the topic. In other words, you brainstorm for relevant ideas.

There are several techniques to get ideas including listing, mind mapping, clustering, free writing as well as keeping a journal. What you need to do is only to write words or phrases that come into your mind. You should keep writing until the flow of ideas stops.

Then, you refer to the chose topic and choose the relevant words or phrases. You may remove the irrelevant words or phrases in order to stay more focused. Next, you categorize these words and phrases according to subtopics which will be the main supporting points. Select the primary and secondary supporting points to support each
main supporting point. At the end, you are going to have an outline of a paragraph and the expansion is an outline of an essay.

Outlining

An outline is based on the ideas thought during the brainstorming activity. Organization of ideas to form an outline is the second process of writing.

Below is a simple outline of a paragraph:

- **Topic sentence**
  - A. Main supporting sentence
  - B. Main supporting sentence
  - C. Main supporting sentence
  - etc

- **Concluding sentence**

Next, is a detailed outline of a paragraph:

- **Topic sentence**
  - A. Main supporting sentence
    1. Supporting detail
    2. Supporting detail
    3. Supporting detail
  - B. Main supporting sentence
    1. Supporting detail
    2. Supporting detail
    3. Supporting detail
  - C. Main supporting sentence
    1. Supporting detail
    2. Supporting detail
    3. Supporting detail
  - etc

- **Concluding sentence**

In both outlines above, main supporting sentences A, B, and C are the main points of a paragraph which support the related topic sentence. In the detailed outline above, supporting sentences 1, 2, and 3 elaborates each main supporting sentence. Of course, the number of main supporting sentence and supporting details may vary according to your elaboration of a title.
For a detailed outline of an essay, you may refer below:

I. Introduction
   - Introductory statements
   - Thesis statement

II. Body
   - First supporting idea
     - Transition, topic sentence
     - Discussion, examples, and analysis
     - Conclusion (optional)
   - Second supporting idea
     - Transition, topic sentence
     - Discussion, examples, and analysis
     - Conclusion (optional)
   - Third supporting idea
     - Transition, topic sentence
     - Discussion, examples, and analysis
     - Conclusion (optional)

III. Conclusion
   - Transition, statement reflecting thesis statement
   - Restate key points
   - Ending statement that provokes thought (optional)

Drafting

Once you have prepared an outline, you can start writing a rough draft easily. This process is easy because you have already organized your ideas. Use the outline as a guide. You should write your rough draft as quickly as you can without stopping to worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. You may see many errors in your rough draft. Don’t worry! We will fix the errors later. However, if you feel like changing, adding, or deleting any information in the outline, you may do so because this is the rough draft.
Revising and Editing
Once your rough draft is ready, you will do two other writing processes. Revising means review the issues of content and organisation. For instance, when you revise an essay, you need to check if each body paragraph discusses of the one topic sentence and controlling idea, do the supporting points support the topic sentence; and is any transition words used to indicate the connection of ideas. Editing means checking on grammar, punctuation, and mechanics.

Activity 1

Fill in the blanks to complete the outline.

Topic: Discuss the differences between staying alone and staying with housemates.

Topic sentence:

1. One of the differences concerns expenses.
   A. __________________________
   B. __________________________

2. Another contrast is in the housekeeping chores.
   A. __________________________
   B. __________________________

3. __________________________
A. You have more privacy if you live alone.

B. If you live with housemates, you have to come up with a common set of rules.

Concluding sentence:

Review

We have come to the end of Unit 5. In this unit, you have learned:

- The process of writing includes four main steps: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising and editing.
UNIT 6
PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT – UNITY AND COHERENCE

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about unity and coherence when writing paragraphs or essays.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- focus on one main idea in each paragraph
- ensure that a paragraph is in unity
- achieve coherence in each paragraph

In the process of revising and editing your rough draft, we will also consider two other important elements of a good paragraph.

Unity

When a paragraph has unity, it means that all the supporting sentences are related to the topic sentence and its controlling idea. The paragraph discusses only one idea. From beginning to end, each sentence is directly related to the topic. Good writer stays on topic by making sure that each supporting detail sentence relates to the topic sentence.
Activity 1

Read the following paragraph. Underline the sentence that does not belong.

Cleaning 101

(1) Cleaning your room is not difficult if you follow some simple guidelines. (2) First, you must pick up all your clothes off the floor. (3) Then you need to decide which clothes are dirty and which are clean and put them in their appropriate places. (4) It is important to wash your clothes with good-quality laundry detergent to keep them looking neat and clean. (5) After that, you should put away any items that are out of place. (6) The next step is to dust all of your furniture, such as your nightstand or your dresser. (7) The final step is to mop or vacuum the floor, depending on the surface. (8) When you have finished these steps, you can relax as you think about your good work.

To attempt the activity, you can use a purpose statement to help establish your purpose, and you can also use it to help establish unity. You can also check to see whether each sentence follows the writer’s purpose statement: “The purpose of this paragraph is to explain how to clean your room.” Study these questions and answers about the above paragraph.

1. Does the first sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

2. Does the second sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

3. Does the third sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?
4. Does the fourth sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

5. Do sentences 5-7 maintain the unity of the paragraph?

6. What about sentence 8? Does it belong?

Activity 2

Read the following paragraph. Two of the sentences do not belong. Write the numbers of these two sentences and be prepared to explain why the sentences do not belong.

The Many Faces of Acting

(1) Modern acting comes in a variety of forms and can be classified in three ways: television acting, stage acting, and film acting. (2) Perhaps the best-known type of acting is television acting. (3) This type of acting generally takes the forms of television programs produced on studio lots. (4) Many actors started their careers as waiters or waitresses in Hollywood. (5) Another form of acting is stage acting. (6) In stage acting, the same performance is repeated, and the sets stay the same for each performance. (7) The shows are performed in places from larger halls to small theatres. (8) Plays that are performed on stage can be very enjoyable. (9) Finally, there is film acting. (10) Film acting begins with screenplay, which includes all the written information about the set and the actors’ dialogues, and grows into movie. (11) Whichever from it takes-television, stage, or film-acting is form of entertainment that many people enjoy.
Coherence
A piece of writing is said to have coherence when all of its parts are organised and flow smoothly and logically from one idea to the next. Writers strive for coherence so that the reader can follow your ideas easily without any sudden jumps. The three important features of coherence are:

- Logical order
- Repetition of key words
- Use of transitional words and phrases

It is important to follow a logical division of ideas in your writing. Sometimes students worry that using the same word again and again can sound too repetitive. To avoid this, you can also use pronouns to take the place of these key nouns. Similarly, use transitions in your writing to show relationships among ideas.

Activity 3

The following sentences form a paragraph, but they are not in the best order. Read the sentences and then number them from 1 to 5 to indicate the best order.
a. _____ He starts his day by putting on face makeup and a large red nose.
b. _____ When he arrives, he puts on a performance that includes jokes, balloon animal, funny stories, and magic tricks.
c. _____ When his performance ends and the audiences is happy, Michael returns home, satisfied that he has done his job as a clown well.
d. _____ Michael’s typical day at work is far from ordinary.
e. _____ He then puts on his oversized shoes and gets into his polka-dotted car and drives to different location each day, usually a birthday party or other special event.

Review

We have come to the end of Unit 6. In this unit, you have learned:
• that unity means a paragraph discusses one, and only one, main idea.
• that a paragraph need coherence. A coherent paragraph is easy to read because it flows smoothly from beginning to end.
UNIT 7

TRANSITION SIGNALS

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about words or phrases which are used to show how two ideas are connected to each other.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- Classify suitable transition signals for specific organisations
- Use transition signals to connect two ideas
- Combine ideas using transition signals to form sentences

When you do revision of an essay, this is where you can improve the focus, content, as well as organization of ideas. You wish to make your ideas flow continuously in order for readers to understand your discussion of topics. As discussed in the previous unit, a way to achieve coherence is through the use of transition signals in your piece of writing.

Transition signals

They are connecting words or phrases to connect your sentences and paragraphs together in order to show smooth connection of your ideas. They direct readers the order and flow of ideas in writing so readers will be able to read easily.

Each transition signal shows the relationship of one sentence to another; or of one paragraph to another, or it can also be of an idea to another. Since it is important that you use transitions signals in your writing, the following table summarises these patterns and their transition signals. There are several patterns of organization depending on your purpose of writing. Remember, the transition signals are used in paragraphs and essays writing. Once you have understood the usage, you should learn how to use them correctly in your writing.
Next, you are going to read examples of paragraphs using the transition signals. As you read them, you should notice that some transition signals lead you progressively and imply the development of an idea, while others may make you compare ideas or draw conclusions from the preceding thoughts.

Transitions between Ideas

To make the movement of ideas between sentences in a paragraph smooth you should use transition signals. Readers will not have problems understanding your ideas in writing since the paragraph has coherence.

You should recall what is describes in Unit 1 the rules to apply when you have different types of sentences that you wish to combine.
Stated below are examples of sentences using transitions signals for different organizations:

**Sequence:** Shaza was born first in 1996. Two years later, her brother, Zaqwan was born. Next there was a break of four years before a set of twin sisters were born.

**Cause:** for the last ten days, Kampung Merual has experienced heavy rain. As a result of this, the water level has risen to 10 metres high.

**Comparison:** Just like Shah Alam, Ipoh also attracts visitors with its orchids along the roads in towns.

**Contrasting:** Success is impossible without confidence; however, overconfidence leads to failure.

**Transitions between Paragraphs**

Just as it is important to use transitions signals to show connection between ideas within a paragraph (see above), it is also important to use transition signals between paragraphs to show how one paragraph is related to another. These transition signals can tell you as readers if the topic of the next paragraph follows the same line of thought or reverses direction.

Next, are samples of paragraphs using some of the transitions signals:

**Sample paragraphs 1**

This popular programme originated in the Netherlands. Many different countries have adapted the programme. On Big Brother, ten people live in a house together. The housemates cannot contact the outside world. There is no TV, radio, telephone, the Internet, newspapers, or any other forms of media. The contestants have to share the housework. In addition, Big Brother gives them a special job or task every week. These tasks test their ability to work as a team.

**Sample paragraphs 2**

Riots and fights never happen at the Olympics. However, they are common after soccer games. In 1985, 39 Italian fans died in a mob riot after the European Cup Final. As a result, the Japanese are particularly worried about the fans from England. Therefore, last Friday, England banned more than 1,000 possible troublemakers from traveling to Japan.

**Sample paragraphs 3**

So, how do you know if a psychic is genuine or not? It isn’t easy. Although many experiments have been done to prove or disapprove psychic powers, the results are usually unsatisfactory and inconclusive. Various organizations have offered
RM1,000,000 to anyone who can prove that they have psychic powers. Unfortunately, none of the psychics who have tried have won the prize money. There is good reason to be careful if you are looking for a psychic.

Activity 1

Complete the sentence after the semicolon by adding a transitional word. Use a different transitional word each time.

1. Most married women are no longer simply “housewives”; ____________________

2. Many men work in what used to be “female” professions; ____________________

3. Living in an extended family has a lot of advantages to career parents; ______________

4. Children without much religious practices are easily influenced to involve in social problems; ______________

5. Fast-food is mouth-watering; ______________

Review

We have come to the end of Unit 7. In this unit, you have learned:
that transition signals are used to link ideas within a paragraph as well as between paragraphs
UNIT 8

REVISING AND EDITING – COMMON ERRORS

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about editing and revising paragraphs.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- do revising of your writing
- edit your writing
- identify fragment or run-on sentences

The same procedure will take place after you are done with your writing either a paragraph or an essay. The next stage is to revise your writing.

REVISING

When you revise your writing, you can:
- add new ideas,
- eliminate irrelevant sentences, or
- rearrange ideas to improve the organization

At the same time, you revise your writing for support, unity, and coherence.

It is also a good idea to have someone else read your paper to revise and suggest on ways to improve your writing. You can ask this person if he can easily understand your paragraph. Once this is done, you read the suggestions that your partners have noted. You then decide which suggestions you agree with. Next, you write a revised draft of your paragraph or essay.

EDITING

Finally, in editing process you check for grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation that they are correct.
Punctuation

A. Three comma rules:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Put a comma after a time order signal that comes before the subject</td>
<td>Finally, I completed writing the book. At 8 am, I fell asleep in front of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the beginning of a sentence. Except then, soon, and now.</td>
<td>television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Put a comma after the first sentence in a compound sentence. Put</td>
<td>I was too tired to think, so I just told my housemate to buy any food for dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the comma before the coordinating conjunction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Put a comma between the items in a series of three or more items</td>
<td>White, blue, yellow and red are the colours of Malaysian flag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(words, praises, or clauses)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Apostrophes

The apostrophe mark (‘) has three main uses in English:

To make contractions – in conversations and in informal writing. For example:

- isn’t is not
- she’s she is
- won’t will not
- they’d they had/ they would

To make nouns and some pronouns possessive – as to show ownership. For example:

- the orders of the doctor or the doctor’s orders
- the complaints of my neighbour or my neighbour’s complaints
- the car of Hanah or Hanah’s car
- pen of someone or someone’s pen

To make letters of the alphabet plural – use an apostrophe +s to make letters of the alphabet plural. For example:

1. There are four s’s and four i’s in the word Mississippi.
2. My son got 13 A’s for his final semester examination.
Fragments
A sentence having both a subject and a verb is complete. If a sentence does not have either a subject or a verb, then it is called a fragment. Three problems of a fragment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fragment</th>
<th>Correction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No subject</td>
<td>Add a subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loves to read newspapers</td>
<td>My elder brother loves to read newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late at night.</td>
<td>late at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No verb</td>
<td>Add a verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The food appetizing.</td>
<td>The food looks appetizing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No subject or verb</td>
<td>Add another sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And big, brown eyes.</td>
<td>The mysterious man has dark, curly hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and big, brown eyes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Run-on sentences
This is when two simple sentences are run together without correct punctuation to separate them. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Run-on sentences</th>
<th>Correction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firas a sweet girl she</td>
<td>Make two simple sentences. Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loves rabbits.</td>
<td>punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firas is a sweet girl,</td>
<td>Firas is a sweet girl. She loves rabbits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she loves rabbits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 1

Read the student’s first draft. Answer the questions at the end of the draft.

Night

Night is the best time for me. I call my friends. We go to a club. And have a good time. My brother doesn’t like to come with us. He stays home and studies. My friends and I dance and talk for a long time. We drink coffee and watch movies. My brother thinks that I should not watch movies. He says I will waste my time. Then, we each go to our own home. At home, I drink one more cup of coffee. And listen to the music of silence. I look out the window. How beautiful is the moon! Some men have walked on it. I look at the moon. Think about my future. The clock says midnight. Everything silent, serene, and perfect. I feel like midnight, too.

Questions:
1. What do you like about this paragraph?
2. Is the paragraph about one main idea?
3. Are all of the sentences relevant to the main idea? Are there any irrelevant sentences?

Activity 2

Write F next to the fragments and S next to the complete sentences.

1. My nephew is a special person in my life. ___
2. Only six months old. ___
3. Likes to wake up at three in the morning. ___
4. I love her. ___
5. Great magnificent house. ___
Activity 3

Write RO next to the run-on sentences and CS next to the correct sentences.

1. The students are doing revision in the public library.
2. Since they are a caring couple they decided two adopt the two young boys.
3. During school holiday I used to accompany my grandparents in the village.
4. I used to accompany my grandparents in the village during school holiday.
5. Whenever Min Yin remembers her mother he cries.

Review

We have come to the end of Unit 8. In this unit, you have learned:

- how to revise your own writing or peers' writings
- sentences that complete or incomplete
- ways to write correct sentences
UNIT 9

WRITING SHORT TEXT - INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about writing introductory paragraph of an essay.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- write an introductory paragraph
- provide a background information on a subject matter
- write a sentence of thesis statement

Earlier units you have been taught various skills to be able to write including writing different kinds of sentences (Unit 1); to use transition signals (Unit 7); to write topic sentences and supporting details (Units 2 and 3). Once you have enough practice on these skills, you will now learn how to write complete essays. This is possible if you have understood the basic essay structure.

An essay is an extension of paragraphs. Instead of you writing a paragraph, you need to write a set of paragraphs about one topic. As in writing a paragraph, writing an essay requires you to support one main point. Commonly, you are expected to write a five-paragraph essay, however depending on purposes certain essays may be longer in term of the number of paragraphs.

Parts of an Essay

An essay has three main sections: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Each section has its own special function. In this unit, you are going to learn on writing introductory paragraph only.

For an essay, a good introduction is very crucial to attract attention of readers. As the writer, it should give you direction as you develop your ideas. In the same occasion, you would want readers to continue reading the complete essay which you have written.
The introductory paragraph states the central idea for the entire essay. It provides some background information on the subject. At the end of the introductory paragraph, you should be able to develop a thesis statement of the essay.

It is also an important paragraph since your audience will have an idea of how you have organised your ideas. To summarise the functions of the introductory paragraph are:

i. provide background information
ii. capture the reader’s interest
iii. state the thesis

Next, we are going to discuss the first two functions of the introductory paragraph. These functions are done simultaneously. There are a few methods to capture or arouse the readers’ interest, as outlined below. You may use any one of the methods or a combination of methods to begin your essay writing. Nevertheless, as writers you are encouraged to be as creative as you can.

Move from general statement of topic to thesis statement – the introductory paragraph begins with a background information of the topic and gradually narrows down to a specific thesis statement.

Use an anecdote – the introductory paragraph begins with an interesting story which relates to your topic as a way to capture interest of readers.

Use a quotation – you can quote an authority on your subject; or highlight an interesting quotation from an article or use a proverb, or even a saying.

Ask a question – to engage readers in the subject by asking one or more questions. Readers may want to read further to discover your presentation.

Present facts and statistics – interesting facts and statistics on your subjects

Thesis Statement

The third function is to develop the thesis statement which introduces the main idea of the entire essay. Often, it is the last sentence of the introduction. There are a few ways to write the thesis statement:

- To state the specific topic of the essay
- To list the subtopics of the main topic
- To mention the method of organization
Activity 1

Write an introduction for each of the following topics using any one of the given techniques.

1. An event I will never forget.
2. "People are only interested in making money." Discuss this statement.
3. The effects of child-awareness on branded goods.

Review

We have now come to the end of Unit 9. In this unit you have learned:

- the content of introductory paragraphs
- the ways to introductory paragraphs
- content of thesis statement
UNIT 10

WRITING SHORT TEXT – BODY AND CONCLUDING PARAGRAPHS

Overview

In this unit, you will learn about writing body and concluding paragraphs of an essay.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- 

An essay is an extension of paragraphs. Instead of you writing a paragraph, you need to write a set of paragraphs about one topic. As in writing a paragraph, writing an essay requires you to support one main point. Commonly, you are expected to write a five-paragraph essay, however depending on purposes certain essays may be longer in term of the number of paragraphs.

Parts of an Essay

An essay has three main sections: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Each section has its own special function. In this unit, you are going to learn on writing introductory paragraph only.

Activity 1

Write an introduction for each of the following topics using any one of the given techniques.
We have now come to the end of Unit 9. In this unit you have learned:

- the content of introductory paragraphs
- the ways to introductory paragraphs
- content of thesis statement
UNIT 11
COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

Overview
In this unit, you will learn how to write comparison and contrast essay.

Objectives
By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- Differentiate between comparison and contrast
- Choose methods of organization
- Write thesis statement for comparison-contrast essays
- Learn the usage of coordinating conjunctions in writing
- Use comparative adjectives to show differences and similarities

In this unit, you will learn how to write about similarities and differences of two items. When you discuss the similarities between them you are comparing; when you discuss the differences you are contrasting them. However, make sure that the two things that you plan to compare or contrast belong to the same general class. For example, you would want to compare and contrast a terrace house and a bungalow; badminton and football; or pizza and roti canai.

When do you choose to write a comparison or contrast essay? Often, before you need to make decisions to choose between two items, you would highlight similarities and differences between them. This thorough discussion is done by supporting a point or persuading readers.

Either to show similarities or differences, it is easier if you use coordinating conjunctions discussed in the Unit 7 or you can use comparative adjectives.

As a guidance, the following sentence patterns are useful to write topic sentences for paragraphs as well as thesis statements in essays of comparison and or contrast:

1. There are several differences between _______ and _______, similarities
2. ________ and ________ are similar in many ways.
   a. different

3. ________ is different from ________ in many ways.
   a. similar to

4. ________ and ________ have several things in common.
   a. many

5. A comparison between ________ and ________ reveals ________ shows ________ demonstrates

Methods of Organization

When you write a comparison/contrast essay, you may choose either the block method or the point-by-point method. Both methods work well depending on how you support your points. The outline for them are given below:

Comparison/Contrast: The block method

- **Introduction**
  - Background information
  - Identify the two things
  - State purpose in thesis statement

- **Similarities**
  - Supporting sentences
  - (one paragraph or several paragraphs)

- **Differences**
  - Supporting sentences

- **Conclusion**
  - Restate purpose
  - Summarize similarities and differences
  - Draw a conclusion

Comparison/Contrast: The point-by-point method

- **Introduction**
  - Background information
  - Identify the two things
  - State purpose
Identify points to be compared and contrasted in thesis statement

Point 1
Comparison supporting point
Contrasting supporting point

Point 2
Comparison supporting point
Contrasting supporting point

Point 3
Comparison supporting point
Contrasting supporting point

Conclusion
Restate purpose
Summarize similarities and differences
Draw a conclusion

Examples:
In the earlier days, typical university students lived on university campus but today many college students are allowed to stay out campus. (Coordinating conjunction)

Both students of the past and present go to universities because they want to keep learning. (Coordinating conjunction)

Most students today are busier than students of the past. (Comparative adjective)

Today students have more difficulty to be financially sponsored than students of the past. (Comparative adjective)

Organizing Ideas
After you have decided on a topic to write in relation to comparison and contrast essay, you may adopt Venn Diagrams as to help you categorise your ideas. An example of the Venn Diagram is shown below to show the similarities and differences between basketball and baseball.

BASKETBALL  BASEBALL
In the Venn Diagram above, two circles are shown. The parts of the circles that do not overlap contain differences between those two sports. The parts that overlap signifies similarities between them. In other words, you may write relevant characteristics of two items that you are studying in these circles as part of your outline.

In your concluding sentence, you will give your opinion about the two sports or types of sports you compared. You can begin the concluding sentence with a phrase that indicates opinion: *In my opinion, To my mind, If you ask me.*

---

**Activity 1**

*Below is the list of sports. Write the sports according to the types given in the chart below. Some sports may fit into more than one category.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>baseball</th>
<th>ice skating</th>
<th>basketball</th>
<th>karate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>soccer</td>
<td>bowling</td>
<td>swimming</td>
<td>golf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rock climbing</td>
<td>tennis</td>
<td>scuba diving</td>
<td>skiing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ice hockey</td>
<td>horseback riding</td>
<td>running</td>
<td>volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sumo</td>
<td>rugby</td>
<td>badminton</td>
<td>archery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Dangerous</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIT 12
CAUSE AND EFFECT

Overview

In this unit, you will learn how to organize information using cause and effect order.

Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:
- identify the differences between the definitions of cause and effect.
- organise information under causes.
- organise information under effects.
- write information in either cause-effect or effect-cause method.

A cause-effect essay type is written to serve one of two purposes. Either it shows the effects of a thing or event, or it explains the causes of a things or event. Cause-effect essays deal with the action/result relationship.

As a writer, when you are able to identify factors that lead to certain consequences it means you have identified the cause of something. On the other hand, if you discover the results, they are the effects. They can be written to inform or to persuade. Remember to refer to Unit 7 for the list of discourse markers suitable for cause and effect order.
As a guidance, the following sentence patterns are useful in writing topic sentences for introductory paragraphs as well as thesis statements for cause-and-effect writing:

1. There are several causes of between _________ and _________.
   reasons for effects of

2. There are two main reasons why _________.
   a few several

3. _________ has had several important effects on _________.
   many a few

CHOOSING A SUBJECT

In a cause-effect essay, it is important to choose a topic that fits a cause-effect relationship. In the other words, you need to choose a topic and then describe its cause or its effects. Consider the following charts that show the relationship of cause and effects:

A. One cause, one effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrorist attacked the United States on September 11, 2001</td>
<td>It is more difficult for international students to obtain a student visa to study in the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility on the night of March 17, 1977, was poor.</td>
<td>Seven cars were involved in an accident that killed four people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are living longer.</td>
<td>Social Security cannot provide the same benefits to everyone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Several causes, one effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim takes good notes in class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim studies his notes every night.</td>
<td>Jim gets an A on his exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim participates in class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. One cause, several effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People lose faith in their country’s currency.</td>
<td>The values of the currency decreases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prices on most goods increase dramatically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exchange rates for the currency decrease in value.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ORGANISATION OF A CAUSE-EFFECT ESSAY

Once you have chosen a topic, you have to decide to write about either the causes of your topic, the effects of your topic, or both. Good writers focus on immediate and direct causes or effects. Here is an example of an outline in which the writer looks at the effects of climate on recreational choices and health:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Warm water ⇒ swimming and surfing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Socialising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Individuals sports like golf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Team outdoor sports: soccer, flag football, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If an essay has a term of arranging, you may have doubt in either chronological order or the order of importance. The chronological order is adopted in presenting causes involving historical events. You may want to begin from the most recent move to the later causes. It is still acceptable if you move vice versa. The second way to develop causes is in their order of importance. Either you discuss the most important first or the least important first.
Below is an essay plan on cause/effect order:

**Introduction**
1. Background information about the situation you are analysing.
2. Describe the situation.
3. Identify its main causes or effects.

**Body paragraphs**
In each paragraph explain
1. One cause or effect
2. State supporting details
3. Concluding sentence

**Conclusion**
1. Summarise the main causes or effects.
2. Draw a conclusion or make a prediction.

---

**Activity 1**

*Read these ten essay titles. Put an X next to the five that are most appropriate for a cause-effect essay. Be prepared to defend your choices.*

1. The Cause of War
2. Why I Decided to Join the Navy
3. The Beatles: The Greatest Group Ever?
4. My First Day Working at McDonald’s
5. The Impact of Death Penalty
6. East Coast Beaches versus West Coast Beaches
7. The Damaging Effects of a Tsunami
8. Why I Choose To Attend Miami-Dade College
9. Inside the Oprah Show
10. A Comparison of Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

**Activity 2**

*Here is an outline for an essay that discusses the harmful effects of smoking. The outline is missing important pieces. Use the answer below to fill in the missing pieces.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Hook</th>
<th>Physical/ appearance</th>
<th>teeth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>the main points</td>
<td>Addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis statement</td>
<td>smokers</td>
<td>Thesis statement</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Title: The Harmful Effects of Smoking**

I. Introduction
   A. 
   B. Connecting information
   C. 

II. ____________________________________________ effects
   A. Stains 
   B. Causes wrinkles
   C. Causes premature aging

III. Physiological effects
    A. 

B. Exercise is difficult
C. 

IV. ___________________________ effects
   A. Non smokers usually do not socialize with ___________________________
   B. Cannot smoke in many restaurants
   C. Becoming socially ___________________________ (passing of no smoking in restaurants laws)

V. Conclusion
   A. Restate ___________________________
   B. Summarise ___________________________
   C. Concluding statement: a suggestion, ___________________________, or prediction

Review

We have now come to the end of Unit 12. In this unit, you have learned how to organize information in cause-effect-order using appropriate transition signals. In addition, you have also learned to write appropriately topic sentences as well as thesis statements.

To develop your writing skill using cause-effect order, you are encouraged to read as much as you can. Then, think critically on what you have read. Finally using the essay plan, organize your ideas accordingly.
UNIT 13

WRITING JOB APPLICATION LETTERS

Overview
In this unit, you will learn how to write job application letters to be sent to potential employers.

Objectives
At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- Write good job application letters
- Use the correct format in writing job application letter

You need to write a job application letter if you are applying for a known position. This letter represents you as it is the first contact that you make with potential employers. Thus, it is crucial for the letter to be clear, concise and straight to the point. As a consequence, the employers would be keen to check your resume attached to your application letter.

Job Application Letter

It is also known as cover letter which accompanies your resume. This letter supports your resume thus it is sufficient to highlight one or two of your strengths, accomplishments or abilities. It is crucial that you write a well-written application letter since your objective is for potential employers to be attracted to call for an interview since there will be a number of applicants for certain positions. Avoid giving details of your entire employment history and school history because your resume contains the details.

Writing an application letter is not easy as it seems. Planning an application letter is time-consuming if it is your first time to write it. So, you may need to spend time to edit and rewrite it before it is ready to be mailed. In the process of editing, you need to keep referring to the job advertisement because you need to relate criteria required as stated in the advertisement to qualification that you have as far as possible. In brief, the application letter should reflect your personality, and your attitude towards your work and life.
Addressing job application letters

On the top, whether it is on the right or left hand sides, you should state your address and the date. Next, on the left hand side you should address it to potential employers by including the name of the person, his/her title, company name, address and any position reference number. Ensure that you spell the names correctly. Find ways to do this. It gives a poor first impression in case a letter is incorrectly addressed or misspelled.

The Opening Paragraph

The first paragraph should simply state why you are writing to them. If it is an advertised position, mention the position title, source of advertisement, and reason for writing. If you are “cold calling” a company then you should specify that you are applying for any current or future employment opportunities.

An easy way to start this paragraph is with the following statement: "Please find enclosed my CV, which I am forwarding to you as an application for the position of......"

The main body of job application letters:

The main body of the letter should be two to three paragraphs at the most. Here is where you tell them what you have to offer and why they should read your CV. This is a good time to review the job advertisement. In one paragraph (two at the most) you need to summarise your experience and skills in response to the position requirements as per the advertisement.

Analyse your career and summarise it in a few sentences, highlight what you specialise in, or how many years in the industry you might have, or even the level that you have reached. This paragraph should direct the reader to your CV and should sell you on some unique points that you might have.

A good way to start this paragraph is with a statement like this: "You will see from my enclosed CV..." then go ahead and tell them something about your career which will immediately get their interest.

The next part of the body of the letter should be a brief description of your personal skills that are job-related. For instance, if they need someone with good co-ordination skills, then ensure you mention something to that effect. If it is communication or perhaps leadership skills they value, then tell them that you have these. Use adjectives like "demonstrated ability", "well developed", "strong".

The Closing Paragraph
The closing paragraph should ask for some action from the recipient. This is where you ask for an interview. It should also state where and how they can reach you, and it should thank the recipient for giving you the opportunity to apply. You can include things like “should you require further information.....”

In addition, give your contact number(s), the best time to reach you, if necessary, as well as e-mail address, if you have one. This will make the job of the recipient easy if they decide to call you for an interview.

Finish the letter by adding a closing remark, either “Yours sincerely”, “Yours faithfully” or whatever you feel comfortable with and obeying general letter writing etiquette. Leave a few spaces for your signature and then place your full name.

Outline – Application Letter

Date
Sender’s name
Sender’s address

Recipient’s name
Recipient’s address

Salutation

Title of Letter

First paragraph
State position applied
State academic status
Source of advertisement

Second paragraph
Describe how/what you could contribute
Show how your qualification would benefit the company
Relate your background/qualification to the position requirements
Short

Third paragraph
Describe your interest to the company
Highlight your knowledge about the company
Point out your eagerness to join the company

Final paragraph
Request for an interview
Include your phone number, e-mail address, specific hours of your availability (if necessary)
Finally, before you mail the application letter, read it over again, making sure that it is perfect. Check that the letter:

- is one page
- has no grammar or spelling errors.
- is in response to the job requirements.
- flows in term of idea
- is easy to read

A sample of good application letter

Adam Ahmad
198, Taman Mamur
71800 Nilai
Negeri Sembilan Darul Khusus

1 November 2007

Mr Robert Ferrari
Human Resource Manager
Nestle Company
75500 Petaling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Dear Mr Ferrari,

Advertising/Sales Executive
My B.S. in Advertising and related work experience qualify me for the Advertising/Sales Executive position described in the *New Straits Times* dated 15 November 2007.

Since graduating from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in June, I have been working on the sales staff of *Consumer News*, a monthly application that provides Klang Valley residents with information on food, drug, and cosmetic products. Through direct sales, I have helped to expand the magazine’s advertising by 15 percent, and I have also helped improve the format of the advertising section.

While working on my degree at UPM, I took several confuting projects for businesses. I assisted in designing a sales campaign for the Nestle Company and wrote mailers for three retail stores. I also have taken a broad range of classes in management, marketing, graphic art, and sales.

I am particularly interested in beginning a career with a young company that is growing as quickly as yours. I believe my interest in communication and my experience in sales and advertising would make an asset to your staff.

Please call (013-3334444) or e-mail me (adam@yahoo.com) to arrange for an interview to further discuss how I can contribute to your organization.

Sincerely,

Adam Ahmad
Enclosure: Resume

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**Activity 1**

Discuss the weaknesses of this application letter.

---

198, Taman Makmur
71800 Nilai
Negeri Sembilan Darul Khusus

November 1, 2007

Mr Robert Ferrari
Human Resource Manager
Nestle Company
75500 Petaling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Dear Mr Ferrari,

Advertising/Sales Executive
My college degree, the course I have taken, plus my sales experience have given me valuable knowledge that will make me an asset to your company. I have experience dealing with the public, and I am capable of taking on my responsibilities required of this position.

The enclosed resume summarizes details of my coursework and work experience. I believe that not having a full time work experience will not hinder my ability to contribute to your company, as I have scored good grades in all of my coursework. I will be glad to furnish references on request.

I would very much like to work for your company, and I am available for an interview. This job is really important to me because I am the sole breadwinner of my family. Please contact me as soon as possible for an interview.

Sincerely,

Adam Ahmad

Enclosure: Resume

We have come to the end of Unit 13. The activities in this unit have taught you the process of writing a job application letter once you have determined on a position.

Since, an application letter acts as a sales tool that sells you as potential employee, make sure that you type and edit the letter any times before you post it. It is as important as the resume. You want to make the employer interested

Finally, when you are called for an interview, this is the platform for you to demonstrate your skills and abilities.
UNIT 14
LETTERS OF COMPLAINTS

Overview

In this unit, you will learn how to produce letters of complaint.

Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- use the correct format of writing complaint letters.
- express complaints effectively

In life, unsatisfactory incidents do happen. Thus, you feel like complaining to express your grievances. A way to do it is to write letters known as complaint letters. For it to be effective, you should know the appropriate format.

CONTENT OF A COMPLAINT LETTER

Written correctly, a letter of complaint can be very effective at getting you the results you want. You might even get more than you expected. Many businesses appreciate knowing when something goes wrong, and they will do what they can to create goodwill with a dissatisfied customer.
Before looking at the content, you should remember to write as much details as necessary to ensure the receiver understands what you are complaining about. Secondly, if it is the first letter of complaint, do not threaten the receiver unless the situation is very serious. No matter how angry you could be, sending a rude, discourteous, inflammatory letter will not help you get the problem corrected. Watch out that the tone of the letter is not aggressive or insulting, as this would annoy the reader and not encourage him/her to solve the problem. Avoid similar questions such as 'Why can't you get this right?'.

Letters of complaint usually include the following stages:

A. Background
B. Problem - cause and effect
C. Solution
D. Warning (optional)
E. Closing

A. Background

Below you can read a few examples of situations before complaining:

a. I am writing to inform you that the goods we ordered from your company have not been supplied correctly.

b. I attended your PC fair exhibition recently at PWTC and found it informative and interesting. Unfortunately, my enjoyment of the event was spoiled by a number of organisational problems.

c. I am a shareholder of RHB and I am very concerned regarding recent newspaper reports on the financial situation of the bank. Your company is listed as the auditor in the latest annual report of the bank, so I am writing to you to ask for an explanation of the following issues.

d. I am writing to inform you of my dissatisfaction with the food and drinks at the 'Cempaka Food Court' on 18 November this year.

B. Problem
Causes:

a. On 7 December 2007 we placed an order with your firm for 10,000 blank cassette tapes. The consignment arrived yesterday but contained only 1,200 batteries.
b. Firstly, I had difficulty in registering to attend the annual dinner. You set up an on-line registration facility, but I found the facility totally unworkable.
c. You sent us an invoice for RM10,000, but did not deduct our usual 10% discount.
d. We have found 20 spelling errors and 2 unlabeled diagrams in the reading book.

Effect:

a. This error put our firm in a difficult position, as we had to make some emergency purchases to compensate for the loss. This caused us considerable inconvenience.
b. Even after spending several wasted hours trying to register in this way, the computer would not accept my application.
c. I am therefore returning the invoice to you for correction.
d. This large number of errors is unacceptable to our customers, and we are therefore unable to sell these books.

C. Solution

a. I am writing to ask you to please make up the shortfall immediately and to ensure that such errors do not happen again.
b. Could I please ask you to look into these matters seriously.
c. Please send us a corrected invoice for RM9,479.
d. I enclose a copy of the book with the errors highlighted. Please re-print the book and send it to us by next Friday.

D. Warning

a. Otherwise, we may have to look elsewhere for our supplies.
b. I'm afraid that if these conditions are not met, we may be forced to take legal action.
c. If the outstanding fees are not paid by Thursday, 27 December 2007, you will incur a 10% late payment fee.
E. Closing
a. I look forward to receiving your explanation of these matters.
b. I look forward to receiving your payment.
c. I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Finally, before you mail the complaint letter, read it over again, making sure that it is perfect. Check that the letter:

- has no grammar or spelling errors.
- is in response to the title
- flows in term of idea
- use no sarcastic words
- is easy to read
- one page - brief, factual and to the point.

Activity 1

Read the letter of complaint below and answer the questions:

Saifuddin Ahmad
150, Taman Sri Serdang
43300 Serdang
Selangor

1 November 2007

Mr Ooi Bee Ng
Purchasing Manager
BSN Transportation
15000 Petaling Jaya
Selangor

Dear Mr Ooi:

This letter is to complain about service I recently received from BSN Transportation.

I called BSN Transportation on 15 October 2007 to find out how to deal with a problem I've had with the delay of your taxi which I had ordered. After I had been on hold for several minutes, Cik Nirmala came on the line. I had to explain my problem to her several times because she did not seem to be listening and therefore asked me the same questions repeatedly. Cik Nirmala put me on hold for several minutes, and then returned to say she could not help me. Needless to say, I was quite frustrated.

I expected a much higher level of service from your company, and I am quite disappointed. Because I do not want to spend any more time on this problem, I am canceling my monthly reservation on your taxi service immediately, and I expect a full refund from your company. I will be informing my friends and family about this experience.

Sincerely,

SAIFUDDIN ABDULLAH

Questions:

1. Background: __________________________________________

2. Problem – cause: ________________________________________

   Effect: ________________________________________

3. Solution: ______________________________________________

4. Warning (if any): ________________________________________
5. Closing: ________________________________

![Review](image)

**Review**

We have come to the end of Unit 14. The activities in this unit have been taught the process of writing a complaint letter. This letter may accompany your verbal complaint. Sine you want to make things right, make sure that you stipulate what you want clearly in the letter. Finally, be polite in words that you use.