



New Practical English Writing



新编实用英语写作



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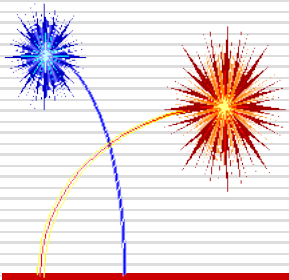
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Unit 4

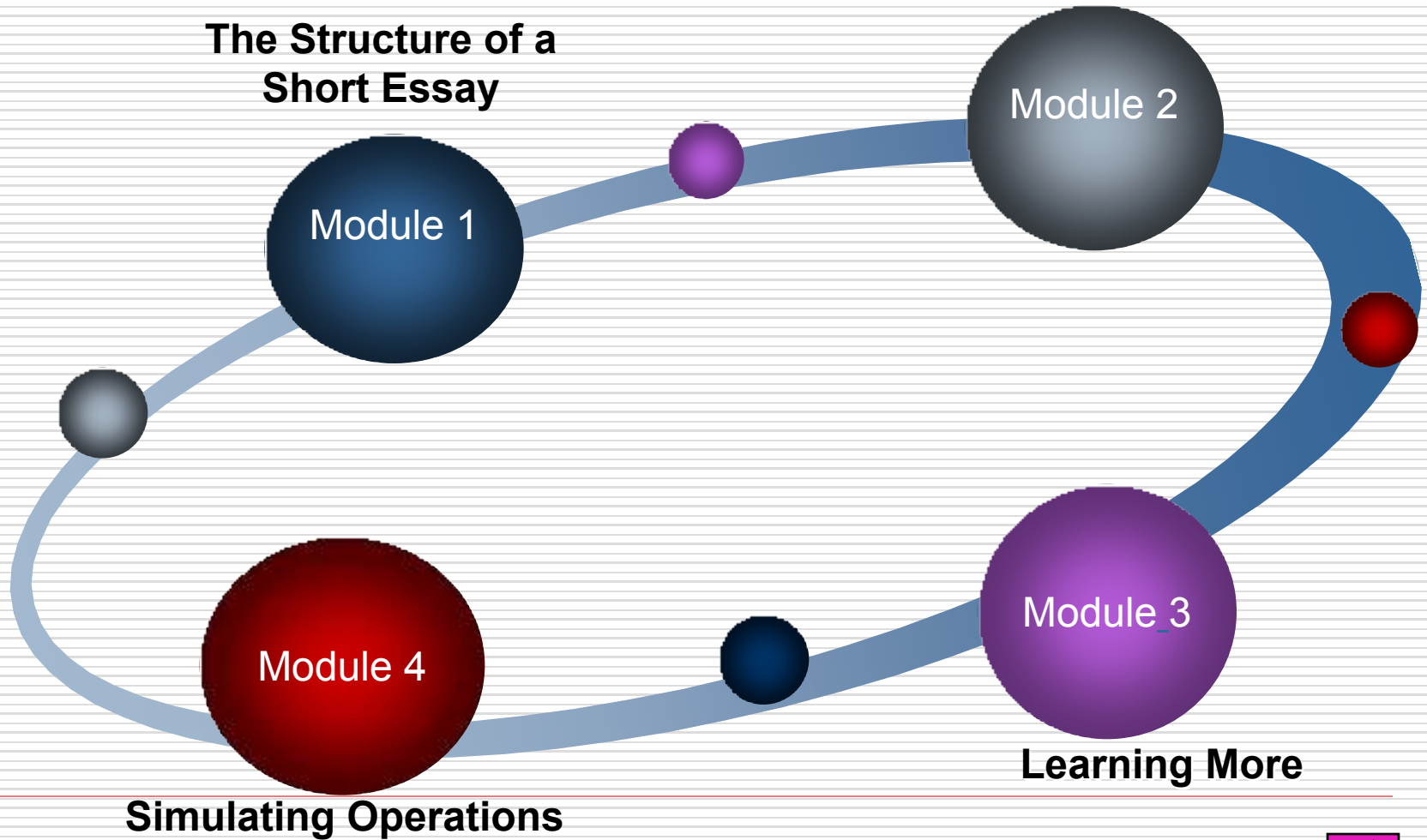
Basic Skills of Essay Writing





Basic Steps of Essay Writing

The Structure of a Short Essay



A stack of four books in yellow, pink, blue, and white, with a laptop in front of them. The scene is decorated with green leaves and black branches.

Unit 4

Learning Focus

After learning this Unit, you will be able to:



know the short essay structure;



identify the usual process of essay writing;



understand types of outline;



learn about manuscript form and punctuation.





Module 1

The Structure of a Short Essay



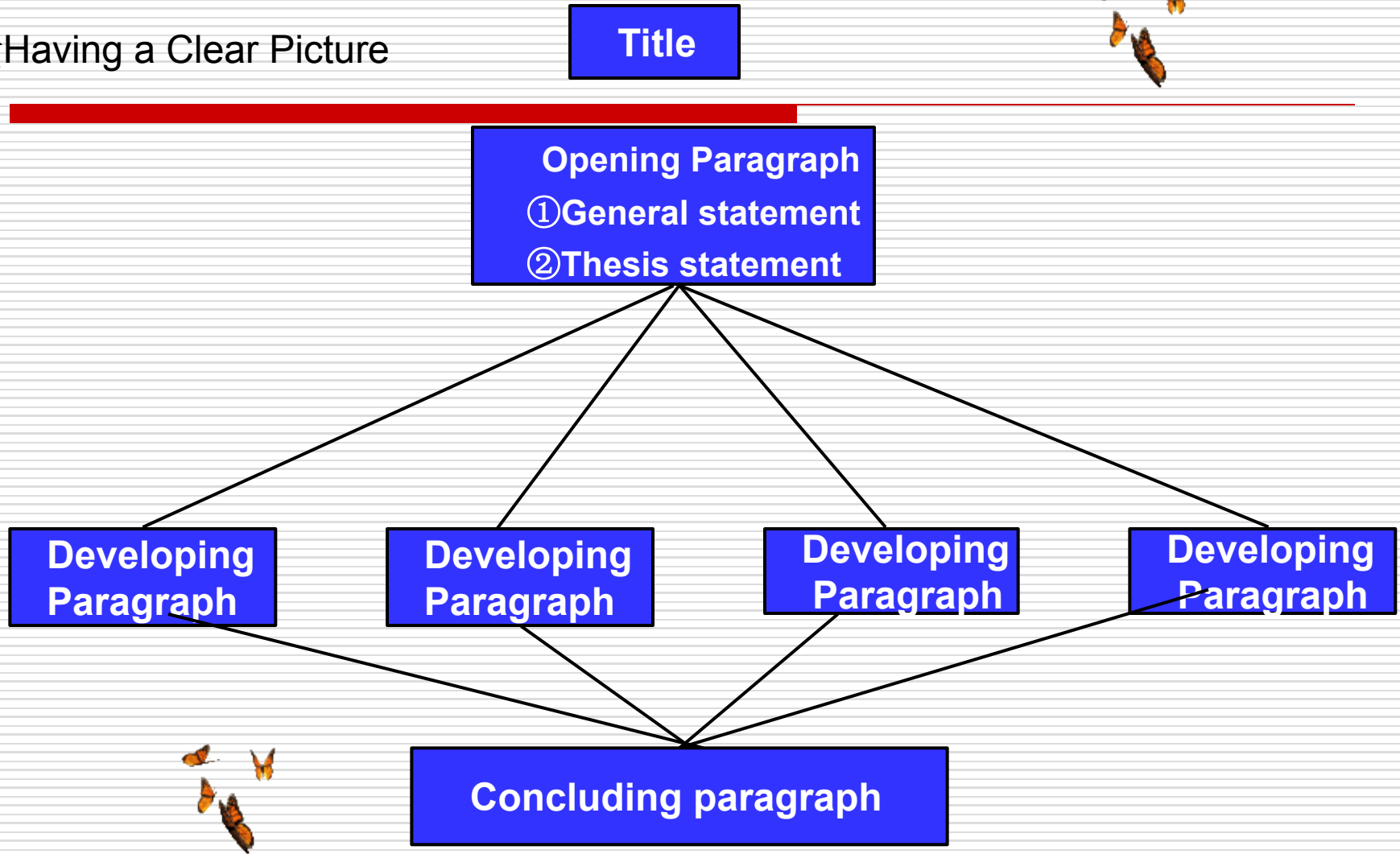
Module 1 The Structure of a Short Essay

An essay is a group of related paragraphs about one subject. It is also a group of ideas about a common topic bounded together in a clear and organized manner. As we study the essay we will see the structure of it is much like that of a paragraph, as the following chart shows:



Module 1 The Structure of a Short Essay

Having a Clear Picture

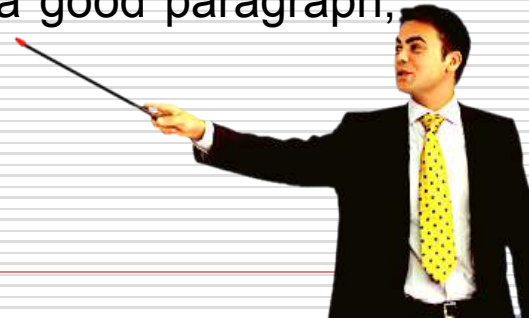


Module 1 *The Structure of a Short Essay*

From the chart, we see an essay also has three main parts:

- ↗ an opening paragraph
- ↗ body paragraphs (at least one paragraph)
- ↗ a concluding paragraph.

In fact a well-developed paragraph is a “composition in miniature” or good paragraphs are really essays written small. That is, the principles of organization are the same for both; so if you can write a good paragraph, you can write a good essay.



Module 1 The Structure of a Short Essay



Sample 1

English is an International Language	Title: This essay consists of 4 paragraphs.
It is quite clear that English has become an international language because it has been used by most of the nations in the world. In other words, you may make a trip around the world without being misunderstood if you know English.	The opening paragraph includes a general statement and a thesis statement.
We know that most of the valuable books, newspapers and magazines are written in English. If we want to read them to increase our knowledge, we must learn English. Furthermore, we should also learn English if we want to do business with foreign countries. The reason is that English is spoken by the majority of foreigners.	The body paragraph 1 develops a subdivision of the topic.



Module 1 The Structure of a Short Essay

<p>At present the contact between foreign countries and China grows considerably day by day. English is known as an indispensable tool of interaction. This is why there are so many people in our country who learn English. They know that learning English makes life more convenient.</p>	<p>The body paragraph 2 develops a subdivision of the topic as well.</p>
<p>From this point of view, English is really a very useful tool to us. Why don't we double our efforts to learn it!</p>	<p>The concluding paragraph is the conclusion of the essay which gives a summary or review of the main points discussed in the essay.</p>



全文

English is an International Language

(Opening paragraph)

It is quite clear that English has become an international language because it has been used by most of the nations in the world. In other words, you may make a trip around the world without being misunderstood if you know English.

(Body paragraph)

We know that most of the valuable books, newspapers and magazines are written in English. If we want to read them to increase our knowledge, we must learn English. Furthermore, we should also learn English if we want to do business with foreign countries. The reason is that English is spoken by the majority of foreigners.

(Body paragraph)

At present the contact between foreign countries and China grows considerably day by day. English is known as an indispensable tool of interaction. This is why there are so many people in our country who learn English. They know that learning English makes life more convenient.

(Concluding paragraph)

From this point of view, English is really a very useful tool to us. Why don't we double our efforts to learn it!





Module 2



Basic Steps of Essay Writing



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing

An essay is a group of ideas about a common topic which involves the effort of conveying thoughts clearly and accurately in words, and requires a consistent and coherent organization of thoughts. To achieve the purpose, it is very important for a writer to be aware of the fact that writing is a process. Usually essay writing involves two basic tasks:

- (1) The topic you write about will be assigned by your teacher;
- (2) The topic you write about will be allowed to choose as your will.

When faced with the problem of writing, you should make sure exactly what your task is, for different tasks has different requirements. If you are free to select a topic for an essay, what you need to do is to think hard and keep the following in mind.



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing

(1) Choose a topic that interests you and about which you either have some knowledge or you have seen or heard about. In this case, you can write it without much trouble.

(2) Choose a topic which is small enough to handle (the usual essay of 200 words or so).

In fact, many of the topics you write about will be assigned by your teacher. In such cases, make sure that you know exactly what the subject or question demands. Many of your essays fail, just because you don't understand the assignment clearly. If your teacher asks you to write an essay to describe your campus, you tell how you spend your time on campus is not suitable. Essay writing often follows certain processes.



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing

Basic Steps of Essay Writing:

- **1. Brainstorm Activity**
- **2. Narrow-down the Topic and Writing a Proper Thesis Statement**
- **3. Re-examine the Listed Facts and Making an Outline**
- **4. Outline Writing**
- **5. Write the First Draft**
- **6. Revise the First Draft**
- **7. Make the final copy**



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing



1. Brainstorming Activity

When a topic is assigned, you need to make sure that it is not too broad. To develop the topic, you need to collect ideas, facts, examples and details. Brainstorming activity is a pre-writing technique that is very helpful in generating ideas on a specific topic. A writer can use brainstorming activity to think of as many relevant materials as he can and jot down a list of ideas in whatever forms come to mind: words, phrases, questions or sentences without caring about the form and order of the items listed. Suppose the topic assigned is “Benefits of Sports and Games”.



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing

The topic assigned is “Benefits of sports and Games”

A quick list of brainstorm on the topic might like this:

- good to health, make us strong,
- physical exercise, enrich life,
- courage, skill,
- prevent people from fat, train collectivist spirit,
- beneficial mental workers, be versatile etc.





Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing



2. Narrowing-down the Topic and Writing a proper Thesis Statement

Having listed all the facts, you should try finding a proper thesis, which is the conclusion to be drawn from the facts to be presented in your essay. At the same time you need to write a thesis statement. It is the main point or controlling idea of your entire essay.

Having listed all the facts, you have sufficient material for your assignment. Then you need to make sure that the topic is not too broad. To narrow down the topic, you should try to think of a proper thesis, which is the main point or controlling idea of your entire essay drawn from the facts to be presented in your essay. Generally, a thesis statement is one sentence that states the main idea of your essay, often in the first paragraph. It functions as a promise to the readers—to let them know what will be discussed.

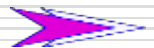


Module 2 *Basic Steps of Essay Writing*



According to the above facts, a thesis statement may be like this:
Thesis statement: Sports and games are beneficial to us at least three ways.

Like a topic sentence in the paragraph, a thesis statement should have two parts: the topic part and the controlling idea about the topic. The topic part states the topic, while the controlling idea makes an important comment about the topic. In order to convince your readers you will have to support the thesis statement with details. In other words, you have to plan how to present your ideas and make them convincing.



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing

A working thesis is important for four reasons:

- It directs your thinking and thus keeps you on track.
- It helps you to focus on a particular point about the topic.
- It indicates the methods of the organization.
- It displays the content to be discussed in the body paragraphs.

The thesis statement is similar to the topic sentence in that it contains an expression of an attitude, opinion, or idea about a topic; unlike the topic sentence, however, the thesis statement is broader and expresses the controlling idea for the entire essay. In fact, each of the developmental paragraphs should have a controlling idea that echoes or relates to the controlling idea in the thesis statement.



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing



A good thesis statement has following characteristics:

- ö It states just one main idea and one that can be adequately developed by using specific details, not two or more ideas.
- ö It should be expressed in a complete sentence, not be written as a question.
 - ↗ It previews the order in which the main points will be discussed.
- ö It does not use abstract or vague words such as good, bad, interesting or nice.
 - ↗ It should express an opinion, attitude, or idea about the topic, not simply announce the topic.
- ö It should express an opinion not express a fact.
- ö It is a statement that needs to be explained or proved.



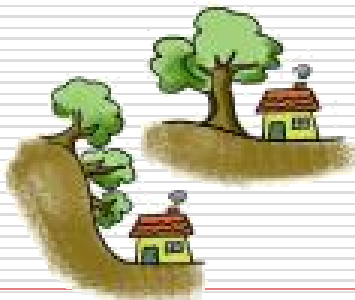
Module 2 *Basic Steps of Essay Writing*



Here is another example:

Thesis statement: Young Americans today (Topic) rarely find work in which they can take pride. (Controlling idea)

Now compare each pair of the thesis statement in the following:



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay

Writing

- My Summer vacation was interesting. (abstract or vague words)

Effective

Because I learned to swim as well as to ride a bike, I enjoyed my summer vacation.

- My fear of the dark. (not a complete sentence)

Effective

My fear of the dark has made my life miserable.

- I am going to discuss the effects of radiation. (simply announce the topic)

Effective

The effects of radiation are often unpredictable.

- Cows produce milk. (simply express a fact)

Effective

The milk cows produce is not always fit for human consumption.



Module 2 Basic Steps of Essay Writing



- There are many advantages and disadvantages of going to college. (not an arguable point.)

Effective

The advantages of going to college far outweigh the disadvantages.

- Going to college in the Midwest can be fun, and I have found that living in a suburb of a large city is the best way to live while at college. (more than one ideas)

Effective

Going to college in the Midwest can be fun.



Module 2 *Basic Steps of Essay Writing*



3. Re-examining the Listed Facts and Making an Outline

For this step, what you should do is to look at the list of details again and try to find connections between ideas, or see if there is any large idea that covers several small ideas, so that they can be put into proper categories. According to the thesis, certain facts on the list will become more important than others. And you have to pick out the suitable items, cut out some irrelevant, unnecessary, or unimportant details. After deleting those not usable ideas or facts, you have narrowed down the facts to the specific topic for your purpose and rearrange the facts in a logical order. Now an outline based on the items listed above may be like the following:



以上内容仅为本文档的试下载部分，为可阅读页数的一半内容。如要下载或阅读全文，请访问：<https://d.book118.com/317123023042006056>