



WRITING IS MORE A SKILL THAN A GENIUS

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ABSTRACT: Writing is a fundamental skill which is useful in the day to day functioning of any literate person. It is an art to express oneself to larger audience, it helps the reader learn and educate. This paper deals with the writing process, the styles of writing and the nuances of writing a good script.

KEYWORDS: Writing skill, draft, revising, editing, proof reading, descriptive, narrative, persuasive, expository writing.

“Writing skills are specific abilities which help writers put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form & to mentally interact with the message.”

INTRODUCTION:

Good writing skills help you to communicate your thoughts message and ideas to the larger public with clarity and ease. Writing includes a lot of things like writing a report, editorial, article, plan or procedure; writing a C.V; writing an application for various purposes; writing an essay, novel, story; writing on websites and blogs to communicate to the larger readers online; writing letters formal and informal; writing a poem or a paragraph, dialogue, writing etc. these are various types of writing, means of communication which communicate a meaning to the reader. When these are coupled with good grammar, vocabulary, orthography, lexis and meaning it forms a good communicative writing.

The DETAILED WRITING PROCESS:

1. Writing the first Draft: This stage includes pre-writing and drawing the skeleton to the script and filling it with flesh and blood. The writer tries to weave his thoughts and ideas into a draft. The writer decides what is to be written, the matter, the format and the style. The writer notes down the composition & the subject matter. The writer also determines who is supposed to read his text and starts constructing his thoughts according to the readers understanding & needs. The draft the writer prepares at this stage could be changed according to the writer's style, mood & the need of the readers. Here the thoughts & ideas of the writer are put into appropriate language & style. Sentences and right words are chosen and woven into text. The style of text presentation (Descriptive, reflective, critical, creative), the writer's point of view using appropriate examples is done the central theme of the text is carefully written here. The first draft is prepared at this stage

2. Revising the first Draft: The review of the first draft is done keeping in mind three things-

- i) What is left out
- ii) What has to be excluded from the draft
- iii) Whether the prepared draft serves the purpose of the writer & the reader.

New ideas could be infused here. Rethinking & re-organisation is done at this stage.

3. Refining: The draft is carefully read and suitable changes are made here w.r.t the content the style of presentations and evidence theme. Proper examples, illustrations and evidence are looked after. The flow of the draft i.e., sections & sub-sections organisation is checked. Gaps in the writing are filled; points to support the central idea are infused. Missing contents are also checked and certain new additions, details and explanations are made so that the whole draft is ready for the final editing.

4. Editing: This is a very important stage where the writer sees to it that there are no mistakes. At this stage certain things are looked at with extra care:

- A) Paragraphs:** Here new additions aren't made but it is ensured whether the paragraphing is clear, concise and there is a logical link between one sentence and other. Line by line editing is done four things are taken into consideration while editing paragraphs-
 - a) Are the paragraphs logical & visually appropriate?
 - b) Does the content in the paragraph contain the central theme of the writer?
 - c) Is the topic relevant to the paragraphs?
 - d) Are the sentences related to each other?

B) Sentence: Sentence by sentence is read and whether they are related to each other is checked. The words, the grammar and sentence structure is reviewed. At times sentences are restructured.

C) Vocabulary: This stage is very helpful to enhance the quality of the words in the text. New words can be added, certain repetitive words can be substituted with synonyms. Certain things have to be assessed-

- a) Do the words convey the same meaning which the writer wants to convey?
- b) The words that are chosen are they understood by the reader?

D) Format: The headings, sub-headings, the structure of the draft, the typography, the placing and spacing throughout the draft should maintain a pattern. This pleases the reader to read with comfort.

E) Indentation: The indentation of the draft should be consistent throughout

F) The Grammar: The grammar aspects are all reviewed.

G) Visual Aids : Proper & clear visual aids like charts, flow chart , table , drawings, graphs, pie diagrams etc. should be included. They must be placed at appropriate places and should be able to enhance the point of view of the writer. These visual aids must be easily understood by the readers. The visual aids must have the title and should be able to explain what the text wants to communicate.

5. Proof reading: This is the final stage after which text reaches the readers. It is more than just re-reading. This is a careful review of the entire draft word by word, sentence to sentence & para to para. Certain techniques & tips are listed below to enhance the efficacy of the Proof Reading-

- i) When you proofread, you need to concentrate. This means getting rid of distraction and potential interruptions.
- ii) Don't rely entirely on spelling or grammar checkers on the computer. These programs work with a limited number of rules, so they can't identify every error.
- iii) Read slowly & read every word.
- iv) Check the punctuation.
- v) Pay attention to capitalization, missing or extra commas, colons & semi-colons used incorrectly.
- vi) If you are using numbers check them. We often make a mistake by omitting or adding zero.
- vii) Finally get somebody else to proofread it once, because after a few readings, we become blind to our errors. (IGNOU)

WRITING STYLES:

1. Descriptive writing style:

Descriptive writing involves creating a vivid picture of characters, events, place, scene etc. It immerses the reader into the script of the writer & makes the reader feel like they are there. It helps the reader imagine and become expressive.

Descriptive writing is used to write-

- Poems ,Song Lyrics
- Novel writing (Fiction & Non-fiction)
- Short stories
- Copy writing-describing about a product or advertising it fancily.
- While writing travel blogs or memoirs
- In marketing business.

It gives the reader / listeners the connect with the script. It immerses the reader into vivid descriptions using all the five senses: sight, smell, taste, touch and hear

2. Narrative Writing :

Narrative writing is as detailed as descriptive writing. It is in basic words story telling. It involves a clear storyline, the plot & the characters in the story. It relates to describing epic tales to small anecdotes. It could be of short span to long span, the narration could be about the fact or fiction.

It involves the most common elements of storytelling like the plot, the story line, the central theme, the moral or message, the characters, the emotions, the setting, the characters, the age or time & the conflict. There is a beginning to it, the middle part & the end to the narration. It helps one to structure their thoughts and words systematically.

Narrative writing is used in-

- Novels
- Short stories
- Brand stories
- Creative essays
- Speeches
- Feature stories

3. Persuasive Writing :

Persuasive writing builds an emotional/attitudinal connect with reader, here the reader is convinced to adopt the opinion, views and ideas of the writer in a thoughtful way.

Persuasive writing influences the reader's thought process & attitude and inspires the reader to adopt certain ideologies ideas, and causes. It makes the reader take proper action towards a particular cause, reason or goal. Persuasive writing takes the help of statistical evidence (Reports, Studies), anecdotal evidence (personal interviews & experiences), Testimonial evidence (from experts) and textual evidence (passages & books).

Persuasive writing is often used in

- Essays
- Cover letters
- Editorials
- Articles

- Op-editorials
- Speeches & Seminars
- Sales writing
- Letters of recommendation
- Raise Awareness about an issue/ cause
- Books
- Copywriting for conversion

It convinces the people to adopt certain practices, ideas and ideologies logically.

4. Expository Writing :

Expository writing's goal is to teach or inform or explain something to the reader about a particular topic. It tries to answer all the questions related to a particular topic in- What, When, Where, How, Who, Which way. It lays down all the details clearly avoiding any jargon or technical language to make the script useful to the reader. It is more about the facts and is used in-

- Textbooks
- Training manuals
- Technical manuals
- Business writings
- FAQs
- Help/ Home page articles

A fifth form of writing skill is also being talked about- 'Creative writing'. It is finding new & interesting ways to tell stories and experiences to surprise & delight readers. This type of writing is used in

- Human writing
- Satires
- Creative Non fiction
- Data Journalism
- Poetry
- Fiction

WHAT IS A GOOD WRITING SKILL?

1. The Writer should think before writing. There must be the clarity of thought & idea. The mental picture of the purpose of writing must be clear. What is to written has to be planned out systematically, & this planning should be broken down into several simple and achievable steps.
2. Before writing, the writer must go through some literature reports, documents & information regarding the topic he/she wants to write. So that a proper opinion can be formed & the writes gains authority over what he is writing.
3. Another important aspect to be kept in mind by the writer is the reader. The writer must step into the shoes of the reader and understand her doubts and must be able to clarify it through her text. Based on the kind of the audience /reader, the tone of the teat has to be determined.
4. A good writer tries to infuse certain good words so that the reader can learn certain new words at the same time tries to avoid too many complex words and writes in a manner which can be easily understood by the reader without distracting the later must. It is a good writing skill when the reading becomes a pleasurable experience for the reader.
5. Good writing skill also comprises of perfectly placed paragraphs, sentences, phrases and words.
6. Repetition should be avoided which makes the reader lose focus & interest.
7. Elimination of the use of filters (words and filtering language) can strengthen the writer's text and central idea.
8. 'Creativity', 'Uniqueness' are the guiding stones for a good writer.
9. The presentation, the style of the text, & the tone plays an important role to hook the reader to the text. All these aspects 3 aspects must be personalized; it highlights the personality of the writer.
10. A proper editing & reviewing of the text plays a very significant role.
11. The Written text should be read out aloud, it helps to check the flow of the text and assess whether reading the text was a smooth ride or not.
12. The writer should avoid contradictions and controversies in the text. This would confuse the reader.
13. Good writing skill is developed with a lot of practice.
14. Proof reading gives the final look for the text. It is the last step to check any types or mistakes.
15. A third person should do the proof reading. The writer at times becomes blind to her mistakes, which a third person can check and avoid blunders.
16. Use of tables, flow charts, diagrams, pictures, pie charts, maps, etc make the view of the writer more clear to the reader, these must be infused in the text. This forms an important feature of a good writing skill.

A writer becomes readable and appreciable only when he knows his reader: who is he writer for, his age group, his mental faculty, and his comprehensive ability has to be kept in mind. As a written document may be preserved as a manuscript unlike spoken words, has to be dealt with utmost care. Lucidity in diction appeals all as we notice this in the most celebrated book “The Capital” by Karl Max where the complex ideas and the cryptic statements are expressed in pithy sentences employing lucid diction. Hence, the significance of writing skill.

SOURCES:

- 1) Wren and Martin High School English and Composition
- 2) Ignou

