Basics for Improving English Writing

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Good writing starts with good ideas. If you write about things that you care about, you will write better. If you write about things that you don’t care about, you’ll be bored and your paper is likely to have few strong ideas. Even if you are writing from a prompt, a given topic, you can find some part of the topic that is interesting or important to you.

Once you have a good idea, the next step is organization. Think through your paper before you start. Write an outline. You need to know what your main points are before you can write a good introductory paragraph. Use 2-4 main points, one paragraph each. Make sure they fit together and all relate to your topic. In the introduction, you can explain how they all relate and why they are important.

**Steps to Good Writing**

**1. Good idea**

**2. Good organization**

**3. Clear examples**

**4. Review Structure**

**5. Review Grammar**

In your central paragraphs, be concise and specific. Give examples with details, not just general ideas. If you can say the same thing with fewer words, do it! Many writers think that using lots of big words and starting every sentence with a complicated clause makes their writing seem better. Actually, it often just makes it harder to read.

When you finish writing, look at your outline again. Did you really follow it or did it change as you wrote? Many times you find different ideas as you write. Look at your central paragraphs. What are their main ideas now? Are these ideas in the Introduction? I often rewrite the introduction to fit the paper after I finish writing.