

SCHOOL LAUNCH · COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING

GRADE 12 COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING: CAPSTONE: RHETORIC AND THE SENIOR THESIS

The capstone year of classical writing: choose a question worth a year of study, write and defend a senior thesis before a real audience, draft a novella chapter and a printed chapbook of poems, learn the writing a career demands, give a commencement speech, and gather ten years of work into one portfolio.

First edition

*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
2 Timothy 4:7 (KJV)*

COURSE GUIDE

Grade 12 gathers every exercise of the progymnasmata and all five canons of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery) into one long work: the senior thesis. You will learn what the classical thesis was, frame a question and a claim, build a reading plan, and meet with an advisor. Then you will write the thesis section by section, draft, revise and cite your sources, and finally defend it aloud: you will learn the format of an oral defense, anticipate hard questions, hold a mock defense, and give a public one. Cicero, Plutarch and the Apostle Paul before Agrippa serve as models of a case argued well before listeners.

The creative track asks for longer and more finished work. In fiction you will study the claims Tolkien makes in “On Fairy-Stories” (summarized, since the essay is in copyright), outline a longer story, and draft and workshop a novella chapter. In poetry you will read George Herbert’s *The Temple* as a whole book, learn to order poems, and lay out and print a chapbook of your own. A practical unit teaches proposals and grants (with Franklin’s 1749 *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania*), technical writing, writing for the web, and a professional portfolio.

In personal narrative you will study great commencement addresses, chiefly Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s 1978 address at Harvard (summarized), then draft, rehearse and give a commencement speech of your own. The year ends with your ten-year portfolio and a letter to a younger student, modeled on Paul’s letters to Timothy. Each lesson has a model passage, a picture study (Raphael’s *The School of Athens*, Gérôme’s *Bonaparte Before the Sphinx*, Rembrandt’s *The Philosopher in Meditation*), a writing project, worked examples, practice, a Style Clinic and a verse from the King James Bible.

WHO IT IS FOR

Written for students in grade 12 (about ages 17–18) who write a full essay on their own and are ready for a long project. A parent or advisor reads drafts, meets with the student, and sits on the defense panel. There is no Grammar course this year: a short Style Clinic in each lesson reviews one skill from Grammar Level 3 and applies it to the student’s own draft. Grade 11 Composition is helpful but not required; Unit 1 reviews the canons of rhetoric and the parts of a classical argument.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

1. **The weekly rhythm.** One lesson a week in two or three sessions of 45–60 minutes. Session 1: warm-up, video, teaching, model passage and picture study. Session 2: worked examples, practice and the Style Clinic. Later sessions: the writing project. During Units 1–3 plan extra reading time each week for the thesis.
2. **Copy, imitate, invent.** Each unit still opens with a model to copy by hand, then an imitation of its form, then a piece of your own. In the capstone year the “invent” step is larger: a thesis, a chapter, a chapbook and a speech.

3. **The quarter path.** Short on time? The ten ★ lessons make a one-quarter course that still ends with a short thesis, a defense and a letter to a younger student.
4. **Style Clinic** 🔗. Every lesson has a Style Clinic marked 🔗 that names the Grammar Level 3 skill it reviews. The revision checklist asks only for skills Grammar has taught.
5. **Speaking.** This is the year of delivery. You will read aloud in every unit, hold a mock and a public thesis defense in Unit 3, read your chapter at a workshop in Unit 4, and give your commencement speech in Unit 7. Invite family, friends or your church to the public defense and the speech.
6. **Contests.** The Grade 12 outline names no contest; the public defense and the commencement speech are this year's public work. If you choose to enter an outside contest, get the official 2026-27 rules and entry form from the sponsor and follow them, since deadlines and word limits change each year.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Unit 1: Choosing a Senior Thesis (1-4)

The progymnasmata end with the thesis, an argument on a general question, and this year that old exercise becomes the capstone of your schooling. In this unit you learn where the senior thesis came from (Hermogenes, the medieval disputation, the classical school), hunt for a perennial question, sharpen it with the four stases into a working claim, build a reading plan of primary and secondary sources, and lead your first meeting with an advisor. Your models are the Preacher's method in Ecclesiastes 12, Bacon's "Of Truth," Milton's praise of good books in *Areopagitica* and Jethro's counsel to Moses. You finish with a one-page prospectus that Units 2 and 3 will build on.

Unit 2: Writing the Thesis (5-8)

In Unit 1 you chose a question, stated a claim and planned your reading. Now you write the thesis itself. You will build its sections on the classical parts of an oration, with Hamilton's plan for the *Federalist* as your model (2.1); draft it steadily by a calendar, as the Preacher "sought out, and set in order" (2.2); revise it from the whole argument down to the single word by Franklin's method of comparison (2.3); and cite every source honestly, as Luke did, before you hand in the finished thesis (2.4, the quarter-path lesson). It is a long course, and this year's verse fits it: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course" (2 Timothy 4:7).

Unit 3: Defending the Thesis (9-12)

Your senior thesis is written; now you will stand behind it. This unit teaches the oral defense, the old classical and university form in which a scholar presents his work aloud and answers questions. You will study Socrates' *Apology* as the first great apologia, learn the four parts of a defense and the roles of the panel, build a question bank with the classical stasis questions, rehearse in a mock defense in Franklin's manner of "modest diffidence," and finally defend your thesis in public, answering hard questions with the courtesy and

composure Paul showed before Festus and Agrippa. The unit ends with revisions, a written reflection and thank-you letters to your panel.

Unit 4: 🐉 Fiction: The Novella Chapter (13-16)

The longest piece of fiction in the course. You will read Tolkien's lecture "On Fairy-Stories" (in summary) on sub-creation, Secondary Belief and the eucatastrophe, the sudden joyous turn; plan a whole novella the way Stevenson planned *Treasure Island*, from a map to a list of chapters; draft one chapter of 2,500-4,000 words on a daily quota, learning voice, scene and the first page from Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*; and take it through a workshop guided by Pope's *Essay on Criticism*. You finish with a polished chapter, a plan for the whole book and a revision memo.

Unit 5: Poetry: A Chapbook (17-20)

In this creative-writing unit you gather the poems you have written since ninth grade and make them into a real book. You will study George Herbert's *The Temple* (1633), the great example in English of a book of short poems built as one whole; learn from the book of Psalms how to open, order and close a collection; follow William Morris's principles of paper, type, spacing and page to lay out your poems; and finally print, sew, dedicate and read aloud a hand-bound chapbook of twelve to twenty poems.

Unit 6: Writing for a Career (21-24)

Rhetoric was always meant for work in the world. In this unit you put the last of the progymnasmata, the proposal of a law, to work in a real proposal modeled on Nehemiah's request to King Artaxerxes. You learn to explain a process and write tested instructions from Michael Faraday's lectures on a candle. You learn to write web pages people can actually use, with Strunk's rule "Omit needless words" as your guide. Then, taking Booker T. Washington's sweeping test at Hampton as your model, you assemble a professional portfolio that lets your work speak for you.

Unit 7: Personal Narrative: The Commencement Speech (25-28)

The last speech of school is a beginning: in the medieval universities a new master "commenced" to teach. In this creative-writing unit you study the commencement address as ceremonial (epideictic) rhetoric through Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's 1978 Harvard address, "A World Split Apart," then draft your own five-to-seven-minute speech on Henry Drummond's pattern of proving one truth from Scripture and your own life. You cut and mark a speaking script under Nehemiah 8:8's rule (read distinctly, give the sense, cause them to understand), rehearse in five stages, and finally give the speech to a live audience, following the pattern of Paul's farewell at Miletus. The speech is a personal narrative about events, people, work and God's providence, ending with thanks, a charge and a blessing.

Unit 8: Review: The Ten-Year Portfolio and a Letter to a Younger Student (29-32)

The series ends where every classical education ends: with a look back and a handing on. You will gather the writing of your school years and walk the ladder of the fourteen exercises

once more, with Roger Ascham's account of double translation as the model (8.1); choose one piece from an earlier year, frame it, and deliver it aloud on a family speech day, following Paul's farewell at Miletus (8.2); rewrite a childhood piece as the writer you are now and give your weightiest high-school piece its last revision, by Pope's rule that "the sound must seem an echo to the sense" (8.3); and, in the quarter-path lesson, write a letter of counsel to a real younger student after the pattern of Cicero's letter to his son, bind it at the front of your ten-year portfolio, and present the portfolio in an oral examination (8.4).

MATERIALS

- **A writing notebook (composition book)** One for the whole year: reading notes, Style Clinic work and drafts.
- **A KJV Bible** For every lesson's verse, the faith thread (2 Timothy 4:7) and the letter in Unit 8.
- **A three-ring binder with tabbed dividers** For the thesis reading plan, source notes, drafts and advisor notes (Units 1-3).
- **George Herbert, The Temple (1633)** Public domain and free online; a printed copy is helpful for Unit 5.
- **A library copy of J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories" (optional)** Found in *Tree and Leaf* and other collections. For Lesson 4.1; the lesson summarizes it.
- **Paper, a printer and a long-reach stapler (or needle and thread)** For printing and binding the chapbook in Lessons 5.3-5.4.
- **A timer and a phone or camera for recording** For the mock and public defense (Unit 3) and the commencement speech (Unit 7).

GRADING

Grades come mostly from the senior thesis and its defense, judged with each lesson's checklist (content, arrangement, style, mechanics) and the thesis rubric. Praise first, then fix one thing at a time. A senior can and should do much of the self-checking.

- Senior thesis (written): 30%
- Thesis defense (mock and public): 10%
- Creative projects (novella chapter, chapbook, commencement speech): 25%
- Career writing projects: 10%
- Writing notebook and Style Clinics: 10%
- Unit reviews and the ten-year portfolio: 15%

A 90-100, B 80-89, C 70-79. Below 70: revise with help and resubmit.

- Mechanics are graded only on skills Grammar Level 3 has taught and the Style Clinic has reviewed.
- If possible, ask one reader outside the family (a pastor, teacher or family friend) to read the thesis and sit on the defense panel.
- A timed writing sample at mid-year and in Unit 8 shows growth.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

You do not need to be a writer or a scholar to guide a senior thesis. Your part is to meet with your student, ask good questions, hold them to the calendar, and listen. Read the models aloud together, use the checklists, and praise specific things before suggesting one change. The defense is not meant to trap your student but to let them show that they know their subject and can answer with truth and grace (Colossians 4:6).

Each lesson has a *For families* note with background, sources and cautions. Public-domain model passages were cut by computer from downloaded Project Gutenberg texts (never typed from memory), and Scripture was checked against an offline King James text. Models written for this course are labeled. Tolkien's essay and Solzhenitsyn's Harvard address are summarized, not quoted, because they are in copyright. Thesis topics should be questions of history, literature, philosophy, science or theology that can be argued from evidence, not current political quarrels.

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- 8.4 The Ten-Year Portfolio and a Letter to a Younger Student ★

★ quarter path (10 lessons) ·  creative writing track ·  ends with a piece for a contest in the School Launch directory ·  Style Clinic in every lesson

CHOOSING A SENIOR THESIS

The progymnasmata end with the thesis, an argument on a general question, and this year that old exercise becomes the capstone of your schooling. In this unit you learn where the senior thesis came from (Hermogenes, the medieval disputation, the classical school), hunt for a perennial question, sharpen it with the four stases into a working claim, build a reading plan of primary and secondary sources, and lead your first meeting with an advisor. Your models are the Preacher's method in Ecclesiastes 12, Bacon's "Of Truth," Milton's praise of good books in *Areopagitica* and Jethro's counsel to Moses. You finish with a one-page prospectus that Units 2 and 3 will build on.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written multi-page argumentative essays with a thesis statement and supporting reasons (Grades 9–11).
- Knows the progymnasmata sequence, especially refutation, confirmation and the thesis exercise.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain the history of the thesis and tell a thesis from a report.
- ☐ I can test a question as perennial, answerable, sourced, sized and loved, and name its stasis.
- ☐ I can write a working thesis statement that is arguable, specific, defensible and significant, with an honest concession.
- ☐ I can build a dated reading plan with primary and secondary sources and a working bibliography.
- ☐ I can write a one-page prospectus, lead an advisor meeting and send a clear follow-up letter.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Francis Bacon, Essays (Project Gutenberg #575)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/575>): Free. Read "Of Truth" (Lesson 1.2) and "Of Studies" (Lesson 1.3) whole.
- **John Milton, Areopagitica (Project Gutenberg #608)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/608>): Free. The model for Lesson 1.3 is in the opening pages.
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): Ecclesiastes 12 and Exodus 18 are the models for Lessons 1.1 and 1.4.
- **Project Gutenberg main catalog** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/>): Free public-domain editions of most primary sources a senior thesis will need (Plato, Augustine, Plutarch, Shakespeare, the Founders).

1.1 THE CLASSICAL SENIOR THESIS ★

OBJECTIVES

- Trace the senior thesis from Hermogenes’ “thesis” exercise through the medieval disputation to the classical school capstone.
- Tell a thesis (an argued answer to a real question) from a report (a summary of what others have said).
- Draft three candidate thesis questions and test each against five practical tests.

Warm-up. Look back over twelve years of school. Write down three questions that have stayed with you: something you read, argued about at the table, or wondered about on your own. Do not judge them yet. Just write them down.

Video slot. Video coming. What is a senior thesis at a classical Christian school (a student defense or an explanation of the medieval disputation). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

thesis

From the Greek for “a setting down” or “position.” In the progymnasmata, an argument on a general question with no particular persons (“Should a man marry?”). Today, both the claim you defend and the long paper that defends it.

hypothesis

In classical rhetoric, a question tied to particular persons, places and times (“Should Cato marry?”). The thesis is the general question behind it.

disputation

The formal debate of the medieval university, in which a candidate stated propositions and answered objections before his masters.

capstone

The top stone that finishes an arch or wall; here, the final project that gathers up a whole education.

prospectus

A short written plan for a thesis: the question, the working claim, the sources and the schedule. You will write one in Lesson 1.4.

CORE IDEAS

The last exercise comes back. When you began the progymnasmata, you retold fables. Year by year you climbed: narrative, chreia, maxim, refutation and confirmation, commonplace, encomium, comparison, description. Near the top of the ladder stood the *thesis*, the argument on a general question, and then the proposal of a law. You met the

thesis in earlier grades as a short essay. This year it returns as the capstone of your schooling: one long, careful argument that you research, write and then defend out loud before others.

What a thesis is. The Greek word *thesis* means a “setting down,” a position you take and hold. Hermogenes taught that a thesis is an inquiry into a matter considered apart from any particular person. “Should Cato marry?” is a hypothesis, because it names a man and his circumstances. “Should a man marry?” is a thesis, because it asks about men in general. The old teachers also split theses into two kinds. Practical theses ask what we should do (“Should one study the sciences?”). Theoretical theses ask what is true (“Is the soul immortal?”). Your senior thesis may lean either way, but it must ask something real and answer it with reasons.

From the forum to the university. Medieval universities kept this habit of setting down a position and defending it. A candidate for a degree stated propositions and answered the objections of his masters in a public disputation. The most famous list of theses in history was written for exactly that kind of debate: on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther offered his Ninety-Five Theses as propositions for academic disputation. Today the “master’s thesis” and the “doctoral dissertation” carry the same idea: a scholar is not finished until he has set down a claim and defended it before those who know more than he does.

The classical senior thesis today. Many classical Christian schools end the senior year this way. The student chooses a question, works with an advisor, reads primary and secondary sources, writes a paper of fifteen to twenty-five pages, and then defends it orally before a panel. Your version at home follows the same pattern across Units 1-3: choose (this unit), write (Unit 2), defend (Unit 3). Aim for about 4,000–6,000 words. Length is not the goal, though. The goal is an argument that is true, well ordered and your own.

A thesis is not a report. A report says, “Here is what people have said about Augustine’s view of time.” A thesis says, “Augustine is right that time is a creature, and here is why that matters for how we use our days.” A report gathers; a thesis judges. You will still gather. You cannot judge what you have not read. But every page of the finished paper should serve a claim. If a reader can finish your paper and ask, “So what does the writer actually think?”, you have written a report.

Five tests for a question. Before you commit months to a question, test it. (1) *Perennial*: would Plato, Augustine or Lincoln have understood it? Lasting questions outlive the news. (2) *Answerable*: can reasons and evidence settle it, at least probably? (3) *Sourced*: are there at least two or three great primary texts you can read on it? (4) *Sized*: can it be argued well in twenty pages, or does it need a library? (5) *Loved*: will you still care about it in April? Keep away from live partisan quarrels; a senior thesis should test your mind, not your loyalty to a party.

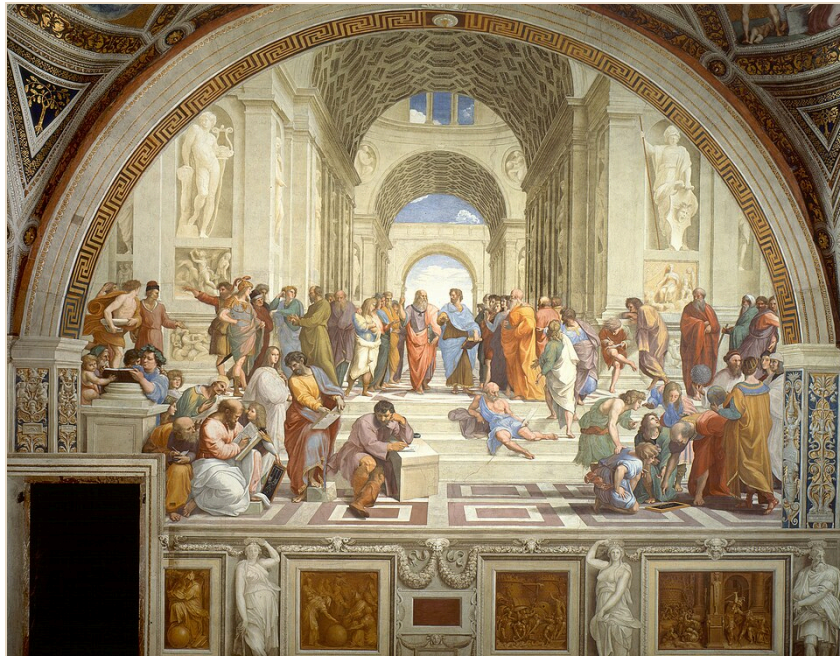
The Preacher’s method. Read the model slowly. The Preacher “gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order.” Those three verbs are the canons of invention and arrangement in plain Hebrew dress: pay attention, search, arrange. He looked for “acceptable words” that were also “words of truth,” which is style serving honesty. He warns that study wearies the flesh; he does not pretend research is easy. Then he gives “the

conclusion of the whole matter.” That is what a thesis is: after the long seeking, a conclusion you are willing to set down and stand behind. Paul’s words at the end of his life (2 Timothy 4:7) are this year’s thread: a course is meant to be finished.

The model. *Ecclesiastes 12:9-13, King James Version (1611)*

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

PICTURE STUDY



The School of Athens, Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino), 1509–1511 · Fresco · Stanza della Segnatura, Apostolic Palace, Vatican City
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Pope Julius II had Raphael paint the walls of a room in the Vatican that probably held the papal library. On this wall Raphael gathered the philosophers of Greece into one great hall. At the center walk Plato, pointing up toward the eternal Forms and carrying his *Timaeus*, and Aristotle, holding his *Ethics* and stretching his hand out over the visible world. Around them every kind of scholar is at work: one reads, one writes, one argues, one bends over a slate to teach geometry. It is a picture of what a senior thesis asks of you: to join a very old conversation.

Look closely

- Find the two figures at the center. What does each one do with his hand, and what might each gesture claim?
- Find someone writing alone and someone arguing in a group. How are their postures different?
- Look at the architecture. Where do the lines of the floor and arches lead your eye?

Talk about it

1. If you could walk into this hall with your thesis question, which group would you join first, and what would you ask them?
2. Raphael put thinkers from many centuries in one room. Write a paragraph on why a thesis writer must also bring old and new voices into one place.

WRITING PROJECT: THE QUESTION HUNT

You will not choose your final question today. You will hunt widely, then narrow to three candidates worth a closer look in Lesson 1.2.

Treat this like a naturalist's field notebook: gather first, sort second.

You will need

- Writing notebook (start a new section titled "Senior Thesis")
- Your commonplace book and portfolio from earlier grades, if you have them
- A list of the great books you have read in high school

Steps

1. Page through your commonplace book, old essays and reading lists. Write down at least twelve questions that arise from them. Phrase each as a real question ending in a question mark.
2. Mark each question T (theoretical: what is true?) or P (practical: what should be done?).
3. Turn any hypothesis into a thesis or the reverse, and keep whichever is sharper. ("Was Brutus right to kill Caesar?" can become "May a citizen kill a tyrant?")
4. Run all twelve through the five tests: perennial, answerable, sourced, sized, loved. Cross out any that fail two tests.
5. Choose your best three. For each, write one paragraph (5–7 sentences): the question, why it matters, two primary texts that speak to it, and what you suspect the answer may be.
6. Read your three paragraphs aloud to a parent. Ask, "Which one do you hear me caring about most?" Write down the answer.

Check your work

- Each candidate is phrased as a single, real question.
- Each paragraph names at least two primary sources by author and title.
- Each paragraph says why the question matters beyond my own curiosity.
- Items in a series are parallel in form (Style Clinic).
- Titles of books are italicized or underlined; titles of short works are in quotation marks.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Ecclesiastes 12:9-10 by hand. Underline the three verbs of method: gave good heed, sought out, set in order.
2. Write a two-column list, "Thesis" and "Hypothesis," and put three pairs in it (e.g., "Should a man marry?" / "Should Cato marry?").
3. Copy 2 Timothy 4:7 on the first page of your Senior Thesis section.

History note. Raphael painted *The School of Athens* between 1509 and 1511 for Pope Julius II. Across the room he painted the *Disputation of the Holy Sacrament*, in which theologians debate beneath the Trinity. The pairing made a point the classical school still holds: philosophy and theology are both part of one search for truth. Luther posted his Ninety-Five Theses only six years after Raphael finished the fresco.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism (Grammar Level 3, usage and style).** When you list things that do the same job, give them the same grammatical form. Weak: "My thesis will require reading the sources, to write twenty pages, and that I defend it." Strong: "My thesis will require me to read the sources, to write twenty pages and to defend my claim." The Preacher writes this way: "gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order," three past-tense verbs in a row. Check every series in your three question paragraphs: nouns with nouns, infinitives with infinitives, clauses with clauses.

For families. Units 1-3 work together as one project that runs most of the fall: choosing (Unit 1), writing (Unit 2) and defending (Unit 3) a senior thesis. Plan now for an advisor (a parent, pastor, tutor or family friend with knowledge of the subject) and, for Unit 3, a panel of two or three adults. Hermogenes' example "Should a man marry?" and the split between practical and theoretical theses come from the Greek progymnasmata manuals (Hermogenes and Aphthonius). If your student is drawn to a question that touches a current political fight, help them find the perennial question underneath it.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student proposes: “My thesis is about the Puritans.” Turn this into a thesis question.

1. A topic is not a question. Ask what about the Puritans is worth arguing.
2. Find the general question behind the topic: the Puritans tried to build a godly commonwealth. Can law make men good?
3. Check it against the five tests: perennial (Aristotle and Augustine both wrote on it), answerable, sourced (Winthrop’s “Model of Christian Charity,” Aristotle’s *Politics*, Augustine’s *City of God*), sized if limited, and the student cares.

Answer: “Can the laws of a commonwealth make its citizens virtuous? A study of John Winthrop’s Massachusetts in light of Aristotle and Augustine.”

Example 2. Report or thesis? “This paper will survey what historians have written about the causes of the fall of Rome.”

1. Ask: does the sentence take a position someone could deny?
2. It promises a survey, not a judgment. No reader could disagree with it.

Answer: A report. A thesis version: “Rome fell less from barbarian swords than from the decay of the civic virtue its own historians praised.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does the Greek word *thesis* mean?
2. **EASY** Thesis or hypothesis? “Should Washington have accepted a third term?”
3. **EASY** Name the five tests for a thesis question.
4. **EASY** What are the three stages of the senior thesis in this course, and which unit covers each?
5. **MEDIUM** Label each T (theoretical) or P (practical): (a) Is beauty in the object or the beholder? (b) Should a Christian read pagan authors? (c) Is history governed by providence?
6. **MEDIUM** Which of the five tests does this fail, and why? “What will the most important invention of the next fifty years be?”
7. **CHALLENGE** Rewrite as a parallel sentence: “A good thesis question is lasting, it can be answered, and having sources.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT/SAT-essay style): “Is it better to finish a hard task poorly than to leave it unfinished?” Take a position and support it with two examples from history or literature.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing a topic (“Shakespeare,” “the Civil War”) instead of a question.
- Choosing a question so large it needs a library (“What is the meaning of history?”) or so small it needs a paragraph.
- Picking a live partisan quarrel and then arguing for a side instead of thinking through the question.
- Choosing what sounds impressive instead of what you actually love and will keep reading in April.

Make it a game · Thesis or Hypothesis?. One player names a specific case (“Should Odysseus have told Penelope the truth at once?”). The other has thirty seconds to state the general thesis behind it (“Should a man ever hide the truth from those he loves?”). Swap. After five rounds, vote on which thesis would make the best senior paper.

Scripture. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:” (2 Timothy 4:7, KJV)

This year’s thread: the senior thesis is the last leg of a long course, and Paul shows that the goal is to finish faithfully.

Practice: answers

1. A setting down; a position taken and held.
2. Hypothesis: it names a particular man and circumstance. The thesis behind it: “Should a ruler limit his own time in office?”
3. Perennial, answerable, sourced, sized, loved.
4. Choosing (Unit 1), writing (Unit 2), defending (Unit 3).
5. (a) T, (b) P, (c) T.
6. Answerable (and sourced): no reasons or primary texts can settle a prediction about unknown inventions.
7. A good thesis question is lasting, answerable and well sourced.
8. Sample opening: “A task left half-built teaches nothing but how to quit. Nehemiah finished the wall of Jerusalem in fifty-two days with his enemies jeering, and an imperfect wall still kept out raiders; the tower in Christ’s parable that its builder could not finish only made him a byword (Luke 14:28-30).” Score for a clear claim in the first two sentences, two developed examples and a conclusion that answers the question.

1.2 FROM QUESTION TO CLAIM

OBJECTIVES

- Use the four stases (fact, definition, quality, policy) to sharpen a thesis question.
- Turn a question into a working claim that is arguable, specific, defensible and significant.
- Choose one question from Lesson 1.1 and write a working thesis statement with a concession clause.

Warm-up. Pilate asked Jesus, “What is truth?” (John 18:38) and walked out before any answer came. Write three sentences: why do people ask great questions and then not wait for the answer?

Video slot. Video coming. How to write a thesis statement for a research paper (a university writing center or classical-school channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

stasis

Greek for “standing” or “stand-off”: the point where two sides actually disagree.

Hermagoras and later Cicero and Quintilian sorted questions by this point of dispute.

working claim

Your present best answer to the thesis question, held firmly enough to guide your reading and loosely enough to change if the evidence demands it.

thesis statement

One or two sentences, usually at the end of the introduction, that state the claim the whole paper defends.

concession

Granting a true point to the other side before giving your own answer: “Although ..., ...”

scope

The limits you set on your question: which texts, which period, which people.

CORE IDEAS

A question is not yet a thesis. In Lesson 1.1 you hunted for questions. A question opens a door; a claim walks through it. You cannot read for twenty pages without knowing what you are looking for, so before your reading plan you need a *working claim*: your best present answer. It is called “working” because it will be tested. Many good theses end up arguing something a little different from where they began. That is not failure. It is what honest inquiry looks like.

Find the point of dispute. The ancient rhetoricians taught that every real argument turns on a *stasis*, a point where two sides stand against each other. Hermagoras named the stases, and Cicero and Quintilian passed them down. In plain terms there are four. *Fact*: did it happen, or is it so? (“Did Richard III order the murder of the princes?”) *Definition*: what is it, rightly named? (“Was the Glorious Revolution a revolution?”) *Quality*: was it good or bad, just or unjust, wise or foolish? (“Was Cincinnatus wise to return to his plow?”) *Policy*: what should be done? (“Should a Christian school teach the pagan poets?”) When you know which stasis your question sits on, you know what kind of evidence you will need: records for fact, careful distinctions for definition, moral reasoning for quality, likely consequences for policy.

Four marks of a good claim. Test your working claim the way you tested your question. (1) *Arguable*: a thoughtful person could deny it. “Shakespeare wrote many plays” is not arguable. (2) *Specific*: it names its terms. “Macbeth is about ambition” is vague; “Macbeth shows that ambition, once it refuses grace, consumes the very kingdom it seeks” is specific. (3) *Defensible*: you can support it with sources you will actually read. (4) *Significant*: it matters. The reader should finish the paper knowing something worth knowing about God, man, the world or how to live.

Narrow the scope. Most first claims are too big. Narrow them by text (“in Augustine’s *Confessions*”), by period (“in the American founding, 1776–1791”), by person (“in the letters of John Adams”), or by comparison (“in Homer and Virgil”). A narrow claim is not a small claim. “Augustine’s pear theft in *Confessions* Book II shows that sin loves its own lawlessness more than any good it gains” is narrow in text and large in meaning.

Grant before you claim. A mature thesis statement usually names the strongest objection and answers it in the same sentence. That is the concession, and you met it as the refutation exercise years ago. “Although Machiavelli is right that a prince who is always merciful may lose his state, he is wrong that a ruler must learn how not to be good, because the cruelty he recommends destroys the trust on which every state rests.” The opening clause shows that you have heard the other side; the main clause gives your answer; the *because* clause gives your first reason. Your panel in Unit 3 will press on exactly that concession, so choose it honestly.

Bacon’s pattern. Read the model. Bacon opens with a question that someone asked and abandoned: Pilate’s “What is truth?” Then he describes people who prefer to keep questions open forever, the “discoursing wits” who think a firm belief is a kind of bondage. Then he states a claim about why men love lies: not only because truth is hard to find, nor because it constrains them once found, but because of “a natural, though corrupt love, of the lie itself.” Notice the shape: question, the wrong ways of handling it, and then a claim stated with a concession built in (“not only ... nor again ... but”). Later in the same essay Bacon names the stakes: the inquiry, knowledge and belief of truth are “the sovereign good of human nature.”

Wait for the answer. Pilate is the warning in Bacon’s first line. He asked the greatest question in the world while the Truth stood before him, and “would not stay for an answer.” A senior thesis is a discipline of staying. You ask, you claim, you test, and you do not walk out when the work becomes hard or the answer becomes uncomfortable.

The model. *Francis Bacon, "Of Truth," Essays (1625), Project Gutenberg #575*

WHAT is truth? said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be, that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them, as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor, which men take in finding out of truth, nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural, though corrupt love, of the lie itself.

PICTURE STUDY



Aristotle with a Bust of Homer, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1653 · Oil on canvas · The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

A Sicilian nobleman, Don Antonio Ruffo, ordered a painting of a philosopher from Rembrandt, and Rembrandt sent him this. The philosopher is usually identified as Aristotle. His hand rests on a bust of Homer, the poet he admired and wrote about; from his shoulder hangs a gold chain with a medallion that probably shows Alexander the Great, his famous pupil. Aristotle is caught between the poet, the king and his own thoughts. The painting seems to ask a question rather than answer one: what is the worth of wisdom, poetry and power, and which of them deserves a man's life?

Look closely

- Where does Rembrandt put the brightest light? Find the three places it falls.
- Look at the two hands. What is each one touching, and what might that say?
- Look at Aristotle's eyes. Is he looking at Homer, at us, or at something else?

Talk about it

1. Write three thesis questions the painting raises (for example, “Is the poet or the philosopher the better teacher?”). Mark each with its stasis.
2. Choose one and write a working claim with a concession clause.

WRITING PROJECT: THE WORKING THESIS

Take your three candidate questions from Lesson 1.1 and carry one of them all the way to a working thesis statement.

You will need

- Writing notebook, Senior Thesis section
- Your three question paragraphs from Lesson 1.1
- Your parent’s note on which question you seem to care about most

Steps

1. For each of your three questions, name its stasis: fact, definition, quality or policy. Write one sentence on what kind of evidence it will need.
2. Choose one question. Write a one-sentence first answer as fast as you can, without polishing.
3. Test the answer against the four marks (arguable, specific, defensible, significant). Revise it at least twice, keeping each version so you can see the change.
4. Narrow the scope by text, period, person or comparison. Write the narrowed claim.
5. Write the strongest objection a wise opponent would raise. Fold it into a final working thesis: “Although [concession], [claim], because [first reason].”
6. Under the thesis, write three reasons you expect to develop. These will become the main sections of your paper in Unit 2.

Check your work

- My thesis statement can be denied by a thoughtful reader.
- Its key terms are named, not vague (“good,” “important,” “interesting” are replaced).
- The concession is the strongest objection, not a weak one.
- The concession is a dependent clause joined to the main clause with a comma, not a comma splice (Style Clinic).
- My three reasons are parallel in form.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Bacon’s first two sentences exactly, with his spelling and punctuation.
2. Imitation: write a paragraph in Bacon’s pattern on a different question. Open with someone who asked it and did not wait for an answer; describe those who avoid answering; give your claim with “not only ... nor ... but.”

3. Make a four-row chart of the stases with one historical question for each.

History note. Francis Bacon (1561–1626) was Lord Chancellor of England and one of the fathers of the scientific method. His *Essays* first appeared in 1597 with ten short pieces; by the final edition of 1625 there were fifty-eight, and “Of Truth” stood first. Rembrandt painted *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* in 1653; the Metropolitan Museum bought it in 1961.

 **Style Clinic. Clauses and the complex sentence (Grammar Level 3, clauses and sentence structures).** A strong thesis statement is usually a complex sentence: a dependent clause of concession plus an independent clause of claim. “Although Bacon admires truth, he admits that lies please us” is correct. “Bacon admires truth, he admits that lies please us” is a comma splice: two independent clauses joined only by a comma. Fix a splice with a subordinating conjunction (*although, because, since, while*), a semicolon, or a coordinating conjunction with a comma. When the dependent clause comes first, follow it with a comma; when it comes last, you usually need none: “Lies please us although we know better.”

For families. The stasis system comes from Hermagoras of Temnos (second century B.C.) through Cicero’s *De Inventione* and Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*; this lesson uses the common simplified four (fact, definition, quality, policy). Help your student choose the strongest honest concession for the thesis statement; a weak opponent makes a weak paper. The model is copied from the Project Gutenberg text of Bacon’s *Essays* (#575), which keeps Bacon’s older spellings such as “imposeth.”

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student’s first claim: “Robinson Crusoe is an interesting book about religion.” Revise it into a working thesis.

1. Arguable? No one denies a book is “interesting.” Specific? “About religion” is vague.
2. Find the stasis: quality. Is Crusoe’s conversion real, or a convenient habit of a merchant’s mind?
3. Narrow by text: the conversion after his illness and his reading of the Bible.
4. Add the strongest objection: Crusoe keeps thinking like a bookkeeper even after he prays.

Answer: “Although Crusoe never stops counting his losses and gains like a merchant, Defoe presents his conversion as real, because after his fever Crusoe’s reading of Scripture changes not only his ledger but his fears, his gratitude and his treatment of Friday.”

Example 2. Identify the stasis and fix the comma splice: “The Roman Republic fell, it was destroyed by ambitious generals.”

1. The sentence makes a claim about cause: a question of fact about what happened.
2. Two independent clauses are joined by a comma alone. Make one dependent.

Answer: Stasis: fact (cause). Revised: “The Roman Republic fell because ambitious generals destroyed it.” Or: “Although the Senate kept meeting, the Republic was destroyed by ambitious generals.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the four stases.
2. **EASY** Which stasis? “Was Brutus a patriot or a traitor?”
3. **EASY** Name the four marks of a good claim.
4. **EASY** In Bacon’s opening, who asks the question and does not wait?
5. **MEDIUM** Which mark does this claim fail? “Lincoln was the sixteenth president.”
6. **MEDIUM** Narrow this claim by text: “Dickens shows that people can change.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a thesis statement with a concession for the question “Should a man marry?”
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (ACT style, 30 minutes): “Some say that a person should hold firm opinions; others say it is wiser to keep an open mind.” Write an essay that states your own position and relates it to at least one of these views.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing an announcement (“This paper will discuss ...”) instead of a claim.
- Choosing a weak concession that no serious opponent would make.
- Using vague value words (“important,” “meaningful,” “interesting”) instead of naming what the claim actually asserts.
- Treating the working claim as fixed and ignoring evidence against it.

Make it a game · Stasis Sort. Write twelve historical questions on cards (Did Columbus know the world was round? Was the Magna Carta a law or a treaty? Was Washington wise to leave office? Should a nation keep a standing army?). Shuffle. Players race to sort them into four piles: fact, definition, quality, policy. Argue over any card that might belong to two piles; the best argument wins the card.

Scripture. “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.” (Proverbs 25:2, KJV)

God hides treasures in His world to be searched out, and a good thesis question is a royal invitation to search.

Practice: answers

1. Fact, definition, quality, policy.
2. Definition (what was his act rightly called?); it also touches quality.
3. Arguable, specific, defensible, significant.
4. Pilate ("jesting Pilate").
5. Arguable: it is a plain fact that no one denies.
6. Sample: "In *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens shows that a man changes when memory, sight and fear teach him that his life belongs to others."
7. Sample: "Although marriage brings cares that the single man escapes, as Paul himself grants in 1 Corinthians 7, a man should ordinarily marry, because marriage trains him in faithfulness, gives children a home and pictures Christ's love for the Church."
8. Sample thesis: "Although a mind closed to all evidence is a prison, a mind that refuses to settle anything is not open but empty; the wise person holds firm convictions and tests them honestly." Score for a thesis with concession in the introduction, two developed examples (Bacon's "discoursing wits" would serve) and clear transitions.

1.3 THE READING PLAN

OBJECTIVES

- Tell primary sources from secondary sources and choose the right mix for a senior thesis.
- Build a reading plan with a dated schedule and a working bibliography in a consistent style.
- Set up a note system (source cards and a thesis commonplace) that records exact quotations and page numbers.

Warm-up. Bacon wrote that “some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.” Name one book from your schooling that belongs in each group.

Video slot. Video coming. How to take research notes and build a working bibliography (a university library or writing center channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

primary source

The thing itself: the original text, letter, speech, law or document you are studying (Augustine’s *Confessions*, Lincoln’s Second Inaugural).

secondary source

A later work about the primary source: a commentary, biography, history or scholarly article.

working bibliography

A growing, formatted list of every source you plan to read or have read, kept from the first day.

annotation

A short note (two to four sentences) under a bibliography entry that says what the source argues and how it helps your thesis.

syntopical reading

Reading several books on the same question side by side and comparing their answers, rather than reading one book alone.

CORE IDEAS

You cannot read everything. The Preacher warned that “of making many books there is no end” (Ecclesiastes 12:12), and he lived long before the printing press, let alone the internet. A thesis question could send you into ten thousand pages. A reading plan is a decision, made

in advance, about which pages deserve your months. Without one you will either read too little and argue from ignorance, or read forever and never write.

Primary first, secondary second. The heart of a classical thesis is the primary source: the great book, the founding document, the letter, the sermon. If your question is about Augustine, you must read Augustine, not only what people say about him. Secondary sources are guides and sparring partners. They tell you what scholars have noticed, where the hard places are and what the strongest objections might be. A good balance for a senior thesis is two to four primary texts read closely and four to eight secondary sources read selectively. Your claim must rest finally on what the primary sources actually say.

Taste, swallow, chew. Bacon's famous sentence in "Of Studies" sorts books by how deeply they must be read. Some you *taste*: you read the introduction, the table of contents, the index and one chapter to learn whether they matter. Some you *swallow*: you read them through at a good pace for their argument. A few you *chew and digest*: you read them slowly, pencil in hand, more than once. In a reading plan, label every source T, S or C. Your primary texts are nearly always C. Most secondary sources are T or S.

Read books in conversation. A thesis reads several authors on one question and makes them talk to one another. Mortimer Adler called this "syntopical" reading. If your question is "May a citizen kill a tyrant?", you might set Cicero's *On Duties*, the account of Brutus in Plutarch, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and Romans 13 side by side. As you read, keep asking each author, "What is your answer to my question, and why?" Record where they agree, where they disagree and which disagreement is the real one.

Write it down the first time. The most common research disaster is a great quotation with no page number. Make one source card (paper or digital) for every work, with full bibliographic information in a single style. This course uses MLA style in Unit 2, but any standard style is fine if you are consistent. Then keep a *thesis commonplace*: a notebook section where each entry has (1) the exact quotation, copied letter for letter, (2) the author, short title and page, and (3) one line of your own on how it bears on your claim. Mark your own words clearly so you never mistake them for the author's. That is how you guard against accidental plagiarism, which is still a form of untruthfulness (Ephesians 4:25).

Put dates on it. A plan without dates is a wish. Count the pages of each source, divide by the weeks before your drafting begins (Unit 2), and set a daily or weekly page goal. Leave a margin week for the source that turns out harder than you thought. Put the plan where your advisor can see it. In Lesson 1.4 you will bring it to your first advisor meeting.

Milton on good books. Read the model. Milton wrote *Areopagitica* in 1644 to argue against licensing books before publication, and in it he says what a book is. A good book is not paper but "the precious life-blood of a master spirit," the best of a mind kept for later readers. That is why your reading plan matters: you are choosing which master spirits to sit with this fall. Notice Milton's method as a writer, too. He grants a concession ("unless wariness be used"), then builds a comparison, killing a man against killing a book, and ends on an image that lifts the whole paragraph.

The model. *John Milton, Areopagitica (1644), Project Gutenberg #608*

For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

PICTURE STUDY



Saint Jerome in His Study, Antonello da Messina, about 1475 · Oil on lime panel · The National Gallery, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Jerome (about 347–420) spent decades translating the Bible into Latin; his translation, the Vulgate, was the Bible of the Western Church for a thousand years. Antonello paints him in a study built like a small room inside a cathedral. Everything he needs is within reach: books open and closed, a desk raised above the floor, light from the windows behind. A lion, from the old story that Jerome drew a thorn from its paw, pads quietly in the shadows. The whole picture is a study in order: a scholar who has arranged his life and his books around one great task.

Look closely

- Count the books you can see. Which are open, which closed, and where are they kept?
- Find the lion, the peacock and the partridge. Why might Antonello keep them outside the study itself?
- Look through the windows at the back. What is the world outside like, compared with the study?

Talk about it

1. Jerome's study is arranged for one task. Describe in a paragraph how you will arrange your own place and time for reading this fall.
2. Write a paragraph on what Jerome might put on his "reading plan" if he were translating the Psalms, and which sources he would chew rather than taste.

WRITING PROJECT: THE READING PLAN AND WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

Build the plan you will follow until drafting begins in Unit 2. It should fit on one or two pages.

You will need

- Writing notebook, Senior Thesis section, with your working thesis from Lesson 1.2
- Library card, a public library catalog, and free sources such as Project Gutenberg
- Index cards or a simple spreadsheet for source cards
- A calendar

Steps

1. List two to four primary sources your claim depends on. For each, note the edition or translation you will use.
2. Find four to eight secondary sources: at least one scholarly book, one older classic commentary or history, and one encyclopedia or reference article for orientation. Ask a librarian; it is their calling.
3. Mark each source T (taste), S (swallow) or C (chew), and write the pages you will actually read.
4. Make a dated schedule: pages per week for each source, a margin week, and a date by which reading is done.
5. Write a working bibliography in MLA style, alphabetized by author. Under at least three entries, write a two-sentence annotation: what the source argues and how it helps or challenges your claim.
6. Set up your thesis commonplace with three sample entries from your first primary source: exact quotation, author and page, one line of your own.

Check your work

- At least two primary and four secondary sources are listed.
- Every entry follows one bibliographic style, with consistent punctuation.

- Every commonplace entry has an exact quotation and a page number; my own words are clearly marked.
- Semicolons separate list items that already contain commas (Style Clinic).
- The schedule has dates, page counts and a margin week.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Milton's last sentence ("Many a man lives a burden ...") exactly.
2. Imitation: write a paragraph in Milton's pattern about something else that preserves a life (a letter, a hymn, a well-kept farm). Give a concession, a comparison and a closing image.
3. List the books you have chewed and digested in high school. Which of them could speak to your thesis question?

History note. Milton published *Areopagitica* in November 1644, about a year after Parliament's Licensing Order of June 1643 required books to be approved before printing. He took his title from the Areopagus of Athens, the hill and council where Paul preached (Acts 17). Antonello da Messina painted *Saint Jerome in His Study* about 1475; the National Gallery in London bought it in 1894.

 **Style Clinic. Colons and semicolons in lists (Grammar Level 3, punctuation mastery).** Use a colon to introduce a list after a complete sentence: "My primary sources are three: the *Confessions*, *The City of God* and *On Christian Doctrine*." Do not use a colon after a verb or preposition ("My sources are: ..." is wrong). When list items already contain commas, separate them with semicolons: "I will read Cicero, *On Duties*, Book I; Plutarch, "Brutus"; and Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Acts II–III." Milton uses the semicolon to balance halves: "Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself."

For families. Bacon's "Of Studies" opened his first little book of essays in 1597 and appears, revised, as essay 50 in the 1625 *Essays* (Project Gutenberg #575). It is short and worth reading whole with your student. The idea of syntopical reading comes from Mortimer Adler's *How to Read a Book* (1940, revised with Charles Van Doren in 1972), which many families find a useful companion for the senior year. Encourage your student to use the public library's interlibrary loan early, since some books take weeks to arrive. Online summaries may help orientation but should never stand in for the primary text.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's thesis: "Although Achilles is the greatest warrior in the *Iliad*, Homer presents Hector as the better man, because Hector fights for his city and family rather than for his own glory." Build a short source list with T/S/C labels.

1. Primary (C): Homer, *Iliad*, especially Books 6, 9, 22 and 24, in a public-domain translation such as Butler or Pope.
2. Primary for comparison (S): Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 2, for how a later poet remembers Hector.
3. Secondary (S): a scholarly study of the *Iliad* from the library; (T) a reference article on Homeric honor; (T) the introduction to a modern translation.

Answer: A balanced plan: one primary text chewed in its key books, one comparison text swallowed, two or three secondary sources tasted or swallowed for context and objections.

Example 2. Fix this commonplace entry: "Milton says books are the life-blood of great minds and we should protect them."

1. It mixes paraphrase and quotation and gives no page or edition.
2. Copy the exact words, add the source, then add your own line, marked.

Answer: "a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." (Milton, *Areopagitica*, PG #608.) MY NOTE: Supports my claim that reading the primary text is meeting the author himself, not a report about him.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Primary or secondary? (a) The Mayflower Compact; (b) a 1950 biography of William Bradford; (c) Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation*.
2. **EASY** What do T, S and C stand for in a reading plan, and where did the idea come from?
3. **EASY** What three things belong in every thesis commonplace entry?
4. **EASY** In the model, what does Milton call a good book?
5. **MEDIUM** Punctuate this list correctly: "My sources are: Augustine, Confessions, Book XI, Boethius, Consolation, Book V and Lewis, Miracles."
6. **MEDIUM** Find Milton's concession in the model and the comparison that follows it.
7. **CHALLENGE** You have 840 pages of reading and seven weeks before drafting. Make a schedule with a margin week.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (CLT-style, 25 minutes): Respond to Milton's claim that "a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit." Agree or disagree, using at least one book you have read closely.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading only secondary sources and summaries, so the thesis rests on what others say the great book says.
- Copying a quotation without the page number, then losing an hour hunting for it later.
- Blurring your own words and an author's in your notes, which can lead to plagiarism.
- Making a list of sources with no schedule, or a schedule with no margin.

Make it a game · Taste, Swallow or Chew? A parent holds up books from the family shelves one at a time, with a thesis question announced at the start (e.g., "Is courage the first virtue?"). The student has ten seconds to say T, S or C for each book and why. A parent may challenge; if the student defends the label well, the student keeps the point.

Scripture. "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." (2 Timothy 4:13, KJV)

Even in prison near the end of his course, Paul asked for his books, and especially the parchments: a scholar knows which sources matter most.

Practice: answers

1. (a) Primary, (b) secondary, (c) primary.
2. Taste, swallow, chew (and digest); from Bacon's essay "Of Studies."
3. The exact quotation; the author, short title and page; one line of your own, clearly marked.
4. "the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."
5. My sources are Augustine, *Confessions*, Book XI; Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, Book V; and Lewis, *Miracles*. (Drop the colon after "are"; use semicolons between items with internal commas.)
6. Concession: "unless wariness be used." Comparison: killing a man (a reasonable creature) against destroying a good book (reason itself).
7. Sample: Six reading weeks at 140 pages a week (20 pages a day), plus one margin week. Primary texts first (weeks 1-3), secondary sources after (weeks 4-6), margin week 7.
8. Sample opening: "Milton is right, and Bunyan proves it: *The Pilgrim's Progress*, written in a Bedford jail, has carried its author's faith to readers he never met for over three centuries." Score for a clear position, a closely read example and an honest answer to one objection (bad books also live on).

1.4 THE ADVISOR MEETING AND THE PROSPECTUS

OBJECTIVES

- Write a one-page thesis prospectus: question, working claim, reasons, sources and schedule.
- Prepare for, lead and take notes at a first meeting with a thesis advisor.
- Receive counsel humbly and write a follow-up letter that records the decisions made.

Warm-up. Think of the best advice anyone ever gave you. Who gave it, and why did you listen? Write it down in two or three sentences.

Video slot. Video coming. How to prepare for a meeting with a thesis advisor or mentor (a university graduate school or writing center channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

advisor

An older, knowledgeable person who guides your thesis: asks hard questions, suggests sources, keeps you on schedule and tells you the truth about your work.

prospectus

A one-page plan of the thesis that you send to your advisor before the first meeting.

agenda

A short list of the questions and decisions a meeting must cover, in order. Latin for “things to be done.”

minutes

A brief written record of what was decided at a meeting and who will do what by when.

counsel

Advice given with thought and care; in Scripture, the wisdom of those who see what we cannot.

CORE IDEAS

No thesis is written alone. Every scholar has someone who reads the work before the world does. The medieval student had his master; the doctoral student has a committee; you will have an advisor. Your advisor might be a parent with knowledge of your subject, a pastor, a tutor, a teacher at a co-op, or a family friend who works in the field. The best advisor knows more than you about the question, cares about the truth more than about your feelings, and has time to meet with you three or four times this fall.

The prospectus. Before the first meeting, put your whole plan on one page. A prospectus has five parts. (1) *Title and question*: a working title and the thesis question, with its stasis.

(2) *Working thesis*: the statement from Lesson 1.2, with its concession. (3) *Reasons*: the three reasons you expect to develop, one sentence each. (4) *Sources*: your primary texts and the best three or four secondary sources from Lesson 1.3. (5) *Schedule*: the date reading ends, the date the first draft is due (Unit 2), and the hoped-for date of the defense (Unit 3). Send it to your advisor at least three days before you meet, so he or she can think about it.

Lead the meeting. It is your thesis, so it is your meeting. Bring an agenda of three to five items, usually: (1) Is the question worth asking and the right size? (2) Is the working claim arguable and honest? (3) What sources am I missing? (4) Is the schedule realistic? (5) How and when shall we meet next? Open with a two-minute summary of your thesis, spoken rather than read. Then ask your questions and *listen*. Do most of the writing and little of the talking. Close by reading back what you heard: “So I will narrow the question to Book XI, add Boethius, and send you a revised thesis by Friday. Is that right?”

Hear the hard word. The point of an advisor is that he sees what you cannot. If your advisor says your question is too large, your claim is a report, or your schedule is a fantasy, he is doing you a kindness. “Faithful are the wounds of a friend,” says Proverbs 27:6. Do not argue in the meeting. Ask a clarifying question (“What would a narrower version look like?”), write the answer down, and think about it at home. You are not bound to accept every suggestion. It is still your thesis, and you will defend it, not your advisor. But you are bound to weigh every suggestion honestly, and to explain your reasons if you decline one.

Put it in writing. Within a day, send a short follow-up letter or email that thanks your advisor, lists what was decided (the minutes) and names your next steps with dates. This does three things. It shows respect for the advisor’s time. It catches misunderstandings while they are still small. And it creates a record that you and your advisor can return to in November when memories differ. In the working world this habit is expected after nearly every meeting with a boss or client, so learn it now. Your letter should be brief, clear and gracious: speech “always with grace, seasoned with salt” (Colossians 4:6).

Jethro and Moses. Read the model. Moses was judging the people alone from morning until evening. His father-in-law watched for a day and said plainly, “The thing that thou doest is not good.” That is a hard word from an advisor. But notice what Jethro does next. He explains why (“thou wilt surely wear away”), proposes a plan (able men who fear God, to judge the small matters), and submits it to God (“if thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so”). Then notice Moses. The greatest leader in Israel, who spoke with God face to face, “hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.” A good advisor speaks the truth with a plan; a wise student hears it.

The end of Unit 1. When this lesson is done you should have a question, a working claim, a reading plan, an advisor and a signed-off prospectus. That is a real beginning. Keep the prospectus at the front of your Senior Thesis section. In Unit 2 you will build the paper on it.

The model. *Exodus 18:17-24, King James Version (1611)*

And Moses’ father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.
Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this

thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

PICTURE STUDY



Two Old Men Disputing (probably Saint Peter and Saint Paul), Rembrandt van Rijn, 1628 · Oil on panel ·
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The young Rembrandt, only about twenty-two, painted two old men in close conversation over a book. They are usually thought to be the apostles Peter and Paul, who once disagreed sharply (Galatians 2:11) and yet remained brothers in Christ. One man turns his back to us and presses his finger on a passage; the other leans in, face lit by the window, weighing what he hears. It is a picture of counsel: two serious minds, one text, and the patience to listen.

Look closely

- Where does the light fall most strongly? Whose face can you see, and whose can you not?
- Find the pointing finger. What does it tell you about how the speaker is making his case?
- Look at the listener's posture and hands. Is he agreeing, doubting or still deciding?

Talk about it

1. Write the conversation you imagine in eight to ten lines of dialogue, as if one man were an advisor and the other a student defending a claim.
2. Rembrandt hides one face. Why might the painting be stronger because we see only the listener's expression?

WRITING PROJECT: PROSPECTUS, MEETING AND FOLLOW-UP LETTER

This project finishes Unit 1. It has three parts: a one-page prospectus, a meeting you lead, and a letter that records what was decided.

You will need

- Your working thesis (Lesson 1.2) and reading plan (Lesson 1.3)
- An advisor who has agreed to meet with you
- Writing notebook for meeting notes
- Computer or good paper for the prospectus and letter

Steps

1. Write the prospectus on one page under five headings: Title and Question; Working Thesis; Reasons; Sources; Schedule.
2. Send it to your advisor at least three days before the meeting, with a short note asking for a time.
3. Write an agenda of three to five questions. Practice a two-minute spoken summary of your thesis.
4. Hold the meeting (30–45 minutes). Take notes. Before you leave, read back the decisions and the next deadline.
5. Within 24 hours, write a follow-up letter: thanks, the decisions (minutes), your next steps with dates, and the next meeting time.
6. Revise the prospectus to reflect the decisions. Put the revised copy at the front of your Senior Thesis section and send it to your advisor.

Check your work

- The prospectus fits on one page and has all five headings.
- The follow-up letter is in active voice and names who will do what by when (Style Clinic).
- Requests are courteous and clear ("I ask that you ...," "Would you be willing ...?").

- Dates, titles and names are correct and consistently formatted.
- The letter is under 250 words and has a proper greeting and closing.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Exodus 18:19 by hand.
2. List three people who could serve as your advisor. Beside each, write one strength and one limit.
3. Write the agenda for your first meeting.

History note. Rembrandt painted *Two Old Men Disputing* in Leiden in 1628, before he moved to Amsterdam. The National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne acquired it in 1936. The identification of the men as Peter and Paul is traditional and likely, but the painting itself carries no title from Rembrandt's hand.

 **Style Clinic. Voice and mood (Grammar Level 3).** Write minutes in the *active* voice so it is clear who acts: "I will add Boethius by October 20," not "Boethius will be added." The passive hides the person responsible. For requests, use courteous forms: the *subjunctive* after verbs of asking ("I ask that the defense *be* scheduled for March," not "is scheduled") or a polite question ("Would you be willing to read my draft by December 1?"). Save the *imperative* mood for plain instructions, as Jethro uses it with authority: "Hearken now unto my voice."

For families. If a parent serves as advisor, it helps to treat the meetings as formal appointments: a set time, the prospectus sent ahead, notes taken. Students learn the most when they lead. If you can, find a second reader outside the family for one meeting; many pastors, retired teachers and professionals are glad to help a serious student. The follow-up letter is the same skill the career unit (Unit 6) builds on: the professional email after a meeting. The model passage is printed from the King James text.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this follow-up email: “hey thanks for meeting!! so basically the question is too big so i guess ill change it. books will be read. see u later”

1. Tone: too casual for an advisor. Add a greeting and closing.
2. Content: say what exactly was decided and what you will do.
3. Voice: “books will be read” is passive and vague. Name the books and the date.

Answer: Dear Mr. Harris,

Thank you for meeting with me on Tuesday. We decided that I will narrow my question to Augustine’s view of time in *Confessions* Book XI, and that I will add Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, Book V, to my primary sources. I will send you a revised thesis statement by Friday, October 17, and finish my reading by November 14. May we meet again the week of November 17?

Respectfully,
Anna Miller

Example 2. Turn this vague agenda item into a useful question: “Talk about sources.”

1. A good agenda item asks for a decision or specific advice.
2. Name what you already have and what you are unsure about.

Answer: “I have three primary texts and four secondary sources (list attached). Which secondary source would you cut, and is there a stronger objection to my claim that I should be reading?”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five parts of a prospectus.
2. **EASY** What does *agenda* mean in Latin?
3. **EASY** In the model, what did Jethro tell Moses first?
4. **EASY** How soon after a meeting should you send a follow-up letter?
5. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in the active voice: “It was decided that the first draft would be submitted in December.”
6. **MEDIUM** Correct the mood: “I request that my advisor reads chapter two by Monday.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Your advisor says your question is too large. You disagree. Write two sentences you could say in the meeting.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (SAT-style analysis, 25 minutes): Explain how Jethro builds his argument in Exodus 18:17–23. Discuss at least two techniques (for example, plain statement of the problem, reasons, a concrete plan, appeal to God’s authority).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Arriving at the meeting with no prospectus or agenda and expecting the advisor to lead.
- Defending every point instead of listening and taking notes.
- Skipping the follow-up letter, so decisions are forgotten or remembered differently.
- Choosing an advisor only because he or she will be easy on you.

Make it a game • Advisor Role-Play. A parent plays a demanding advisor with a hidden concern (the question is too broad, the sources are thin, the schedule is too tight). The student has five minutes to present the prospectus and ask questions until the hidden concern comes out. Score a point for finding it, a point for not arguing, and a point for a correct read-back at the end. Swap roles: the student plays advisor to the parent's imaginary thesis.

Scripture. "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established." (Proverbs 15:22, KJV)

A thesis plan made alone often fails; tested by wise counsel, it stands.

Practice: answers

1. Title and question; working thesis; reasons; sources; schedule.
2. Things to be done.
3. "The thing that thou doest is not good."
4. Within 24 hours (a day).
5. Sample: "We decided that I will submit the first draft by December 12."
6. "I request that my advisor read chapter two by Monday." (subjunctive after a verb of requesting)
7. Sample: "Could you show me what a narrower version would look like? I want to keep the comparison with Aquinas, so I would value your advice on how to limit it without losing that."
8. Sample thesis: "Jethro persuades the most powerful man in Israel not by flattery but by a plain diagnosis, a reason Moses cannot deny and a concrete plan that he humbly submits to God." Score for a clear thesis, two techniques with quoted evidence and explanation of their effect.

UNIT 1 REVIEW

The student works alone, with a Bible and notebook closed except for item 12. Short answers may be written or given aloud; items 9–12 are written. Score writing items for a clear claim, correct structure and the mechanics taught in this unit's Style Clinics.

1. (3 pts) What does the Greek word *thesis* mean, and how did Hermogenes distinguish a thesis from a hypothesis?
2. (5 pts) Name the five tests for a thesis question.
3. (3 pts) Report or thesis? “This paper will explain what Puritans believed about work.” Rewrite it if needed.
4. (3 pts) Name the four stases and give the stasis of this question: “Should a Christian read the pagan poets?”
5. (4 pts) Name the four marks of a good claim.
6. (3 pts) Primary or secondary? (a) Washington’s Farewell Address; (b) a modern history of the Constitutional Convention; (c) Madison’s notes on the Convention.
7. (2 pts) Fix the comma splice: “Bacon loved truth, he admitted that men love lies.”
8. (3 pts) Punctuate: “I will read three works: Plato, Republic, Book VII, Augustine, Confessions, Book X and Milton, Areopagitica.”
9. (2 pts) Rewrite in active voice with a responsible person and a date: “The bibliography will be finished soon.”
10. (5 pts) Write a thesis statement with a concession for the question “Is it better to live in the country or the city?”
11. (3 pts) In Exodus 18, name two things Jethro does that make his counsel effective, and one thing Moses does that makes him a good listener.
12. (5 pts) Attach your revised prospectus. Does it have all five parts (title and question, working thesis, reasons, sources, schedule)?

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE SENIOR THESIS PROSPECTUS

Place your revised one-page prospectus, your working bibliography and your follow-up letter to your advisor at the front of your Grade 12 portfolio. They are the foundation of the thesis you will write in Unit 2 and defend in Unit 3.

- **Question:** A single, perennial, answerable question of the right size, with its stasis named.
- **Working thesis:** Arguable, specific, defensible and significant, with an honest concession and three parallel reasons.
- **Sources and schedule:** At least two primary and four secondary sources in one consistent style, with a dated, realistic schedule.
- **Counsel and mechanics:** The follow-up letter is courteous, in active voice, and records decisions; complex sentences, semicolons and parallelism are used correctly.

1. A setting down or position. A thesis is a general question with no particular persons ("Should a man marry?"); a hypothesis is tied to particular persons and circumstances ("Should Cato marry?").
2. Perennial, answerable, sourced, sized, loved.
3. Report. Sample thesis: "The Puritan teaching that ordinary work is a calling from God gave dignity to labor that the medieval world had reserved for monks and priests."
4. Fact, definition, quality, policy. This question is policy.
5. Arguable, specific, defensible, significant.
6. (a) Primary, (b) secondary, (c) primary.
7. Sample: "Although Bacon loved truth, he admitted that men love lies."
8. I will read three works: Plato, *Republic*, Book VII; Augustine, *Confessions*, Book X; and Milton, *Areopagitica*.
9. Sample: "I will finish the bibliography by October 31."
10. Sample: "Although the city offers learning, trade and fellowship the country cannot match, the country is the better place to raise a family, because steady work, quiet and nearness to creation train children in patience and gratitude."
11. Two of: states the problem plainly; gives a reason (Moses will wear away); proposes a concrete plan; submits it to God. Moses hearkens and does what was said.
12. One point per part present and complete.

WRITING THE THESIS

In Unit 1 you chose a question, stated a claim and planned your reading. Now you write the thesis itself. You will build its sections on the classical parts of an oration, with Hamilton's plan for the *Federalist* as your model (2.1); draft it steadily by a calendar, as the Preacher "sought out, and set in order" (2.2); revise it from the whole argument down to the single word by Franklin's method of comparison (2.3); and cite every source honestly, as Luke did, before you hand in the finished thesis (2.4, the quarter-path lesson). It is a long course, and this year's verse fits it: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course" (2 Timothy 4:7).

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has a thesis question, an arguable claim and a reading plan approved by an advisor (Unit 1).
- Writes multi-page essays with a clear thesis, paragraphs and quoted evidence.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can arrange a long argument in sections built on the classical parts of an oration.
- ☐ I can draft steadily by a calendar, in paragraphs that move from claim to evidence to warrant.
- ☐ I can revise from large to small, using a reverse outline and a revision log.
- ☐ I can cite quotations, paraphrases and facts in Chicago (or MLA) style and avoid plagiarism.
- ☐ I can submit a finished thesis in clean, consistent form.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **The Federalist Papers (Project Gutenberg #1404)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1404>): Free; No. 1 is the model partition for 2.1.
- **Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (Project Gutenberg #20203)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20203>): Free; the Spectator passage on imitation and revision (2.3).
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): Free; Ecclesiastes 12 and Luke 1 are this unit's other models.
- **Purdue OWL: Chicago Manual of Style, 18th edition** (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_18th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_18th_edition.html): Free reference pages and a notes-bibliography sample paper.
- **Purdue OWL: MLA Formatting and Style Guide** (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html): Free; use if your advisor prefers MLA.

2.1 THE SECTIONS OF THE THESIS

OBJECTIVES

- Match the six classical parts of an oration to the sections of a senior thesis.
- Read Hamilton’s plan at the close of Federalist No. 1 and name what a good partition does.
- Build a sectioned sentence outline of your own thesis and write its road-map paragraph.

Warm-up. Open any well-made nonfiction book you own and read only its table of contents. In two minutes, write what you can already tell about the author’s argument before reading a single chapter.

Video slot. Video coming. The Federalist Papers: how Publius planned the series (a history or civics lecture). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

arrangement (dispositio)

The second canon of rhetoric: putting the things you have found (invention) into the order that will best persuade.

partition (partitio)

The part of a speech or essay that tells the hearer what will be proved and in what order; in a thesis, the road-map paragraph.

statement of facts (narratio)

The background the reader needs before the argument begins: the history of the question, the terms, what others have said.

confirmation and refutation

The proof of your claim (confirmatio) and the answer to objections against it (refutatio or reprehensio).

section

A titled division of a long paper that proves one part of the main claim; each section has its own small claim, evidence and conclusion.

CORE IDEAS

From essay to thesis. In Unit 1 you chose a question, stated a claim and gathered a reading plan. Now you build the house. A five-paragraph essay can be held in the mind all at once; a senior thesis of four to six thousand words (fifteen to twenty pages, or the length your advisor sets) cannot. A long work needs sections, and each section needs a job. Without them the reader wanders, and so does the writer.

The old parts still work. Cicero, in his youthful handbook *On Invention*, named six parts of a speech: the exordium (opening), the narratio (statement of facts), the partitio (partition), the confirmatio (proof), the reprehensio (refutation) and the conclusio (conclusion). Quintilian taught nearly the same order a century later. These were not rules for their own sake. They follow the order of a listener's mind: Why should I care? What is the situation? What will you prove? Prove it. What about the other side? So what?

The parts become sections. In a senior thesis the six parts usually take this shape. *Introduction* (exordium and claim): a real problem, stated so the reader feels its weight, ending in your thesis statement. *Background* (narratio): the history of the question, the meaning of key terms and the main voices who have answered it before you. *Road map* (partitio): a short paragraph naming your sections in order. *Argument sections* (confirmatio): usually two to four, each proving one reason for the claim. *Objections and replies* (refutatio): the strongest case against you, stated fairly and answered. *Conclusion* (peroration): what follows if you are right, and why it matters for how we should live or think.

Order the proofs on purpose. Quintilian and later teachers advised putting a strong argument first, so the reader trusts you early, and the strongest last, so it rings in the ear; weaker but useful points go in the middle. Arrange your argument sections, too, so that each prepares for the next. If Section III cannot be understood without Section II, the order is right. If any two sections could be swapped without loss, ask whether they are really one section, or whether a step is missing between them.

Answer objections like Thomas Aquinas. The *Summa Theologiae* is built on articles that open with the objections to the author's own view, stated at their strongest, before he gives his answer and replies to each in turn. That habit marks an honest thinker. Put your objections section late, after your proof, but state the opposing view so well that one who holds it would say, "Yes, that is what I mean." A thesis that refutes only weak objections proves nothing.

The partition in the model. Hamilton opened the *Federalist* series in October 1787 with an essay that ends in a partition for the whole work: six "particulars" in an order that builds, from the value of union to the security of liberty. Notice three things. The heads are parallel, each a noun phrase in capitals. The order is logical: you must see the Union is useful before you care that the old Confederation cannot keep it. And he promises to meet objections, then names exactly what his next paper will do. Your road-map paragraph should do the same work in three to six sentences.

Titles that argue. Give each section a title that states its claim, not just its topic. "The Monastery Library" is a topic; "The Monasteries Kept Latin Learning Alive" is a claim. When you read your section titles in order, they should sound like a summary of the whole argument. That list is the first test of your arrangement, and your advisor can read it in one minute.

The model. Alexander Hamilton ("Publius"), *The Federalist No. 1, "General Introduction"* (1787), in *The Federalist Papers*, Project Gutenberg #1404

I propose, in a series of papers, to discuss the following interesting particulars:

THE UTILITY OF THE UNION TO YOUR POLITICAL PROSPERITY THE
INSUFFICIENCY OF THE PRESENT CONFEDERATION TO PRESERVE THAT
UNION THE NECESSITY OF A GOVERNMENT AT LEAST EQUALLY ENERGETIC
WITH THE ONE PROPOSED, TO THE ATTAINMENT OF THIS OBJECT THE
CONFORMITY OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION TO THE TRUE PRINCIPLES
OF REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT ITS ANALOGY TO YOUR OWN STATE
CONSTITUTION and lastly, THE ADDITIONAL SECURITY WHICH ITS
ADOPTION WILL AFFORD TO THE PRESERVATION OF THAT SPECIES OF
GOVERNMENT, TO LIBERTY, AND TO PROPERTY.

In the progress of this discussion I shall endeavor to give a satisfactory answer to all the objections which shall have made their appearance, that may seem to have any claim to your attention.

It may perhaps be thought superfluous to offer arguments to prove the utility of the UNION, a point, no doubt, deeply engraved on the hearts of the great body of the people in every State, and one, which it may be imagined, has no adversaries. But the fact is, that we already hear it whispered in the private circles of those who oppose the new Constitution, that the thirteen States are of too great extent for any general system, and that we must of necessity resort to separate confederacies of distinct portions of the whole.(1) This doctrine will, in all probability, be gradually propagated, till it has votaries enough to countenance an open avowal of it. For nothing can be more evident, to those who are able to take an enlarged view of the subject, than the alternative of an adoption of the new Constitution or a dismemberment of the Union. It will therefore be of use to begin by examining the advantages of that Union, the certain evils, and the probable dangers, to which every State will be exposed from its dissolution. This shall accordingly constitute the subject of my next address.

PICTURE STUDY



The Philosopher in Meditation, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1632 · Oil on oak panel · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In a small panel painted when he was about twenty-six, Rembrandt filled a room with shadow and let light fall from one window onto an old scholar, deep in thought. A spiral staircase turns up into darkness at the center; across the room a woman bends over the hearth. The picture is built in parts, each with its own light, yet the eye moves through them in a fixed order. A thesis is built the same way.

Look closely

- Follow the light. Where does it enter, what does it fall on first, and where does it fade?
- Trace the staircase. How many turns can you see before it vanishes?
- Find the second figure by the fire. How does she balance the scholar on the other side?

Talk about it

1. The stair climbs one step at a time and each step depends on the one below. Write a paragraph comparing it to the sections of your thesis.
2. Rembrandt keeps most of the room in shadow so that one part shines. What is the one bright idea of your thesis, and which sections lead the reader's eye to it?

WRITING PROJECT: THE SECTIONED OUTLINE AND ROAD MAP

Turn your claim and reading notes from Unit 1 into a plan your advisor can approve before you draft.

The outline uses full sentences, not single words, so that every heading is already a claim.

You will need

- Your thesis question, claim and reading notes from Unit 1
- Writing notebook or a document on the computer
- Index cards (optional, for shuffling sections)

Steps

1. Write your thesis statement at the top in one sentence.
2. List every reason you have found for your claim. Group them until you have two to four reasons strong enough to be sections.
3. Write a claim-title for each section, then under it two or three sentence-points, each naming the main source or evidence you will use.
4. Add the Background section: list the terms to define, the history to tell and the two or three thinkers who have answered your question before.
5. Write the strongest objection to your claim in a form its holder would accept, and under it one sentence of your reply.
6. Read the section titles aloud in order. Rearrange until each prepares for the next; then write a road-map paragraph of three to six sentences on the pattern of Hamilton's partition.
7. Send the outline and road map to your advisor and note the advisor's comments in the margin.

Check your work

- My thesis statement is one arguable sentence, not a topic or a question.
- Each section title states a claim, and the titles read in order summarize the argument.
- I have an objections section that states the other side fairly.
- Each argument section names at least one source I will use.
- My section titles and road-map items are parallel in grammatical form.
- Every sentence in my road map is complete, with a clear subject and verb.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Hamilton's first paragraph and list of particulars by hand. Then rewrite the list as six numbered, parallel noun phrases in ordinary capitals and lower case.
2. Imitate the model: write a three-sentence partition for a thesis on "Is it better to live in the country or the city?" naming three sections and promising to answer objections.
3. List the six classical parts of a speech beside the six sections of a thesis, drawing a line from each part to its section.

History note. The *Federalist* essays appeared in New York newspapers in 1787 and 1788 under the pen name "Publius," written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay to urge ratification of the Constitution. No. 1, by Hamilton, ran in the *Independent*

Journal on October 27, 1787. The series grew to eighty-five papers, and the plan announced in No. 1 governed it from start to finish.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism.** Items in a list or series should share one grammatical form. Hamilton's particulars are all noun phrases: "THE UTILITY ...," "THE INSUFFICIENCY ...," "THE NECESSITY" Check your section titles: if one is a clause ("The Monks Preserved Latin"), make them all clauses; if one is a noun phrase ("The Preservation of Latin"), make them all noun phrases. Not parallel: "I will show the monks' copying, how the schools grew, and that Charlemagne helped." Parallel: "I will show that the monks copied, that the schools grew and that Charlemagne helped."

For families. Cicero lists the six parts in *De Inventione* I.19; Quintilian treats the order of proofs in *Institutio Oratoria* V.12. Aquinas's pattern (objections, *sed contra*, answer, replies) is worth showing your student from any article of the *Summa*. The advisor should approve the outline before drafting begins in 2.2; a week spent here saves a month later. The model is printed exactly from the Project Gutenberg text, including its run-together list and the "(1)" footnote marker; the list was set on separate lines in the original newspaper.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's thesis claims: "The medieval monasteries, more than any other institution, preserved classical learning in the West." Her draft outline has these titles: I. Monasteries; II. Some Manuscripts; III. Charlemagne; IV. Conclusion. Revise the outline.

1. The titles are topics, not claims, and there is no background or objections section.
2. Turn each topic into a claim and ask what each proves for the thesis.
3. Add Background (what was lost when Rome fell) and Objections (the Byzantine and Arabic preservation of Greek texts).
4. Order: the strongest claim (the copying of manuscripts) first among proofs, the Carolingian schools last, as the fullest fruit.

Answer: I. Introduction: The Lamp in the Dark Ages. II. Background: What the Fall of Rome Put at Risk. III. The Monks Copied the Books That Survive. IV. The Rule of Benedict Made Reading a Daily Duty. V. Monastic Schools Became the Seedbed of Carolingian Learning. VI. Objection: Did Constantinople and Baghdad Keep More? Reply: They kept Greek; the monasteries kept the Latin West. VII. Conclusion: What We Owe to Copyists.

Example 2. Write a road-map paragraph for that outline, imitating Hamilton’s partition.

1. Name each section in order, in parallel form.
2. Promise the objection and its answer.
3. Close by saying where the next section begins.

Answer: This thesis proceeds in five steps. After sketching what the fall of Rome put at risk, it shows that the monks copied the books that survive, that the Rule of Benedict made reading a daily duty and that monastic schools became the seedbed of Carolingian learning. It then answers the strongest objection, that the libraries of Constantinople and Baghdad kept more of the ancient world than the West did. It begins, therefore, with the libraries of Rome in the fifth century.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name Cicero’s six parts of a speech in order.
2. **EASY** Which thesis section matches the narratio?
3. **EASY** What does a partition do?
4. **MEDIUM** Turn this topic title into a claim title: “Lincoln and the Bible.”
5. **MEDIUM** In Hamilton’s list, why must “the utility of the Union” come before “the insufficiency of the present Confederation”?
6. **MEDIUM** Make these road-map items parallel: “the causes of the war,” “how the generals fought,” “it ended badly.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Where should the objections section go, and why there rather than first?
8. **CHALLENGE** State the strongest objection to the claim “Every young man and woman should learn Latin,” in words its holder would accept, then give a one-sentence reply.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Topic titles instead of claim titles, so the outline shows subjects but not an argument.
- Leaving out the objections section, or stating the other side so weakly that answering it proves nothing.
- Sections that could be swapped without loss, a sign that the argument does not build.
- A Background section that swells into half the thesis and leaves no room for the proof.

Make it a game · Shuffle the Stair. Write the section titles of a parent’s or sibling’s chosen thesis (or of the worked example) on index cards and shuffle them. The student lays them out in the best order against a two-minute timer, then defends the order aloud, step by step: why must this card come before that one?

Scripture. “Let all things be done decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40, KJV)

Paul gives this rule for worship, but its wisdom reaches every work done for God, including a long argument set out in order for a reader.

Practice: answers

1. Exordium, narratio, partitio, confirmatio, reprehensio (refutatio), conclusio.
2. The Background section: history of the question, definitions and earlier answers.
3. It tells the reader what will be proved and in what order.
4. Sample: "Lincoln's Second Inaugural Reasons from Scripture, Not Merely Quotes It."
5. The reader must first see that union is worth keeping before it matters that the Confederation cannot keep it; the second point depends on the first.
6. Sample: "the causes of the war, the conduct of its generals and the bitterness of its end."
7. Usually after the proofs and before the conclusion. The reader should hear your case first; answering objections before you have argued can make you look defensive and lets the other side set the terms. A very well-known objection may be named briefly in the introduction and answered fully later.
8. Sample: Objection: "A student's years are limited, and the hours spent on Latin could give real fluency in a living language or a trade that serves neighbors now." Reply: Latin pays its cost back because it trains the very habits of exact reading and grammar that make every later language and trade easier to learn.

2.2 DRAFTING: STEADY WORK, SECTION BY SECTION

OBJECTIVES

- Make a drafting calendar that brings a full thesis draft to the advisor by a fixed date.
- Draft an argument section in paragraphs that move from claim to evidence to explanation.
- Write a 40-minute timed argument in the manner of the ACT Writing test.

Warm-up. Set a timer for ten minutes and write, without stopping or erasing, everything you would tell a friend about why your thesis claim is true. Count the words. That number is your honest drafting speed when you are not afraid of being wrong.

Video slot. Video coming. How great writers kept a daily writing routine (Trollope, Franklin; a biography or literature lecture). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

draft

A complete but unpolished version of a work, written to get the whole argument onto the page so that it can be judged and revised.

drafting calendar

A schedule that sets a daily or weekly word goal and a due date for each section.

topic sentence

The sentence, usually first, that states the one point a paragraph proves.

warrant

The explanation that shows why a piece of evidence supports the claim; the step that tells the reader what the quotation or fact means.

placeholder

A bracketed note left in a draft, such as [CITE Pine p. 14] or [DATE?], so that you keep writing now and fill the gap later.

CORE IDEAS

The preacher’s labor. The model this week is not about inspiration but about work. Solomon, the Preacher, “gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order”; he “sought to find out acceptable words,” and the result was “upright, even words of truth.” Seeking, ordering, choosing words and telling the truth: that is drafting. It takes time, and it takes the humility to write something imperfect today so that it can be made good next month.

A calendar, not a mood. Anthony Trollope, who wrote more than forty novels while working full time for the Post Office, described in his *Autobiography* (1883) how he wrote

early each morning with his watch before him, aiming at a fixed number of words each quarter hour. You need not be so strict, but you do need a number. Divide your target length by the weeks you have. A five-thousand-word thesis drafted in five weeks is a thousand words a week, or two hundred a day on five days. Write the due date for each section on your calendar and show it to your advisor.

Begin in the middle. You do not have to draft in the order the reader will read. The introduction is often the hardest part to write first, because you do not yet know exactly what you have proved. Start with the argument section you know best, then the others, then the background, and write the introduction and conclusion last. Keep your sectioned outline from 2.1 open beside you; each day, draft the next sentence-point into a paragraph.

The shape of a paragraph. In an argument section most paragraphs follow a pattern you can trust: a topic sentence that makes one claim; evidence (a quotation, fact, example or summary of a source); the warrant, which explains how the evidence proves the claim; and a closing sentence that ties the point back to the section's claim or leads to the next paragraph. New writers give evidence and stop. Strong writers spend at least as many words explaining the evidence as quoting it. A quotation never speaks for itself; you must make it testify.

Keep moving. A draft that stops to look up every date never gets finished. When you do not know something, leave a placeholder in brackets and go on: [CITE Federalist 1], [CHECK: 1787 or 1788?], [NEED EXAMPLE]. But one thing must never wait: the source of every quotation and borrowed idea. Tag it the moment you write it, even roughly, so that in 2.4 you can build your notes and bibliography without hunting. Losing track of a source is how honest students drift into plagiarism.

Under the clock. College entrance writing is drafted under time. The ACT Writing test gives forty minutes for one argumentative essay on an issue with three given perspectives; the SAT no longer has an essay, and the SAT and CLT test your editing in multiple-choice passages instead. A timed essay is a small thesis: claim, two or three reasons in order, one objection answered, a conclusion. Spend five minutes planning, thirty writing and five rereading. Drafting your thesis daily makes this easier, and practicing timed drafts makes your thesis drafting faster.

Words that are upright. Ecclesiastes joins "acceptable words" to "words of truth." In a draft, grace and truth both matter, but truth comes first: do not let a fine sentence say more than your evidence will bear. When you find yourself writing "always," "never" or "everyone agrees," stop and ask whether it is true. The words of the wise are "as goads," and goads are sharp; but they are sharp because they are true.

The model. *Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 (King James Version)*

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and

as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

PICTURE STUDY



The Geographer, Johannes Vermeer, about 1669 · Oil on canvas · Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Vermeer shows a scholar in the middle of his work. He has paused, dividers in hand, and looks up toward the window as if a thought has just come. Maps are spread and rolled about him, a globe waits on the cabinet, and the rug on the table has been shoved aside. Nothing is finished; everything is in use. This is what a room looks like while a draft is being written.

Look closely

- What is the geographer holding, and what is he measuring?
- Find the signs of work in progress: papers rolled, unrolled and dropped.
- Where does the light come from, and what does it fall on?

Talk about it

1. Write a short paragraph from the geographer's point of view at the moment he looks up. What has he just realized, and what will he do next?
2. A map must be drawn before it can be corrected. How does that idea apply to the first draft of your thesis?

WRITING PROJECT: THE DRAFTING CALENDAR AND FIRST SECTION

This lesson's project spans several weeks: you will set the calendar now and draft one argument section in full before the next lesson.

The goal is a complete rough draft of the whole thesis by the date you and your advisor set.

You will need

- Your approved sectioned outline and road map from 2.1
- Reading notes with page numbers
- A calendar or planner
- A timer

Steps

1. Divide your target length by the number of drafting weeks; write a daily word goal and a due date for each section on your calendar.
2. Choose the argument section you know best and draft it first, one sentence-point per paragraph.
3. In every paragraph, write the topic sentence, the evidence, at least two sentences of warrant and a tying sentence.
4. Tag every quotation and borrowed idea with its source and page as you write; use bracketed placeholders for anything else you must check.
5. Stop each day in the middle of a thought you know how to finish, so that tomorrow begins easily.
6. Once a week, write one 40-minute timed essay (see practice 8) and keep it with your thesis papers.
7. At the end of each week, record your word count and send the week's pages to your advisor if the advisor asks for them.

Check your work

- Every paragraph has one topic sentence that serves the section's claim.
- Every piece of evidence is followed by a warrant that explains it.
- Every quotation and borrowed idea has a source tag with a page number.
- Subordinate clauses (because, although, since, if) show how my ideas relate, instead of strings of "and."
- No claim says more than my evidence supports.
- I met my weekly word goal, or I wrote down why not and how I will catch up.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 by hand and underline the four verbs of the Preacher's labor.
2. Write one paragraph of your thesis in four colors (or four underlines): topic sentence, evidence, warrant, tie.
3. Keep a one-line drafting log each day: date, words written, the next sentence you mean to write.

History note. Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) worked for the British Post Office for over thirty years and is often credited with helping introduce the pillar box to Britain. His *Autobiography*, published the year after his death, shocked some readers by describing novel-writing as daily labor done by the clock. Its plain account of steady work has encouraged writers ever since.

 **Style Clinic. Clauses that show relation.** Rough drafts pile up independent clauses joined by *and*: “The monks copied books, and the books survived, and we can read Virgil.” A complex sentence puts the less important idea in a subordinate clause and shows how the ideas connect: “Because the monks copied Virgil, we can still read him.” Use *because* and *since* for cause, *although* and *while* for concession, *if* and *unless* for condition. Remember the comma: an introductory adverb clause takes a comma (“Although the library burned, the copies survived.”); one that follows the main clause usually does not.

For families. Most students underestimate drafting time by half. Help your student set a calendar with one free week built in before the advisor’s deadline, and check the drafting log weekly without reading for polish; a rough draft should look rough. The ACT Writing test is optional and lasts 40 minutes; check act.org for current rules before test day. The model is read from the King James text.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this draft paragraph so that the evidence is explained: “The Rule of Benedict made reading part of monastic life. Chapter 48 says the monks should be occupied at fixed times in reading. This shows that reading was important. Monasteries also had libraries.”

1. The topic sentence is good, and the evidence (Rule chapter 48) is fitting.
2. “This shows that reading was important” is a weak warrant: it repeats the claim instead of explaining it.
3. The last sentence starts a new point and belongs in another paragraph.
4. Explain what fixed hours of reading would do over centuries, and tie it back to preserving learning.

Answer: The Rule of Benedict made reading a daily duty, not a private hobby. Chapter 48 sets fixed hours for reading in every season, and in Lent it assigns each monk a book to read straight through [CITE Rule ch. 48]. A rule that required books required that books be kept, mended and copied, and a community that read every day for centuries would notice when a volume wore out. Benedict did not set out to save classical learning, but by making reading a part of obedience he created communities that could not live without libraries.

Example 2. A student plans a 5,000-word thesis with six weeks until the advisor's deadline. Build a calendar.

1. Keep one week free for catching up and rereading: five drafting weeks.
2. $5,000 \div 5 = 1,000$ words a week; at five days a week, 200 words a day.
3. Assign sections by their outline lengths, hardest-known argument first.

Answer: Week 1: Section III (1,000 words). Week 2: Section IV (1,000). Week 3: Section V (1,000). Week 4: Objections and Background (1,200). Week 5: Introduction, road map and conclusion (800). Week 6: catch-up, fill placeholders, read the whole draft aloud, send to the advisor.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the four verbs of the Preacher's labor in Ecclesiastes 12:9-10.
2. **EASY** Why write the introduction last?
3. **EASY** Name the four parts of an argument paragraph.
4. **MEDIUM** Combine with a subordinate clause: "Lincoln read the Bible as a boy. His speeches echo its rhythms."
5. **MEDIUM** Which one thing must never be left as a vague placeholder in a draft, and why?
6. **MEDIUM** Write a warrant for this evidence and claim. Claim: Franklin taught himself to write. Evidence: he rewrote *Spectator* papers from notes and compared them with the originals.
7. **CHALLENGE** This draft sentence overclaims. Revise it to fit the evidence: "Everyone in the Middle Ages owed their education to monks."
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (40 minutes, ACT style). Prompt: "Some say a young person should learn a trade before going to college; others say college should come first; still others say the order matters less than the habit of steady work." Write an essay that states your own view, supports it with reasons and examples, and answers one other view. Plan 5 minutes, write 30, reread 5.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Waiting to feel ready, or polishing the first page for weeks while the rest stays unwritten.
- Dropping in a quotation and moving on without explaining it.
- Writing "I will look up the source later" and then losing it.
- Letting a strong-sounding sentence claim more than the evidence proves.

Make it a game · Make It Testify. A parent reads a short quotation from Proverbs or Franklin. The student has one minute to state a claim it could support and two sentences of warrant explaining how. Switch roles; the best warrant of the round earns a point.

Scripture. “And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.” (Habakkuk 2:2, KJV)

God told the prophet to write plainly so that the reader could run with it; a draft aims first at plain, complete statement of what you have to say.

Practice: answers

1. He gave good heed, sought out, set in order and sought to find out acceptable words.
2. You do not know exactly what you have proved until the argument is drafted; the introduction must promise what the thesis actually delivers.
3. Topic sentence, evidence, warrant (explanation), tying sentence.
4. Because Lincoln read the Bible as a boy, his speeches echo its rhythms.
5. The source of a quotation or borrowed idea. If it is lost, you may later present someone else’s words or ideas as your own.
6. Sample: By comparing his version with the original, Franklin became his own teacher: the original showed him each fault, and no tutor was needed to point it out.
7. Sample: “Most educated men in the early medieval West learned their letters in schools that monasteries or cathedrals kept.”
8. Sample plan: Claim: The habit of steady work matters more than the order, but learning a trade first builds that habit best. Reason 1: A trade gives skill that is tested daily by results. Reason 2: Work first teaches the worth of money and time, so college is used well. Objection: Delay may cost scholarships or momentum. Reply: Many programs allow deferral, and maturity often gains more than it costs. Conclusion: Whatever the order, “whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

2.3 REVISING: FROM THE WHOLE ARGUMENT TO THE SINGLE WORD

OBJECTIVES

- Revise a full draft in order from large to small: argument, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words.
- Use Franklin’s method of comparison and a reverse outline to find the faults in your own draft.
- Receive an advisor’s comments and answer each one in a revision log.

Warm-up. Read the first paragraph of your draft aloud, slowly, to someone in your family. Without looking at them, mark every place you stumbled or wanted to change a word while reading. Those marks are your first revision notes.

Video slot. Video coming. St. Jerome and the making of the Vulgate (a church history or art history lecture). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

revision

Literally “seeing again”: rethinking and rebuilding a draft, not only correcting its spelling.

reverse outline

An outline made from a finished draft by writing one sentence for what each paragraph actually says, then comparing it with what the paragraph was meant to say.

global and local revision

Global revision changes the argument, structure and sections; local revision changes sentences and words. Do global first.

revision log

A list of each comment from an advisor or reader, with what you changed in answer, or why you chose not to.

proofreading

The last, slowest reading of a clean copy, for typing errors, punctuation and format.

CORE IDEAS

Seeing again. A draft is the first map; revision is the survey that corrects it. The word means “seeing again,” and the hardest part is truly seeing your own work as a stranger would. Set the finished draft aside for at least three days before you begin. You will come back to it, as Franklin came back to his notes “a few days” later, able to notice what the writer could not.

Franklin's comparison. In the model, young Franklin made notes from a *Spectator* essay, rewrote it from the notes, then laid his version beside the original and found his faults. He went further, as the next sentences of the *Autobiography* tell: he jumbled his notes, then tried weeks later to put them back in the best order, to teach himself "method in the arrangement of thoughts." You can revise the same way. Lay your draft beside a standard: your approved outline, a model essay you admire, or your advisor's comments. Every difference is a question: is the draft better here, or worse?

Large to small. Revise in order of size, or you will polish sentences you later cut. First the *argument*: does the thesis statement still say what the draft proves? Often the draft has discovered a sharper claim; rewrite the thesis statement to match it. Then the *sections*: does each one prove one part of the claim, in an order that builds? Then *paragraphs*: one point each, with evidence and warrant. Then *sentences*: clear, varied, active where possible. Last, *words*: exact, plain, honest. Proofreading comes after all of these, on a clean copy.

The reverse outline. To see the structure of a long draft, read each paragraph and write in the margin one sentence saying what it actually does. Then read only the margin. You will find paragraphs that repeat each other, paragraphs that wander off the section's claim, and gaps where a step is missing. This is the quickest way to see the forest. Move, merge or cut paragraphs now, while cutting is cheap.

Cutting. Blaise Pascal once ended one of his *Provincial Letters* by apologizing that it was long only because he had not had time to make it shorter. Most drafts can lose a tenth of their words and gain strength. Cut throat-clearing openings ("In this section I will discuss ..."), doubled words ("each and every"), stacked qualifiers ("it could perhaps be argued that") and quotations longer than the point needs. Keep every word that carries weight; cut every word that only fills space.

Hearing correction. Your advisor will mark your draft, and some marks will sting. Proverbs says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (27:6). Make a revision log: copy each comment, then write what you changed, or, if you disagree, the reason you are keeping your version. You may disagree; an advisor is not infallible. But you must answer every comment, and you should take seriously any comment two readers make independently.

Under the clock again. The SAT and CLT test revision directly: you read a passage and choose the best version of an underlined phrase, the best transition, or whether to add or delete a sentence. These are the same questions you ask your thesis. Does this sentence serve the paragraph? Does this transition show the right relation? Is this word exact? Practice items 6–8 below give you a taste.

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (written 1771–1790), Project Gutenberg #20203*

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the

sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, try'd to compleat the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them

PICTURE STUDY



Saint Jerome in His Study, Antonello da Messina, about 1475 · Oil on lime panel · National Gallery, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Antonello paints Jerome, the great translator of the Latin Bible, at work inside a wooden study built within a vast stone hall. Every shelf, book and pot is drawn with patient precision. Jerome spent decades on the work of revision: asked by Pope Damasus to correct the old Latin Gospels against the Greek, he went on to translate the Old Testament from the Hebrew. His Bible, later called the Vulgate, served the Western church for more than a thousand years.

Look closely

- Look through the archway, then into the study, then out the far windows. How many layers of space can you count?
- Find the objects on the shelves and the ledge in front. Which seem placed with care?
- Find the lion in the shadows. (Legend says Jerome drew a thorn from a lion's paw.)

Talk about it

1. Antonello frames the scholar within a frame within a frame. Write a paragraph on how revision moves from the outer frame (the whole argument) inward to the smallest detail.

2. Jerome checked earlier translations against the original languages. What is the “original” you should check your draft against?

WRITING PROJECT: THE REVISION ROUND

Take your complete rough draft through one full round of revision, large to small, and return it to your advisor with a revision log.

You will need

- Your complete rough draft (printed, double-spaced, with wide margins)
- Your approved outline from 2.1
- Your advisor’s comments
- Two colors of pen

Steps

1. Let the draft rest at least three days. Then read it straight through without a pen and write one paragraph: what does this draft actually prove?
2. Rewrite your thesis statement if the draft proves something sharper than the one you began with.
3. Make a reverse outline in the margins. Move, merge or cut paragraphs and sections until the outline builds.
4. Revise each paragraph for topic sentence, evidence and warrant; add warrants where the evidence stands alone.
5. Revise sentences: change weak passives to active voice, combine choppy sentences, and cut a tenth of the words.
6. Make a revision log answering every advisor comment.
7. Read the whole revised draft aloud, then send it with the log to your advisor.

Check your work

- My thesis statement matches what the draft actually proves.
- My reverse outline shows each paragraph serving its section, with no repeats or gaps.
- Every quotation is followed by an explanation.
- I used the passive voice only where the doer is unknown or unimportant.
- Every modifier sits next to the word it describes; no participial phrase dangles.
- I answered every advisor comment in my revision log.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model by hand. Then make “short hints” of it, as Franklin did, put them away for a few days, and rewrite the passage from the hints. Compare and list your faults.
2. Choose one page of your draft and cut it by a tenth. List every kind of word or phrase you cut.
3. Write the reverse outline of one section in your notebook, one sentence per paragraph.

History note. Franklin wrote the first part of his *Autobiography* in 1771 as a letter to his son and added later parts until shortly before his death in 1790. The Project Gutenberg text keeps his original spellings, such as “try'd” and “compleat.” The *Spectator* he imitated was the daily paper of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, published in London in 1711–1712.

 **Style Clinic. Active and passive voice.** In the active voice the subject acts: “The monks copied the manuscripts.” In the passive voice the subject receives the action: “The manuscripts were copied (by the monks).” Drafts slide into the passive because it hides the doer, and so it hides the argument: “It has been argued that ...” (by whom?). Revise to the active when the doer matters: “Gibbon argued that” Keep the passive when the doer is unknown or beside the point (“The library was burned in the ninth century”) or when you want to keep the paragraph’s subject in front (“Virgil was read in every monastic school”).

For families. Revision is where most of the learning in a thesis happens. Ask your student to show you the revision log rather than the polished pages; it shows whether comments were truly weighed. If the advisor and the student disagree on a point of argument (not mechanics), let the student defend the choice in writing; that is practice for the defense in Unit 3. The model is copied exactly from the Project Gutenberg text, including Franklin’s spellings.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student’s reverse outline of Section IV reads: ¶1 Benedict wrote the Rule about 530. ¶2 The Rule sets hours for reading. ¶3 Benedict founded Monte Cassino. ¶4 Monks read in Lent. ¶5 Reading was important to monks. What should change?

1. ¶1 and ¶3 are both background about Benedict; merge them into one opening paragraph.
2. ¶2 and ¶4 make the same point (fixed reading); merge them, with Lent as the example.
3. ¶5 only repeats the claim; it needs a real point or should go.
4. A step is missing: how daily reading led to keeping and copying books.

Answer: ¶1 Benedict and the Rule (about 530, Monte Cassino). ¶2 The Rule makes reading a daily duty, fixed by the hours and by the Lenten book. ¶3 New: a community that must read must keep, mend and copy books (the scriptorium). ¶4 The section’s conclusion: obedience produced libraries. Four paragraphs that build, in place of five that circle.

Example 2. Revise this sentence: “Having been read in every monastic school, it is clear that Virgil was considered by the monks to be a model of Latin style.”

1. “Having been read ...” dangles: it seems to describe “it,” not Virgil.
2. “It is clear that” is throat-clearing.
3. “Was considered by the monks” is a needless passive; the monks are the doers.

Answer: “Because every monastic school read Virgil, the monks took him as their model of Latin style.” Or, keeping the participle: “Read in every monastic school, Virgil became the monks’ model of Latin style.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does “revision” literally mean?
2. **EASY** Put in order, from first to last: words, argument, paragraphs, proofreading, sections, sentences.
3. **EASY** What did Franklin compare his rewritten papers with?
4. **MEDIUM** Change to active voice: “A new theory of the fall of Rome was proposed by Gibbon in 1776.”
5. **MEDIUM** Cut the filler: “In this section of the thesis I will attempt to discuss the fact that, in my opinion, each and every monk was required to read.”
6. **MEDIUM** SAT/CLT style. “The monks copied Virgil and Cicero. ___, they preserved the pagan authors they did not fully approve.” Which transition fits best? (A) Similarly (B) In other words (C) Thus (D) For example
7. **CHALLENGE** SAT/CLT style. A writer is considering adding this sentence to a paragraph on monastic copying: “Monte Cassino was rebuilt after the Second World War.” Should the writer add it? Explain.
8. **CHALLENGE** Your advisor writes: “Section V seems weaker than Section IV. Swap them?” You disagree. Write the revision-log entry.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Starting with commas and spelling and never revising the argument.
- Treating revision as only cutting, when a draft often needs a missing step added.
- Ignoring advisor comments that sting, or accepting every comment without thought.
- Changing every passive to active, even where the passive is the better choice.

Make it a game · Franklin’s Puzzle. A parent copies a short paragraph from a classic essay onto strips, one sentence per strip, and shuffles them. The student restores the best order against a timer, then compares with the original. Score one point for each sentence in its original place, and one bonus point for any order the student can defend as equally good.

Scripture. “Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.” (Proverbs 25:4, KJV)

Revision is refining: the silver was in the draft all along, but the vessel appears only when the dross is taken away.

Practice: answers

1. Seeing again.
2. Argument, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words, proofreading.
3. The original *Spectator* essays.
4. Gibbon proposed a new theory of the fall of Rome in 1776.
5. Sample: “The Rule required every monk to read.”
6. (C) Thus: the second sentence states the result of the first. (B) is tempting, but the second sentence adds a new point (they preserved what they did not fully approve), not a restatement.
7. No. The sentence is true but off the paragraph’s point (how copying preserved texts); it would distract the reader.
8. Sample: “Comment: swap V and IV. Response: kept the order. Section V depends on IV, since the schools could not exist without the copied books IV describes. I strengthened V instead by adding the Alcuin example and a fuller warrant on p. 14.”

2.4 CITATIONS AND THE FINISHED THESIS ★

OBJECTIVES

- Explain why honest writers cite, and tell quotation, paraphrase and common knowledge apart.
- Write footnotes and a bibliography in Chicago notes-bibliography style (18th edition), or MLA if your advisor prefers.
- Prepare and submit the finished thesis in clean, consistent form.

Warm-up. Read Luke 1:1–4. List every phrase in which Luke tells Theophilus where his account came from and why it can be trusted.

Video slot. Video coming. Erasmus and the 1516 Greek New Testament: “back to the sources” (a church history or Reformation lecture). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

citation

A note telling the reader exactly where a quotation, fact or idea came from, so that the reader can find and check it.

plagiarism

Presenting another’s words or ideas as your own, whether by copying, by close paraphrase without credit, or by careless note-taking.

paraphrase

Another writer’s idea restated wholly in your own words and sentence structure; it still needs a citation.

common knowledge

Facts found in many general sources and not disputed (Lincoln was the sixteenth president); these need no citation. When in doubt, cite.

primary and secondary sources

A primary source is the original text or witness (the *Federalist* itself); a secondary source is a later study of it (a historian’s book on the *Federalist*).

CORE IDEAS

Luke’s footnote. The model is the opening of Luke’s Gospel, and it does what a good citation does. Luke says that others have written before him, that his material came from those “which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word,” and that he has traced it carefully and set it “in order,” so that Theophilus might “know the certainty” of what he had been taught. Luke names his kind of sources and his method, because certainty rests on sources that can be trusted and checked. That is why we cite.

Three reasons to cite. First, honesty: “putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour” (Ephesians 4:25), and to present another’s work as your own is a lie told in ink. Second, justice: Paul says to render “honour to whom honour” is due, and a citation is a small honor paid to the scholar whose labor helped you. Third, service to the reader: a note lets the reader go to the source, check you and learn more. Notes are not decoration; they are the bridge from your thesis to the library.

What needs a note. Cite every direct quotation, every paraphrase or summary of another writer’s idea, every statistic and every fact a careful reader might doubt or want to check. You need not cite common knowledge or your own reasoning. Most plagiarism among serious students is not theft but carelessness: notes copied without quotation marks, then pasted into a draft weeks later as if they were one’s own words. The tags you kept in 2.2 protect you now. If you cannot find where a sentence came from, rewrite the point from a source you can cite, or cut it.

Chicago notes and bibliography. Most humanities theses use the notes-bibliography system of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (its 18th edition appeared in 2024; Kate Turabian’s *Manual for Writers* adapts it for students). A superscript number in your text points to a footnote. The first note for a book gives full facts: 1. *Mary Smith, The Monastic Scriptorium* (Example Press, 2020), 45. Later notes are shortened: 2. *Smith, Monastic Scriptorium*, 52. (Chicago now prefers such shortened notes to “ibid.”) The bibliography at the end lists every source alphabetically with the author’s last name first: *Smith, Mary. The Monastic Scriptorium. Example Press, 2020.* The 18th edition no longer asks for the city of publication. Bible passages are cited by book, chapter, verse and version, in a note or in parentheses (Luke 1:1–4 KJV), and are usually left out of the bibliography. (The Smith book is an invented example.)

Or MLA. If your advisor prefers MLA style (9th edition), you will write short parenthetical citations in the text, (Smith 45), and a Works Cited list at the end in nearly the same form as Chicago’s bibliography. Either system is honest and clear. What matters is that you choose one with your advisor and use it the same way every time. Inconsistent citations make a careful thesis look careless.

Ad fontes. Erasmus, whom Holbein painted at his writing desk, cried “to the sources!” and in 1516 printed the Greek New Testament so that scholars could read the original instead of trusting later copies alone. Do the same. Quote Hamilton from the *Federalist*, not from a website that quotes him. When you must use a secondary source, say so: “quoted in Smith, 45.” Always prefer the primary source, the best edition and the exact page.

If you are on the quarter path. This lesson finishes Unit 2. A senior thesis has an introduction ending in a claim, background, a road map, two to four argument sections, an answer to the strongest objection and a conclusion (2.1). It is drafted steadily by a calendar, section by section (2.2), and revised from large to small, argument first and words last (2.3). Now it is cited and set in final form: a title page, a table of contents, numbered pages, section headings, footnotes and a bibliography, typed double-spaced with one-inch margins

unless your advisor sets another form. Then you hand it in, and Unit 3 prepares you to defend it.

The model. *Luke 1:1-4 (King James Version)*

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

PICTURE STUDY



Portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam Writing, Hans Holbein the Younger, 1523 · Oil on panel · Musée du Louvre, Paris

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Holbein painted the great scholar Erasmus in Basel, where Erasmus worked with the printer Johann Froben. He shows him in profile, eyes lowered, writing. The face is calm and the hands are exact. Erasmus spent his life on texts: editing the Church Fathers, translating, and above all preparing the Greek New Testament (1516), which he printed beside his own Latin version so that readers could compare the original with the translation. His motto for scholars was *ad fontes*, “to the sources.”

Look closely

- Look at the hands. What is each one doing?
- Where is Erasmus looking, and what does that tell you about his attention?
- Find the book beneath the page. What might it be?

Talk about it

1. Holbein leaves out everything that would distract from the act of writing. What should a reader of your thesis see clearly, and what belongs quietly in the footnotes?
2. Erasmus printed the Greek beside his translation so readers could check him. Write a paragraph on how citations let your reader check you.

WRITING PROJECT: THE CITATION PASS AND THE FINISHED THESIS

Bring your revised thesis to finished form, with complete notes and bibliography, and submit it to your advisor.

Agree with your advisor first on the style: Chicago notes-bibliography (recommended) or MLA.

You will need

- Your revised thesis and revision log from 2.3
- Your reading notes with page numbers
- A free style guide (see the unit kits) or Turabian's *Manual for Writers*
- Your sources, at hand for checking

Steps

1. Search your draft for every bracketed placeholder and source tag; turn each into a full footnote (first note full, later notes shortened).
2. Check every quotation word for word against the source, including spelling, punctuation and page number.
3. Read each paraphrase beside its source; if it follows the source's wording or sentence shape, rewrite it or quote it.
4. Build the bibliography from your notes: every source cited, alphabetical by author's last name, in one consistent form.
5. Format the whole: title page, table of contents, section headings, page numbers, double spacing and one-inch margins (or your advisor's form).
6. Proofread a printed copy slowly, aloud, one page at a time, starting from the last page.
7. Submit the thesis to your advisor and set the date for the oral defense (Unit 3).

Check your work

- Every quotation, paraphrase and doubtful fact has a note; common knowledge does not.
- Every quotation matches its source exactly, and every omission is marked with an ellipsis.
- My notes and bibliography follow one style consistently.
- Periods and commas sit inside closing quotation marks; colons and semicolons sit outside.

- Block quotations are indented without quotation marks.
- The title page, contents, headings and page numbers are complete and match.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Luke 1:1–4 by hand. Underline the phrases about sources and bracket the phrases about order.
2. Write a first footnote, a shortened note and a bibliography entry for three of your own sources.
3. Find one sentence in your notes that you copied without quotation marks. Rewrite it as a true paraphrase, and as a quotation, each with a note.

History note. Erasmus’s Greek New Testament, printed by Froben in Basel in 1516 under the title *Novum Instrumentum*, was the first published edition of the Greek New Testament. Later editions in the same line of Greek text stand behind the New Testament of the King James Version (1611). Holbein painted several portraits of Erasmus; the Louvre panel of 1523 shows him writing, as does a smaller version in Basel.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuating quotations.** In American usage, periods and commas go inside closing quotation marks: Hamilton promised to meet “all the objections.” Colons and semicolons go outside: he named his “particulars”: six in all. Question marks and exclamation points go inside only if they belong to the quotation. Mark words left out with an ellipsis (...) and words you add with square brackets: “It seemed good to me also ... to write unto thee [Theophilus] in order.” Quotations of about a hundred words or more (Chicago) or more than four lines (MLA) are set off as indented block quotations, with no quotation marks. Introduce every quotation with a grammatical sentence, so that the quoted words fit your syntax.

For families. This is the quarter-path lesson for Unit 2; a student taking only starred lessons should read its last core-ideas paragraph closely. Chicago’s 18th edition (2024) dropped the place of publication for books; older guides that include it are not wrong, only older, so let the advisor decide. Free and reliable help: the Purdue OWL pages on Chicago and MLA. Talk plainly with your student about plagiarism: colleges treat it as a grave offense, and it is a sin against truthfulness. Writing tools that generate text should not write any part of the thesis; if your family allows them for spelling checks, the student should tell the advisor.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's source (a history of the monasteries) reads: "The monks preserved the classics not out of love for paganism but because Latin grammar could not be learned without them." The student writes: "The monks kept the classics not from a love of paganism but because one could not learn Latin grammar without them." Is this acceptable?

1. Compare structure: "not ... but because" is the source's exact shape.
2. Compare words: "classics," "paganism," "Latin grammar" and the order of ideas are all kept.
3. This is close paraphrase, a form of plagiarism even if a note is added.

Answer: Not acceptable. Either quote it exactly with a note, or truly paraphrase with a note: "The monasteries copied Virgil and Cicero because they needed them as grammar books, not because they admired pagan religion.¹" The note gives author, title and page.

Example 2. Write the Chicago first note and bibliography entry for Federalist No. 1, read in the Project Gutenberg edition.

1. Author: Alexander Hamilton; the essay title goes in quotation marks; the collection title in italics.
2. Add the online source and URL; an access date may be added for an undated online source.
3. In the bibliography, invert the author's name and use periods between parts.

Answer: Note: 1. Alexander Hamilton, "The Federalist No. 1," in *The Federalist Papers*, Project Gutenberg, <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1404>. Bibliography: Hamilton, Alexander. "The Federalist No. 1." In *The Federalist Papers*. Project Gutenberg. <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1404>.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Give three reasons to cite.
2. **EASY** Does a paraphrase need a citation?
3. **EASY** Does "The Declaration of Independence was adopted in 1776" need a note?
4. **MEDIUM** Write a shortened Chicago note for page 88 of Mary Smith, *The Monastic Scriptorium*.
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the punctuation: Luke wrote "in order", so that Theophilus might "know the certainty".
6. **MEDIUM** Primary or secondary? (a) Franklin's *Autobiography* in a thesis on Franklin. (b) A 2005 biography of Franklin. (c) Luke 1:1-4 in a thesis on how the Gospels were written.

7. **CHALLENGE** Shorten this quotation with an ellipsis so it fits your sentence, keeping it exact:
“It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order.”
8. **CHALLENGE** You found a perfect sentence in your notes but cannot tell whether it is yours or copied, and you cannot find the source. What do you do, and why?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Close paraphrase: changing a few words but keeping the source’s sentence shape.
- Quoting from memory or from a secondary website instead of checking the original.
- Mixing Chicago and MLA forms, or formatting each note differently.
- Citing too little (borrowed ideas without notes) or too much (notes for common knowledge).

Make it a game • Source Detective. A parent reads six sentences: some quoted from Proverbs, the *Federalist* or Franklin, some paraphrased, some common knowledge, some the parent’s own opinion. For each, the student calls out “quote,” “paraphrase,” “common knowledge” or “yours,” and says whether it needs a note. One point for each correct call.

Scripture. “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” (Romans 13:7, KJV)

A citation renders honor to the scholar whose labor you have used; it is a small act of justice on every page.

Practice: answers

1. Honesty (not presenting another’s work as yours), justice (giving honor where it is due) and service (letting the reader check and learn more).
2. Yes. The words are yours, but the idea is borrowed.
3. No. It is common knowledge.
4. Smith, *Monastic Scriptorium*, 88.
5. Luke wrote “in order,” so that Theophilus might “know the certainty.”
6. (a) Primary. (b) Secondary. (c) Primary.
7. Luke says, “It seemed good to me also ... to write unto thee in order.”
8. Do not use it as it stands. Rewrite the point from a source you can find and cite, or cut it. Using it risks presenting someone else’s words as your own, and a thesis must be truthful in every sentence.

UNIT 2 REVIEW

The student answers in writing. Short answers are scored for accuracy; writing tasks are scored for the skills taught in the unit. The finished thesis itself is assessed through the portfolio rubric, not this test.

1. (6 pts) Name Cicero's six parts of a speech and the thesis section each becomes.
2. (3 pts) What does a partition do? Name two things Hamilton's partition in Federalist No. 1 does well.
3. (2 pts) Turn the topic title "Benedict's Rule" into a claim title.
4. (4 pts) Name the four parts of an argument paragraph, and explain what a warrant does.
5. (2 pts) Combine with a subordinate clause and punctuate correctly: "The library burned. Copies survived in other monasteries."
6. (4 pts) Put the stages of revision in order and explain why the order matters.
7. (4 pts) Revise: "Having been rediscovered in the fourteenth century, it was argued by scholars that Cicero's letters changed Latin style."
8. (3 pts) Define plagiarism and name the most common way careful students fall into it.
9. (6 pts) Write a Chicago first note, a shortened note and a bibliography entry for page 12 of Thomas Reed, *Books of the Cloister*, Example House, 2019 (an invented book).
10. (2 pts) Fix the punctuation: The Preacher sought "acceptable words"; and "words of truth", he did not choose between them.
11. (4 pts) Explain from Luke 1:1-4 or Ephesians 4:25 why a Christian writer cites sources.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE FINISHED SENIOR THESIS

Place the finished thesis from 2.4 in your portfolio: title page, table of contents, sections with claim titles, footnotes and bibliography, together with the approved outline (2.1), the drafting log (2.2) and the revision log (2.3). This is the work you will defend in Unit 3.

- **Argument and arrangement:** One clear, arguable claim; background, road map, two to four argument sections that build, a fair objection answered, and a conclusion that shows why it matters.
- **Evidence and explanation:** Primary sources preferred; every quotation and fact explained by a warrant; no claim beyond the evidence.
- **Revision and style:** Revision log answers every comment; prose is clear, parallel, mostly active, with subordinate clauses that show relation and no dangling modifiers.
- **Citations and form:** Every borrowed word and idea cited in one consistent style; quotations exact and correctly punctuated; complete, clean format.

Answer key

1. Exordium: introduction and claim; narratio: background; partitio: road map; confirmatio: argument sections; reprehensio (refutatio): objections and replies; conclusio: conclusion.

2. It tells the reader what will be proved and in what order. Two of: parallel heads; a logical, building order; a promise to answer objections; naming what the next paper will do.
3. Sample: "Benedict's Rule Made Reading a Daily Duty."
4. Topic sentence, evidence, warrant, tying sentence. The warrant explains how the evidence proves the claim.
5. Although the library burned, copies survived in other monasteries.
6. Argument, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words, then proofreading. Large changes come first so that you do not polish sentences you later cut.
7. Sample: "Scholars argue that Cicero's letters, rediscovered in the fourteenth century, changed Latin style." (Fixes the dangling modifier and the needless passive.)
8. Presenting another's words or ideas as one's own. The most common way is careless note-taking: copying words into notes without quotation marks or a source, then using them later as one's own.
9. 1. Thomas Reed, *Books of the Cloister* (Example House, 2019), 12. Shortened: Reed, *Books of the Cloister*, 12. Bibliography: Reed, Thomas. *Books of the Cloister*. Example House, 2019.
10. The Preacher sought "acceptable words" and "words of truth"; he did not choose between them.
11. Sample: Luke names his sources and method so that Theophilus may "know the certainty"; citations let the reader check the truth. Ephesians 4:25 commands us to speak truth, and to present another's work as our own is a lie.

DEFENDING THE THESIS

Your senior thesis is written; now you will stand behind it. This unit teaches the oral defense, the old classical and university form in which a scholar presents his work aloud and answers questions. You will study Socrates' *Apology* as the first great apologia, learn the four parts of a defense and the roles of the panel, build a question bank with the classical stasis questions, rehearse in a mock defense in Franklin's manner of "modest diffidence," and finally defend your thesis in public, answering hard questions with the courtesy and composure Paul showed before Festus and Agrippa. The unit ends with revisions, a written reflection and thank-you letters to your panel.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- A finished, revised and cited senior thesis (Unit 2).
- Familiarity with the five canons of rhetoric and the parts of a classical oration (Grade 9 onward).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain what an apologia is and describe the four parts of a thesis defense and the roles of the panel.
- ☐ I can deliver a 9–11 minute opening statement from a single key-word card.
- ☐ I can predict questions with the four stases and answer them with hear, restate, answer, support, return.
- ☐ I can concede what is true in an objection and say "I don't know" honestly when I must.
- ☐ I can host a public defense and finish it with revisions, a reflection and specific thank-you letters.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Plato, *Apology*, translated by Benjamin Jowett (Project Gutenberg #1656)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1656>): Socrates' defense; short enough to read in one sitting. Lessons 3.1 and 3.2.
- **Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (Project Gutenberg #20203)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20203>): The passage on "modest diffidence" is in Part One. Lesson 3.3.
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): Acts 17 and 25–26 (Paul's defenses); 1 Peter 3:15.

3.1 THE ORAL DEFENSE: AN ANCIENT FORMAT ★

OBJECTIVES

- Explain what an apologia is and trace the oral defense from Socrates through the medieval disputation to the senior thesis defense.
- Name the four parts of a thesis defense and the roles of candidate, advisor, readers and chair.
- Draft a key-word outline for a ten-minute opening statement on your own senior thesis.

Warm-up. Your thesis is written. Imagine three adults have read it and are seated across a table from you. Write down the one question you most hope they will not ask. Keep it; you will need it in Lesson 3.2.

Video slot. Video coming. What happens at a thesis defense or senior thesis presentation (a classical school or university explaining the format); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

apologia

Greek for “a speech in defense.” Not an apology in the modern sense of saying sorry, but a reasoned answer to a charge or a challenge. Plato’s *Apology* is Socrates’ apologia; Peter uses the same word in 1 Peter 3:15 (“an answer”).

oral defense

A meeting in which a candidate presents a finished thesis aloud and answers questions from a panel, which then decides whether the work passes.

opening statement

The short prepared speech (about 8–12 minutes) with which the candidate begins: the question, the claim, the main proofs and the limits of the work.

panel (readers)

The adults who have read the thesis and question the candidate. The advisor sits with them; a chair keeps time and order.

disputation

The medieval university exercise in which a student held a position against objections raised by masters and fellow students. It is the ancestor of the modern defense.

CORE IDEAS

An old word for a new task. When you hear “apology,” you think of saying sorry. The Greeks meant something stronger. An *apologia* was a speech in defense: a citizen stood before his accusers and gave reasons. In 399 B.C. Socrates, past seventy, stood before a jury of about five hundred Athenians and answered the charges against him. Plato wrote the

speech down, and we still call it the *Apology*. Four centuries later Peter told Christians to be “ready always to give an answer” (in Greek, an *apologia*) for the hope that is in them. Your senior thesis defense belongs to this family. You are not on trial for your life, but you are asked to stand behind your words.

From the agora to the university. The medieval universities of Paris and Oxford examined students by *disputation*. A student announced a position; masters and other students raised objections; he answered them one by one, often in a fixed form: state the objection, grant what is true in it, and show why it does not overturn the claim. Thomas Aquinas built the whole *Summa Theologica* in this shape. The modern doctoral defense, the British “viva voce” (living voice), and the classical-school senior thesis defense all descend from that hall. The format is old because it works: a claim that survives honest questioning is worth holding.

The four parts. Most senior thesis defenses run about forty-five minutes to an hour and follow four parts. (1) *The opening statement*: you speak alone for eight to twelve minutes. (2) *The questions*: the panel asks, you answer, for twenty to thirty minutes. (3) *Deliberation*: you step out while the panel confers. (4) *The verdict*: you return and hear the result, usually “pass,” “pass with revisions,” or, rarely, “not yet.” Four people matter: the *candidate* (you), the *advisor* who guided the work, two or three *readers* who question you, and a *chair* who keeps time and order. At home, a parent often serves as chair.

The opening statement is a speech, not the paper read aloud. A listener cannot reread a sentence, so you must arrange for the ear. Use the classical order you have known since Grade 9. The *exordium* wins attention and good will in a sentence or two: why this question matters. Then state the *question* and your *thesis* in one sentence each. Give a *roadmap* (“I will show three things”). Present your *proofs*, usually three, each with its best piece of evidence. Name the *limits* of your work honestly, before anyone else does. Close with a *peroration* that returns to the question and says what is at stake. At about 130 spoken words a minute, ten minutes is roughly 1,300 words, about a fifth of a twenty-page thesis. You must choose.

Memory and delivery. Grade 9 named five canons of rhetoric. Your thesis has used invention, arrangement and style. The defense adds the last two. *Memory* does not mean memorizing every word; it means knowing your argument so well that a key-word outline on one card is enough. *Delivery* means voice, pace, posture and eye contact. Read from a script and you will lose your listeners; speak from an outline and look at them, and they will lean in. Socrates told his jury he would not give “a set oration” but would use the words that came to him. He could do that only because he had thought about his subject for a lifetime.

The spirit of a defense. The panel is not your enemy. Readers ask hard questions because they have taken your work seriously, and a hard question is a compliment. Peter’s command has two halves: be ready to give an answer, and give it “with meekness and fear.” Readiness is the work of preparation; meekness is the work of character. A good candidate is confident in the evidence and humble about himself. He says plainly what he knows, what he does not know, and what he would study next. That is truthfulness (Ephesians 4:25) applied to scholarship.

The model. *Plato, Apology, translated by Benjamin Jowett, Project Gutenberg #1656*

How you, O Athenians, have been affected by my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that they almost made me forget who I was—so persuasively did they speak; and yet they have hardly uttered a word of truth. But of the many falsehoods told by them, there was one which quite amazed me;—I mean when they said that you should be upon your guard and not allow yourselves to be deceived by the force of my eloquence. To say this, when they were certain to be detected as soon as I opened my lips and proved myself to be anything but a great speaker, did indeed appear to me most shameless—unless by the force of eloquence they mean the force of truth; for if such is their meaning, I admit that I am eloquent. But in how different a way from theirs! Well, as I was saying, they have scarcely spoken the truth at all; but from me you shall hear the whole truth: not, however, delivered after their manner in a set oration duly ornamented with words and phrases.

PICTURE STUDY



The Death of Socrates, Jacques-Louis David, 1787 · Oil on canvas · The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

David painted the last scene of Socrates' life, a month after the trial in the *Apology*. Condemned by the jury, Socrates has refused to flee and is about to drink the hemlock. Yet he is still teaching: one hand points upward as he speaks of the soul, while the other reaches for the cup without looking at it. His friends collapse in grief; only he is calm. David shows a man whose words and deeds match to the end.

Look closely

- Find Socrates' two hands. What is each one doing, and which one is he paying attention to?
- Count the figures who are grieving. How does David show grief differently in each?
- Find the old man sitting at the foot of the bed with his back turned (often identified as Plato). Why might David place the writer of the *Apology* apart from the scene?

Talk about it

1. Write a paragraph comparing Socrates' calm in this painting with his manner in the opening of the *Apology*. What does each show about how a person should defend the truth?
2. Socrates lost his trial but is remembered as the wiser man. In a short essay, argue whether a defense should be judged by its verdict or by its truthfulness.

WRITING PROJECT: THE OPENING STATEMENT OUTLINE

Turn your finished thesis into a ten-minute spoken argument. This week you write the outline and a full first draft; in 3.3 you will cut it to a single key-word card.

Your opening statement must stand on its own: a listener who has not read your paper should understand your question, your claim and your best evidence.

You will need

- Your revised senior thesis (from Unit 2)
- Writing notebook and index cards
- A timer

Steps

1. Write your research question and your thesis, one sentence each. If either takes more than one sentence, sharpen it.
2. Choose your three strongest proofs. For each, pick the single best piece of evidence (a quotation, a fact, a case) and write it under the proof.
3. Write an exordium of two or three sentences: why should a thoughtful listener care about this question?
4. Write a roadmap sentence in parallel form: "I will show first ..., second ..., and third"
5. Write a short "limits" paragraph: one thing your thesis does not claim and one question you could not settle.
6. Write a peroration that returns to your opening image or question and states what is at stake.
7. Read the whole draft aloud with a timer. Aim for 9–11 minutes. Mark every sentence you stumbled on.

Check your work

- My question and thesis are each one clear sentence.
- My roadmap names three proofs in parallel grammatical form, and my proofs follow that order.
- Each proof has one specific, cited piece of evidence.
- I named the limits of my work honestly.
- Spoken sentences are short enough to say in one breath; long sentences were split or rearranged.
- The draft runs between 9 and 11 minutes aloud.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model passage from “but from me you shall hear the whole truth” to the end, by hand. Underline the contrast Socrates draws between two kinds of eloquence.
2. Imitation: write a three-sentence exordium for your own defense that, like Socrates, contrasts two ways your question is usually treated and promises the plainer way.
3. List the four parts of a defense and the four roles, and write one sentence on what each role is for.

History note. Socrates was tried in Athens in 399 B.C. on charges of corrupting the young and not believing in the city’s gods. Plato, who was present, wrote the *Apology*; Xenophon left a shorter account. The medieval disputation shaped university life for centuries, and Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) built each article of the *Summa* as objections, a contrary authority, an answer and replies. David’s *Death of Socrates* (1787) hangs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism in the roadmap.** A listener remembers a list only if its items share a grammatical form. Faulty: “I will show that Lincoln read the Bible, his use of its cadences, and how audiences responded.” (noun clause, noun phrase, noun clause). Parallel: “I will show *that* Lincoln read the Bible daily, *that* he borrowed its cadences, and *that* his hearers recognized them.” Three noun clauses, each opening with *that*. Check your roadmap, then make your three proof headings match it word for word.

For families. If your student is not in a school with a formal panel, assemble one: the parent-advisor, plus two adults who will read the thesis in full (a pastor, a professional in the field, a grandparent, a tutor). Give them the paper at least two weeks before the defense (3.4). The *Apology* is short and well worth reading in full together; the Jowett translation is public domain. David’s painting shows Socrates bare-chested in the Greek manner; there is nothing indecent in it. If your student is preparing for the ACT’s optional writing test or the CLT, the timed practice item below uses the same skill: a clear claim and three ordered reasons under time pressure.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's draft exordium reads: "My thesis is about the Erie Canal. The Erie Canal was built from 1817 to 1825. It is 363 miles long. In this defense I will talk about it." Revise it into an exordium that wins attention and good will.

1. Diagnose: this opens with bare facts and announces a topic, not a question. Nothing tells the listener why to care.
2. Find the human stake: the canal turned a frontier into a market and made New York the leading port.
3. Pose the question the thesis answers, and promise a plain answer.

Answer: In 1809 President Jefferson told a visitor from New York that a canal across the state was "little short of madness." Sixteen years later, boats were carrying wheat from Lake Erie to the Hudson for a fraction of the old cost. How did a project dismissed as folly become the making of a nation's commerce? I will argue that the answer lies less in engineering than in the persistence of one governor and the skill of self-taught surveyors.

Example 2. Take apart this opening-statement outline and fix it: "1. Intro. 2. Background on Augustine (5 min). 3. My three points. 4. Conclusion."

1. Diagnose the timing: five minutes of background leaves too little time for the argument. Panels have read the paper; they need only enough background to follow.
2. Diagnose the missing parts: no stated question, no thesis sentence, no limits.
3. Rebuild on the classical order with rough times.

Answer: 1. Exordium (30 sec): why Augustine's *Confessions* still matters. 2. Question and thesis (30 sec). 3. Roadmap (15 sec). 4. Brief background (1 min). 5. Proof one, two and three (2 min each, each with one key quotation). 6. Limits (1 min). 7. Peroration (1 min). Total: about 10 minutes.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does the Greek word *apologia* mean?
2. **EASY** Name the four parts of a thesis defense in order.
3. **EASY** What are the roles of the advisor, the readers and the chair?
4. **MEDIUM** In the model, how does Socrates turn his accusers' warning about his "eloquence" to his own advantage?
5. **MEDIUM** Why should an opening statement not simply be the thesis read aloud? Give two reasons.
6. **MEDIUM** Make this roadmap parallel: "I will discuss the causes of the war, how the generals planned, and the effects being long-lasting."

7. **CHALLENGE** Write a “limits” paragraph (3–4 sentences) for a thesis arguing that Bunyan’s imprisonment shaped *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes): “A person should be judged by his reasons, not by his success.” Write a short essay that takes a clear position and supports it with three ordered reasons, one drawn from history or literature.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Spending half the opening statement on background the panel has already read.
- Writing the statement as an essay and then reading it word for word with eyes on the page.
- Hiding the weaknesses of the thesis and hoping no one notices. Name the limits first; it earns trust.
- Treating the panel as opponents. They are fellow inquirers who have honored your work by reading it closely.

Make it a game · Sixty-Second Thesis. Each player (student, parents, siblings) gets one minute on a timer to state a question, a one-sentence claim and three reasons on a topic drawn from a hat (“Is it better to live in the country or the city?”, “Should every student learn Latin?”). The listeners must repeat the three reasons back. If they can, the speaker scores a point.

Scripture. “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:” (1 Peter 3:15, KJV)

Peter’s word for “answer” is *apologia*; a Christian scholar defends the truth with readiness and with meekness at once.

Practice: answers

1. A speech in defense; a reasoned answer to a charge or challenge.
2. Opening statement, questions, deliberation, verdict.
3. The advisor guided the work and sits with the panel; the readers have read the thesis and ask questions; the chair keeps time and order.
4. He says he is no great speaker, so the warning is shameless, unless by eloquence they mean the force of truth; in that sense he admits he is eloquent. He redefines the charge as praise.
5. Listeners cannot reread, so sentences and structure must be built for the ear; and there is time for only about a fifth of the paper, so the candidate must choose the best proofs.
6. Sample: “I will discuss why the war began, how the generals planned it, and what it left behind.”
7. Sample: This thesis does not claim that prison alone made Bunyan a writer; he was already preaching and publishing before 1660. Nor can I say with certainty how much of the book was written during the first imprisonment rather than the second, because scholars still disagree. What I claim is narrower: that the experience of confinement gave the allegory its central images of burden, captivity and release.

8. Sample outline: Thesis: Reasons, not results, are the fairer test, because success depends on circumstances. (1) Circumstance: a just cause can lose a vote, as Socrates lost his trial. (2) Character: reasons reveal what a man would do again; luck does not. (3) Correction: judging reasons lets us learn from failure. Conclusion: success matters, but it is the fruit, not the root.

3.2 ANTICIPATING QUESTIONS

OBJECTIVES

- Use the stasis questions and eight question types to predict what a panel will ask about your thesis.
- Answer a hard question with the five-step pattern: hear, restate, answer, support, return.
- Build a question bank of at least twenty-five questions with brief, sourced answers.

Warm-up. Take out the question you wrote in 3.1, the one you hope no one asks. Answer it now in three sentences. Then ask: is the answer good enough to say aloud, or does it show a hole in the thesis that needs a fix?

Video slot. Video coming. How to prepare for and answer questions at a thesis defense or after a presentation (a university writing center or classical-school channel); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

procatalepsis

The figure in which a speaker raises an objection himself and answers it before the opponent can (“Some one will say ...”). Also called prolepsis.

stasis

The “standing point” of a dispute. Classical rhetoric (Hermagoras, then Cicero and Quintilian) sorted every question into four kinds: fact, definition, quality and procedure.

question bank

A written list of likely questions with short answers and the page or source that supports each.

concession

Granting the part of an objection that is true while showing that it does not overturn your claim.

bridge

A sentence that turns from a question back to your thesis (“And that is exactly why ...”).

CORE IDEAS

The best defense is foresight. Socrates did not wait for his accusers to ask why he was willing to risk death. He raised the question himself: “Some one will say ...” and then answered it. The figure is called *procatalepsis*, “seizing beforehand.” Your defense will go best if you have already heard every hard question in your own head and written an answer

to it. A candidate surprised by a question has usually not read his thesis as a stranger would. This lesson teaches you to become that stranger.

The four standing points. The Greek teacher Hermagoras taught that every dispute “stands” on one of four questions, and Cicero and Quintilian passed his system on. Use them to predict your panel. *Fact* (conjecture): Did it happen? Is your evidence sound? *Definition*: What exactly do you mean by your key term? *Quality*: Was it good or bad, wise or foolish, more or less important than something else? *Procedure* (translation): Is this the right way, or the right place, to settle the question? Did you use the right sources and method? Run your thesis sentence through all four and you will have found most of the questions a careful reader can ask.

Eight kinds of questions. Panels ask the same kinds of questions everywhere. (1) *Clarification*: “What do you mean by ...?” (2) *Evidence*: “How do you know?” (3) *Source*: “Why trust this historian?” (4) *Counterexample*: “What about the case of ...?” (5) *Alternative*: “Couldn’t this be explained another way?” (6) *Implication*: “If you are right, what follows?” (7) *Significance*: “Why does this matter?” (8) *Next step*: “What would you study next?” Write at least three questions of each kind for your thesis, and you will have a bank of twenty-five or more.

Hear, restate, answer, support, return. When a question comes, do five things. *Hear* it to the end without interrupting; Solomon says that he who answers before he hears shows his folly. *Restate* it briefly if it is long or unclear (“If I understand, you are asking whether ...”); this also buys you a few seconds. *Answer* directly in the first sentence: yes, no, or “in part.” *Support* with one reason or one piece of evidence, naming the page or source. *Return* to your thesis with a bridge. A good answer usually takes thirty seconds to a minute. Most bad answers are too long.

Concede what is true. The medieval disputant did not deny every objection. He sorted it: “I grant this; I deny that.” When a reader raises a fair point, say so: “You are right that Bunyan was already preaching before his arrest. My claim is narrower.” A concession costs you nothing if your thesis was carefully limited, and it wins the trust of the panel. If an objection really does damage the thesis, say that too, and say how you would revise. A candidate who can change his mind in public, for good reasons, shows the very judgment a thesis is meant to prove.

“I don’t know” is an honest answer. You will be asked something you cannot answer. Do not bluff; panels can always tell. Say what you do know, say where the answer could be found, and offer to follow up: “I read only the first edition, so I can’t say whether the passage changed. I would check that first.” Truthfulness is not only a rule for the paper (Ephesians 4:25); it governs every answer you give aloud.

Prepare the hardest question first. Go back to the warm-up. The question you fear most is usually the one a sharp reader will ask, because you already sense the weak joint in your argument. Write it at the top of your bank. If the answer exposes a real gap, you still have time to add a paragraph, a source or a limit to the thesis before the defense.

The model. *Plato, Apology, translated by Benjamin Jowett, Project Gutenberg #1656*

Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end? To him I may fairly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong—acting the part of a good man or of a bad. Whereas, upon your view, the heroes who fell at Troy were not good for much, and the son of Thetis above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when he was so eager to slay Hector, his goddess mother said to him, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself—“Fate,” she said, in these or the like words, “waits for you next after Hector;” he, receiving this warning, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonour, and not to avenge his friend. “Let me die forthwith,” he replies, “and be avenged of my enemy, rather than abide here by the beaked ships, a laughing-stock and a burden of the earth

PICTURE STUDY



The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple, William Holman Hunt, 1854–1860 · Oil on canvas · Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, England
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Hunt spent years on this painting, much of it in Jerusalem, studying faces, dress and buildings. He shows the moment after Luke 2:46–47: Mary and Joseph have found the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple, “sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.” The elders are still holding their scrolls. Some look puzzled, some thoughtful; all have just been in a conversation they will not forget.

Look closely

- Find the elders with the scrolls. How does Hunt show that a serious discussion has just been interrupted?
- Look at the boy's face and hands. Is he looking at his mother or past her? What might that suggest?
- Find a detail of the temple (lamps, doorway, musicians, workmen outside). What does it add to the scene?

Talk about it

1. Luke says Jesus was "both hearing them, and asking them questions." Write a paragraph on why hearing comes first in a good discussion, and what that means for your defense.
2. Choose one elder and write three questions he might have asked, then sort them by stasis: fact, definition, quality or procedure.

WRITING PROJECT: THE QUESTION BANK

Build the document you will study most before the defense: a bank of likely questions with short, sourced answers.

Format each entry in three lines: the question; a one- or two-sentence answer; the page in your thesis or the source that supports it.

You will need

- Your revised thesis and source list
- A notebook or document with a table (Question / Answer / Support)
- A highlighter

Steps

1. Write your thesis sentence at the top. Run it through the four stases and write at least two questions for each.
2. Read your thesis as a skeptic. In the margin, mark every claim a reader might doubt with "?" and every key term a reader might define differently with "D."
3. Turn your marks into questions, then add at least three questions for each of the eight types until you have twenty-five or more.
4. Star the five hardest. Write full answers to these using hear, restate, answer, support, return.
5. For each starred question, write one honest concession you could make.
6. If any answer exposes a real gap, add a sentence, a source or a limit to your thesis now and note the change for your advisor.
7. Give your advisor the bank and ask, "Which question is missing?"

Check your work

- My bank has at least twenty-five questions covering all four stases and all eight types.

- Every answer begins with a direct answer, not with background.
- Every answer names its support (page, source or example).
- The five hardest questions have written concessions.
- Concessive sentences use a subordinate clause correctly (“Although ..., ...”) without creating a fragment.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model’s first two sentences by hand. Mark where Socrates raises the objection and where he answers it.
2. Imitation: write a procatalepsis for your own thesis: “Some one will say: ... To him I may fairly answer: ...”
3. List the eight question types from memory with one example of each about a book you read this year.

History note. Hermagoras of Temnos, a Greek teacher of the second century B.C., worked out stasis theory; his books are lost, but Cicero’s *On Invention* and Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory* preserve the system. In the model, Socrates compares himself to Achilles (“the son of Thetis”), who chose to avenge Patroclus knowing he would die soon after; the scene is from *Iliad* Book 18. Hunt’s painting was finished in 1860 and is in Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

 **Style Clinic. Concessive clauses.** The grammar of a fair answer is the complex sentence: a subordinate clause grants, the main clause holds the line. “*Although* Bunyan was preaching before 1660, prison gave his allegory its central images.” Put what you grant in the subordinate clause (*although, while, even though, granted that*) and your claim in the independent clause, where the weight falls. Watch for fragments: “Although he was preaching before 1660.” is not a sentence. And do not reverse the weight: “Although prison shaped the book, he was preaching before 1660” ends by conceding your thesis.

For families. The question bank is the most useful preparation a student can do, and it often improves the thesis itself. Encourage your student to show it to the advisor and readers. The Homeric example in the model may need a word of context: Socrates is not praising revenge but the choice of honor over safety. Luke 2:41–52 is a good family reading for this lesson.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A thesis argues: “Washington’s Farewell Address (1796) rests its case for national unity chiefly on religion and morality.” Use the four stases to generate one panel question for each.

1. Fact: Is the evidence sound? Who wrote the text? (Hamilton drafted much of it.)
2. Definition: What does “chiefly” mean? Measured how?
3. Quality: Is religion really more central than the economic and foreign-policy arguments?
4. Procedure: Did the student compare the final text with Washington’s own draft, and is the address the right source for Washington’s own views?

Answer: (1) Fact: “Since Hamilton drafted much of the address, can you call its argument Washington’s?” (2) Definition: “What do you mean by ‘chiefly’? How would we know if religion were secondary?” (3) Quality: “Isn’t the warning against permanent foreign alliances the more important argument?” (4) Procedure: “Did you compare Washington’s own May 1796 draft with Hamilton’s version?”

Example 2. Revise this answer to “Since Hamilton drafted much of the address, can you call its argument Washington’s?”: “Well, that’s a really good question, and a lot of people have wondered about it, and actually Hamilton and Washington worked together for a long time, going back to the war, so they had similar views, and anyway Washington signed it.”

1. Diagnose: no direct answer at the start; filler; one long run-on chain of *and*; weak support (“anyway he signed it”).
2. Apply the pattern: restate briefly, answer in the first sentence, give one piece of evidence, concede, return to the thesis.

Answer: “Yes, I think we can. Washington sent Hamilton his own draft of May 1796, reviewed Hamilton’s text and revised it before publication. I grant that much of the phrasing is Hamilton’s. But Washington tied public happiness to religion and morality in his own earlier writings, such as the 1783 Circular to the States, which is why I treat the claim that they are ‘indispensable supports’ as his conviction.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is procatalepsis?
2. **EASY** Name the four stases.
3. **EASY** List the five steps for answering a question.
4. **MEDIUM** Classify by stasis: “Isn’t ‘tyranny’ too strong a word for what George III did?”

5. **MEDIUM** In the model, what objection does Socrates anticipate, and what principle does he give in answer?
6. **MEDIUM** Combine into one concessive sentence with the claim in the main clause: "Shakespeare borrowed the plot of *King Lear*. He changed its ending completely."
7. **CHALLENGE** A panelist asks a question you cannot answer: "Did Lincoln ever comment on this sermon?" Write an honest answer of two or three sentences.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes): "It is wiser to answer an objection before anyone raises it." Write a short essay that takes a position, raises and answers the strongest objection to your own view, and uses one example from history or literature.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Starting an answer with background instead of a direct answer.
- Defending every point, even indefensible ones, instead of conceding what is true.
- Bluffing an answer instead of saying honestly, "I don't know, but here is how I would find out."
- Preparing only the easy questions. Write the hardest one first.

Make it a game · Stasis Sort. Write twenty questions about a familiar story (for example, "Did the boy really cry wolf three times?", "What counts as a lie?", "Was the village wrong not to come?", "Should the elders have set a different watch?") on cards. Players race to sort them into four piles: fact, definition, quality, procedure. Then each player answers one card from each pile in thirty seconds using hear, restate, answer, support, return.

Scripture. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." (Proverbs 18:13, KJV)

The first step in answering a question is to hear it all the way through.

Practice: answers

1. Raising an objection yourself and answering it before your opponent can.
2. Fact (conjecture), definition, quality, procedure (translation).
3. Hear, restate, answer, support, return.
4. Definition.
5. That he should be ashamed of a way of life likely to get him killed. He answers that a good man considers only whether he is doing right or wrong, not the chance of living or dying.
6. Sample: Although Shakespeare borrowed the plot of *King Lear*, he changed its ending completely.
7. Sample: I don't know; I didn't find a reference in the *Collected Works* index, but I searched only under the preacher's name. I would check Lincoln's correspondence for that year next. If he did comment, it would strengthen the connection, but my argument rests on the parallels in the texts themselves.
8. Sample outline: Thesis: Answering objections first is wiser, because it shows honesty and controls the ground of the debate. Example: Socrates' "Some one will say ..." Objection:

raising doubts can plant them in hearers who had none. Answer: thoughtful hearers already have them; silence looks like evasion. Conclusion: the speaker who names the hardest question first is believed on the others.

3.3 THE MOCK DEFENSE

OBJECTIVES

- Reduce the opening statement to a single key-word card and deliver it in 9–11 minutes.
- Hold a full mock defense before a practice panel, with timed questions and written feedback.
- Revise the statement and the question bank from the feedback, using Franklin’s “modest diffidence” without weak hedging.

Warm-up. Read your opening statement’s first paragraph aloud twice: once as if reading a grocery list, once as if telling a friend something you are sure matters. What changed in your voice, pace and face?

Video slot. Video coming. Public speaking practice: rehearsing a speech, pacing and eye contact (a classical-school, debate or library channel); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

mock defense

A full rehearsal of the defense before a practice panel, kept to time, with questions the candidate has not seen.

key-word card

A single index card holding the outline of the opening statement in a few words per part, plus exact quotations to be read.

modest diffidence

Franklin’s phrase for stating opinions without “the air of positiveness”: firm in reasons, humble in tone.

hedge

A word that softens a claim (“perhaps,” “somewhat,” “sort of”). One honest hedge is wise; a string of them sounds evasive.

filler

Sounds and words that fill silence (“um,” “like,” “you know,” “basically”). A short pause is better.

CORE IDEAS

Practice in public before you speak in public. Plutarch tells us that Demosthenes, who became the greatest orator of Athens, failed badly in his first speeches. He built an underground study and practiced there daily, sometimes for months at a time; he spoke with pebbles in his mouth to cure his stammer and declaimed while running uphill. He did not

become eloquent by waiting for the big day. A mock defense is your underground study: a full rehearsal, before real listeners, early enough that you can still change things.

From script to card. Last week you wrote the opening statement in full. Now cut it to one index card. Write each part (exordium, question, thesis, roadmap, three proofs, limits, peroration) as two to five key words, and copy out word for word only the quotations you must read exactly. Then practice from the card until you can deliver the whole statement in 9–11 minutes without looking at the full draft. Memory, the fourth canon, is not rote recitation. It is knowing your road so well that a few signposts are enough.

Set up the panel. Ask two or three adults to serve, and at least one who did not help with the thesis. Give them the paper and five of your starred questions a few days ahead, but ask them to add questions of their own. Choose a chair to keep time: ten minutes for the statement, twenty to twenty-five for questions, then five minutes alone for the panel to write feedback. Dress as you will on the day and stand where you will stand. Record the session if you can; you will learn more from ten minutes of watching yourself than from an hour of advice.

Franklin's manner. As a young man, Franklin loved to win arguments by drawing people into admissions they did not foresee. He confessed later that this won him "victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved." So he gradually left it and adopted what he called "modest diffidence": he stopped saying *certainly* and *undoubtedly* and began saying "I conceive" or "it appears to me ... for such and such reasons." Notice the second half: *for such and such reasons*. Franklin did not soften his reasons, only his tone. That is the manner you want before a panel. Be certain of your evidence and humble about yourself.

Diffidence is not dithering. There is a counterfeit of Franklin's manner: the speaker who hedges every sentence. "I kind of think that maybe, in a way, Bunyan was sort of influenced by prison" sounds less modest than unprepared. One honest qualifier, placed where the evidence really is uncertain, is wisdom. Five qualifiers in a sentence are fog. Practice saying your thesis sentence aloud plainly, with no hedge at all; then decide where, if anywhere, a single "I would argue" belongs.

Hearing feedback. After the mock defense, ask each panelist three questions: What was the weakest answer? What part of the statement was unclear? What question did I not see coming? Write the answers down without arguing; you may disagree later, in private. Then make two lists: changes to the statement and new entries for the question bank. A mock defense that leaves you with a page of corrections has done its work. Solomon says iron sharpens iron; a friend who finds your weak joint now is doing you a kindness that a public audience cannot.

Polishing delivery. Watch the recording for four things. *Pace*: most nervous speakers rush; aim for about 130 words a minute and pause after your thesis. *Eyes*: look at each panelist in turn, not at the card or the ceiling. *Hands*: hold the card low or set it down; let your hands rest or move naturally. *Filler*: count the "ums." Replace each with a silent breath. A pause sounds like thought to a listener; a filler sounds like panic.

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (written 1771–1790), Project Gutenberg #20203*

I continu'd this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence; never using, when I advanced anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so*, for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so*; or *it is so, if I am not mistaken*. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engaged in promoting; and, as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat everyone of those purposes for which speech was given to us, to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure

PICTURE STUDY



The Syndics of the Drapers' Guild (De Staalmeesters), Rembrandt van Rijn, 1662 · Oil on canvas ·
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The men in this group portrait were the *staalmeesters*, the sampling officials of the Amsterdam drapers' guild. Their job was to examine cloth and judge whether it met the standard. Rembrandt painted them at their table with the account book open, and he made them look up, as if someone has just come in or stood to speak. To stand before this table would feel very much like standing before a thesis panel: they are calm, attentive, fair and not easily fooled.

Look closely

- Follow each man's eyes. Are they all looking at the same place? Where would you be standing?
- Find the man who seems to be rising from his chair. What might he be about to say or do?
- Look at the open book and the hands. Which details tell you these men are at work, not posing for a party?

Talk about it

1. Imagine you are presenting your thesis to these five men. Write the first question each one might ask, based on his face and posture.
2. These officials judged cloth by a public standard, not by personal taste. Write a paragraph on why a thesis panel should judge the same way, and what standard it should use.

WRITING PROJECT: THE MOCK DEFENSE

Hold a full rehearsal of your defense, under time and before a real panel, at least one week before the public defense.

You will need

- One index card (your key-word outline)
- Copies of your thesis for the panel, sent ahead
- Your question bank (for you, not the panel)
- A timer, a recording device if possible, and a feedback sheet for each panelist (three questions: weakest answer, unclear part, unexpected question)

Steps

1. Cut your opening statement to one key-word card. Practice it aloud three times from the card alone until it runs 9–11 minutes.
2. Recruit a panel of two or three adults, including one who did not help with the thesis, and a chair to keep time.
3. Hold the mock defense: ten-minute statement, twenty to twenty-five minutes of questions, then step out for five minutes while the panel writes feedback.
4. Return, hear the feedback, and write it down without arguing.
5. Watch the recording. Tally fillers, note pace, and mark the two weakest answers.
6. Make two lists: changes to the statement, and new or revised entries for the question bank. Make the changes.
7. Rewrite your two weakest answers using hear, restate, answer, support, return, and practice them aloud.

Check your work

- I delivered the statement from one card, in 9–11 minutes, looking at the panel most of the time.
- Each answer began with a direct answer in the first sentence.
- I used no more than one hedge per claim, and only where the evidence is uncertain.
- My key claims are in the active voice, with a clear doer (“Bunyan wrote,” not “it was written”).
- I recorded every panelist’s feedback and made at least three specific revisions.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Franklin’s sentence from “never using” to “if I am not mistaken.” Circle each phrase he recommends.
2. Imitation: rewrite three sentences from your opening statement in Franklin’s manner (“it appears to me ..., for such and such reasons”), then rewrite them once more with no hedge at all. Which version will you say aloud?
3. List every filler word you heard in your recording, with a tally beside each.

History note. Plutarch’s *Life of Demosthenes* tells of the underground study, the pebbles and the uphill speeches. Franklin wrote the first part of his *Autobiography* in 1771; the passage in the model describes his youth, after he had read Xenophon’s *Memorable Things of Socrates* and taken up the Socratic method of questioning. Rembrandt painted the *Staalmeesters* in 1662; it hangs in the Rijksmuseum.

 **Style Clinic. Active voice for spoken claims.** In the active voice the subject does the action: “Bunyan wrote the first part in prison.” In the passive, the subject receives it: “The first part was written in prison.” The passive hides the doer, which listeners notice. Under questioning, candidates slide into it (“mistakes were made in the sources”). Use the active for your claims and admissions: “I misread the date.” Keep the passive only when the doer is unknown or unimportant: “The manuscript was lost in the fire.” Then check mood: Franklin’s “I should think it so” uses a conditional to soften a claim; once is gracious, every sentence is too much.

For families. The mock defense works best when at least one panelist is a little intimidating, a respected adult outside the family. Do not rescue your student during the questions; let them sit with a hard question for a few seconds. Afterward, start feedback with one strength, then the weaknesses. Note that Franklin’s *Autobiography* mentions, just before the model passage, that he had become a doubter of religious doctrine as a youth; it is worth discussing that his rule about modest speech is good advice even though his early reasons for using the Socratic method were not.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn this paragraph of an opening statement into a key-word card entry: “My second proof is that Dickens’s own childhood work in Warren’s blacking warehouse shaped the factory scenes of *David Copperfield*. Dickens described the warehouse in an autobiographical fragment he gave to his friend John Forster, and many details, such as the rats and the rotten floors, appear almost unchanged in Murdstone and Grinby’s warehouse in the novel.”

1. Find the claim in a few words: blacking warehouse → *Copperfield*.
2. Find the evidence: the Forster fragment; rats, rotten floors; Murdstone and Grinby.
3. Keep exact wording only for quotations; here there are none to read.

Answer: P2: Warren’s → Murdstone & Grinby. Forster fragment. Rats, rotten floors.

Example 2. In the mock defense, a panelist asks, “Isn’t it a stretch to say prison made Bunyan’s allegory?” The student answers: “Um, I mean, it was kind of written in prison, maybe, and some people sort of think it was influenced, so I guess it probably was, in a way.” Revise the answer in Franklin’s manner without dithering.

1. Diagnose: a pile of hedges (“kind of,” “maybe,” “sort of,” “I guess,” “probably,” “in a way”) and fillers (“um,” “I mean”); passive “was written” hides Bunyan; no reason given.
2. Answer directly; use one honest qualifier; give a reason; return to the thesis.

Answer: “I would say it is not a stretch, for two reasons. Bunyan himself opens the book by saying he dreamed it in a ‘den,’ which readers have long taken to mean the jail. And the book’s central images, a burden, a dungeon, a key, are prison images. I grant that he may have finished it after his release; but my claim is about the shape of the allegory, not the date of the last page.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a mock defense?
2. **EASY** Which words did Franklin stop using, and what phrases did he use instead?
3. **EASY** Name two ways Demosthenes practiced, according to Plutarch.
4. **MEDIUM** According to Franklin, what are the chief ends of conversation, and how does a positive, assuming manner defeat them?
5. **MEDIUM** Change to the active voice: “It was decided by the panel that the thesis should be revised.”
6. **MEDIUM** Remove the excess hedges but keep one honest qualifier: “I sort of think it’s maybe possible that Lincoln probably read Bunyan.”

7. **CHALLENGE** Write three feedback questions you would give a panelist after a mock defense, and explain why each is useful.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes): Franklin says a “positive, assuming manner” defeats the purposes of speech. Write a short essay agreeing or disagreeing, with one example from history or literature and one from your own experience of work or study.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Holding the mock defense too late to make changes. Schedule it at least a week before the public defense.
- Using only friendly panelists who have already heard the thesis.
- Arguing with feedback in the room instead of writing it down.
- Mistaking hedging for humility; Franklin softened his tone, not his reasons.

Make it a game • No Ums. Each player draws a question from the student’s question bank and must answer it for forty-five seconds without a single filler word (“um,” “like,” “you know,” “basically”). Listeners clap once at each filler; three claps and the player sits down. A player who finishes cleanly earns a point; a player who also gives a direct answer in the first sentence earns two.

Scripture. “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” (Proverbs 27:17, KJV)

A practice panel that finds your weak points is a friend sharpening you for the real defense.

Practice: answers

1. A full, timed rehearsal of the defense before a practice panel, with unseen questions and written feedback.
2. He stopped using “certainly” and “undoubtedly”; he said “I conceive,” “I apprehend,” “it appears to me,” “I should think it so,” “if I am not mistaken.”
3. Two of: in an underground study; with pebbles in his mouth; speaking while running uphill.
4. To inform or be informed, to please or persuade. A positive manner disgusts hearers and creates opposition, so they stop listening and are not persuaded.
5. The panel decided that I should revise the thesis.
6. Sample: Lincoln very likely read Bunyan; *The Pilgrim’s Progress* was one of the few books he is reported to have read as a boy.
7. Sample: (1) What was my weakest answer? — shows where the thesis or preparation is thin. (2) Which part of the statement was unclear? — tests whether it works for the ear. (3) What question did I not see coming? — adds to the question bank.
8. Sample outline: Thesis: Franklin is right that tone can defeat truth, though modesty must not swallow conviction. Example: Franklin himself, who by his own account won “victories” his cause did not deserve until he changed his manner, and then found he could “persuade men into measures.” Experience: a group project where a confident but courteous suggestion was adopted while a domineering one was resisted. Limit: some truths must be stated plainly, as

Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." Conclusion: be plain in substance, modest in manner.

3.4 THE PUBLIC DEFENSE ★

OBJECTIVES

- Plan and host a public thesis defense: panel, audience, program, room and one-page handout.
- Deliver the opening statement and answer the panel's questions with composure, as Paul did before Festus and Agrippa.
- Complete the defense with a written reflection, final revisions and thank-you letters to the panel.

Warm-up. Read Acts 26:24–29 aloud. Festus interrupts Paul in the middle of his defense and calls him mad. Write down Paul's first six words in reply. What do they show about how to answer an interruption?

Video slot. Video coming. A student senior thesis defense at a classical Christian school (watch one full example); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

public defense

A thesis defense held before invited guests as well as the panel. The panel questions and decides; guests may ask a question at the end if the chair allows.

program

A printed order of events: welcome, opening statement, panel questions, audience questions, deliberation, verdict.

handout (abstract)

One page for guests: the thesis title, the question, the thesis sentence, a 150-word abstract and the main sources.

composure

Calm self-command under pressure. Paul's "I am not mad, most noble Festus" is composure in six words.

verdict

The panel's decision: pass, pass with revisions, or not yet. Revisions are normal and are a mark of a serious panel.

CORE IDEAS

The finish line. Paul, near the end of his life, wrote, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course." Your senior thesis is a course you began in Unit 1 with a question. You read, claimed, drafted, revised, cited and rehearsed. Now you stand up in public and give account of it. Classical schools make this a public event because a claim that is only

whispered has not yet been tested. It is also a celebration: the family, friends and church members who have watched you learn get to see what you have become.

Planning the day. Three weeks ahead, confirm the panel (advisor plus two or three readers) and send them the final thesis. Set the date, time and place: a living room, a church fellowship hall or a library meeting room all work. Invite fifteen to forty guests by letter or card. Two days ahead, print the program and a one-page handout. On the day, arrange the room: a table for the panel facing a lectern or open space for you, chairs for guests behind or beside, water for everyone, and a clock the chair can see and you cannot. Arrive early. Walk to your spot and say your first sentence once aloud in the empty room.

The order of the day. The chair welcomes the guests, introduces you and the panel, and states the rules: the panel questions first; guests may ask brief questions at the end if time allows. You give your opening statement (about ten minutes). The panel questions you (about twenty-five). The chair may open the floor for two or three guest questions. Then you and the guests step out while the panel deliberates. You return, and the chair announces the verdict. A short prayer of thanks and refreshments make a fitting close. The whole event takes about an hour.

Paul before Festus and Agrippa. The model is the end of the most famous defense in the New Testament. About A.D. 59, at Caesarea, the prisoner Paul gave account of himself before the Roman governor Festus and King Agrippa II. In the middle, Festus broke in “with a loud voice”: “Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.” Notice four things in Paul’s answer. He keeps his courtesy (“most noble Festus”). He answers the charge directly (“I am not mad”). He states his ground (“words of truth and soberness”) and his evidence (“this thing was not done in a corner”). And he turns at once back to his purpose, the king and his question. Every hard moment in your defense calls for the same four moves.

Questions from the floor. Guests’ questions are often the hardest because they are the least predictable. A grandparent may ask why the question matters; a younger sibling may ask what a word means. Treat every question with the same respect you give the panel. Restate it so the whole room hears it, answer in a minute or less, and thank the questioner. If a question is off your subject, say so kindly and offer to talk afterward. Your speech should be “always with grace, seasoned with salt” (Colossians 4:6).

Receiving the verdict. Most strong theses pass with revisions. That is not a failure; it is the last stage of the writing process. Write down every revision the panel requires, ask questions if any is unclear, and thank them. Within two weeks, make the revisions, have your advisor sign off, and bind or print the final copy for the family library and your portfolio. If the verdict is “not yet,” ask for a plan and a date. Many good scholars have defended twice.

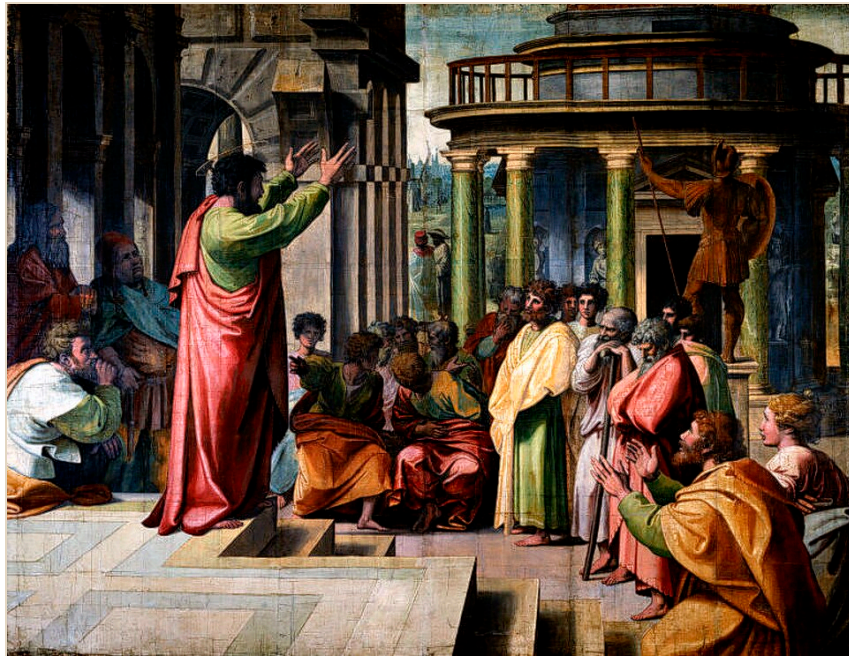
Finishing well. Within a week, write a handwritten thank-you letter to each panelist: name a question that helped you and something you will carry forward. This is the same skill employers and colleges look for: gracious, specific, timely writing. Then write a one-page reflection for your portfolio: what you set out to prove, what you actually proved, what

changed your mind, and what you would study next. Paul finished his course and kept the faith. You have finished this one; give thanks to God, who gave the strength to do it.

The model. *Acts 26:24-29 (KJV)*

And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

PICTURE STUDY



St Paul Preaching in Athens (tapestry cartoon), Raphael, 1515–1516 · Bodycolour (distemper) on paper, mounted on canvas · Royal Collection, on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Pope Leo X commissioned Raphael to design ten great tapestries for the Sistine Chapel, and Raphael painted full-size designs, called cartoons, for the weavers. Seven survive. This one shows Acts 17: Paul on the Areopagus in Athens, giving account of his faith before the philosophers. Raphael gives every listener a different response: some lean forward, some argue among themselves, some turn away. At the right, a man and a woman step toward Paul; they are Dionysius the Areopagite and Damaris, who believed (Acts 17:34).

Look closely

- Look at Paul's posture and arms. Why might Raphael place him above the crowd and at the edge of the picture rather than in the center?
- Find three listeners who are responding in three different ways. Describe each in a phrase.
- Find the statue in the background. Paul spoke in a city "wholly given to idolatry" (Acts 17:16). How does Raphael remind you of that?

Talk about it

1. Your public defense will have an audience like this one: some attentive, some puzzled, some unconvinced. Write a paragraph on how a speaker should address a mixed audience without changing the truth he speaks.
2. Compare Paul in Athens (Acts 17) with Paul before Agrippa (Acts 26). What is the same in his manner? What does he adapt to each audience?

WRITING PROJECT: THE PUBLIC DEFENSE

Hold your senior thesis defense before your panel and invited guests, then complete the finishing work: revisions, reflection and thank-you letters.

This is the capstone of the unit and a quarter-path lesson. Begin the planning steps at least three weeks ahead.

You will need

- Final thesis, sent to the panel three weeks ahead
- Invitations, a printed program and a one-page handout (title, question, thesis sentence, 150-word abstract, main sources)
- Your key-word card and question bank
- Room set-up: panel table, lectern or open space, chairs, water, a clock
- Good stationery for thank-you letters

Steps

1. Three weeks ahead: confirm the panel and chair, set the date and place, send invitations, and send the thesis to the panel.
2. One week ahead: write the program and handout; review your question bank daily; practice the statement from the card twice.
3. On the day: arrive early, set the room, and say your first sentence once aloud in the empty space.
4. Deliver the opening statement, answer the panel and any guest questions, and step out for deliberation.
5. Return, receive the verdict, write down every required revision, and thank the panel and guests.
6. Within one week: write a handwritten thank-you letter to each panelist and a one-page reflection for your portfolio.

7. Within two weeks: complete the revisions, get your advisor's approval, and bind or print the final copy.

Check your work

- The handout states the question, the thesis and the abstract in clear, complete sentences.
- I delivered the statement in 9–11 minutes from one card and answered every question directly in the first sentence.
- I answered at least one hard or hostile question with courtesy and composure.
- My thank-you letters each name one specific question or comment and are in correct letter form.
- In my reflection, sentence structures are varied: simple sentences for key claims, complex sentences for reasons and concessions.
- I made all required revisions and filed the final copy.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 26:25–26 by hand. Underline the courteous address, the direct denial, the ground and the evidence.
2. Imitation: write a two-sentence reply, in Paul's pattern, to an imagined interruption at your defense: "Your thesis rests on one book, and that book is biased."
3. After the defense, list three questions you were asked and one sentence on how you would answer each now.

History note. Paul's defense before Festus and Agrippa II at Caesarea is usually dated about A.D. 59–60; he had appealed to Caesar and was soon sent to Rome (Acts 25:11–12, 27:1). Raphael's cartoons for the Sistine Chapel tapestries were made in 1515–1516; seven survive and have been in the English Royal Collection since 1623. They have been on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum since 1865.

 **Style Clinic. Sentence structures for the ear.** Grammar Level 3 named four structures: simple, compound, complex and compound-complex. Listeners need variety. Put your main claims in short simple sentences, so they land: "I am not mad." Put reasons and concessions in complex sentences, where a subordinate clause carries the support: "For I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him." Use a compound-complex sentence sparingly, for a climax, and follow it with a short one. Paul does this in verse 29: one long, rising sentence of hope, ending in three plain words: "except these bonds." Read your peroration aloud and listen for the rhythm: long builds, short lands.

For families. This is a milestone; treat it as one. Invite grandparents, pastors, neighbors and younger students, who will remember it when their turn comes. Brief the chair ahead on keeping time and on gently cutting off a guest who speaks too long. If a panelist is very hard on the student, do not intervene; the chair can move on. Keep the program, handout, recording and thank-you letters together; they belong in the Grade 12 portfolio

and the ten-year portfolio in Unit 8. This year's faith verse, 2 Timothy 4:7, makes a fitting close to the evening.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A guest says, with some heat: "This whole thesis is pointless. Nobody reads *The Pilgrim's Progress* anymore." Use Paul's four moves (courtesy, direct answer, ground, return) to answer.

1. Courtesy: thank the guest and treat the challenge as a real question.
2. Direct answer: grant what is true (fewer people read it), deny what is not (that it is pointless).
3. Ground and evidence: one fact about the book's influence.
4. Return: bring it back to the thesis.

Answer: "Thank you; that's a fair question to ask about any old book. It's true that fewer people read Bunyan today than a century ago. But for two hundred years it was, after the Bible, one of the most widely read books in English, and its images, the Slough of Despond and Vanity Fair, still turn up in our language. That is exactly why I asked how prison shaped it: to understand a book that shaped so many readers, we should know how it was made."

Example 2. Revise this thank-you letter body: "Thanks for coming to my defense. It was great. I learned a lot. Thanks again."

1. Diagnose: vague ("great," "a lot"), nothing specific to this panelist, four short sentences of the same pattern.
2. Add a specific memory: a question the panelist asked and what it changed.
3. Look forward: what you will carry on. Vary sentence structure.

Answer: "Thank you for reading my thesis so carefully and for serving on my panel last Friday. Your question about the later editions caught me unprepared, and when I checked afterward I found that Bunyan added whole episodes to the second edition, published the same year as the first; my final copy now discusses both. I will remember that lesson in every paper I write: check every edition, not only the first. I am grateful for your time and your kindness."

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** List the order of events at a public defense.
2. **EASY** What should the one-page handout contain?
3. **EASY** Before whom did Paul make the defense in Acts 26, and where?

4. **MEDIUM** Name Paul's four moves in answering Festus, with the words from Acts 26:25–26 for each.
5. **MEDIUM** Why is “pass with revisions” not a failure?
6. **MEDIUM** Identify the sentence structure: “Although I did not read every edition, I compared the two that matter most, and the change is clear.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write an abstract of 120–150 words for a thesis you have read about in this unit (Bunyan and prison, Washington's Farewell Address, or Dickens and the blacking warehouse).
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes): “The true test of an argument is not whether it persuades, but whether it can withstand questioning.” Write a short essay taking a position, with one example from Scripture or history and one from this year's work.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Leaving the planning to the last week; panelists need the thesis three weeks ahead.
- Answering a hostile question with heat instead of courtesy and evidence.
- Arguing with the verdict instead of writing down the revisions.
- Forgetting the thank-you letters, or writing vague ones.

Make it a game · Interrupt Me. Before the defense, family members take turns as “Festus.” While the student practices the opening statement, a player may interrupt once with a short challenge (“That source is biased!”, “Why should anyone care?”). The student must answer in Paul's four moves in under thirty seconds and return to the statement exactly where they left off. Rotate roles so everyone tries both parts.

Scripture. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:” (2 Timothy 4:7, KJV)

This year's faith verse: Paul wrote it near the end of his life, after his “first answer” before the Roman court (2 Timothy 4:16); it reminds you to finish your course faithfully and give thanks.

Practice: answers

1. Welcome and introductions, opening statement, panel questions, guest questions, deliberation, verdict (then thanks and close).
2. Title, research question, thesis sentence, a 150-word abstract and main sources.
3. Before the Roman governor Festus and King Agrippa II, at Caesarea.
4. Courtesy (“most noble Festus”); direct answer (“I am not mad”); ground (“words of truth and soberness”); evidence (“this thing was not done in a corner”), then a return to his purpose with Agrippa.
5. Because revision is the last stage of writing; a serious panel nearly always finds something to improve, and the candidate finishes the work by making the changes.
6. Compound-complex (one dependent clause and two independent clauses).
7. Sample (Bunyan): This thesis asks how John Bunyan's imprisonment from 1660 to 1672 shaped *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Scholars agree that Bunyan began the book in jail but

disagree on how much of it he wrote there. Rather than settle the date of composition, I examine the allegory's central images: the burden, the dungeon of Doubting Castle, the key called Promise, and the Den in which the dreamer sleeps. Comparing these with Bunyan's prison writings, especially *Grace Abounding*, I argue that confinement gave the book its pattern of captivity and release. The thesis concludes that Bunyan's suffering was not merely the setting of his work but its shaping metaphor, and that this explains why prisoners and invalids have so often loved the book.

8. Sample outline: Thesis: Withstanding questions is the truer test, because persuasion can be won by charm or fear but questioning tests the reasons themselves. Example: Paul before Agrippa did not persuade the king, but his case withstood the governor's charge of madness. This year: my thesis lost one claim under questioning and was better for it. Concession: an argument must also be persuasive to be useful. Conclusion: first make it true, then make it clear.

UNIT 3 REVIEW

The student answers in writing; items 9 and 10 may be answered aloud to a parent acting as panelist. Open-ended items are scored for a direct answer, a sound reason and clear, correct sentences, using the checklists from the unit.

1. (3 pts) What does *apologia* mean, and where does the word appear in the New Testament?
2. (4 pts) Name the four parts of a thesis defense and the four roles.
3. (3 pts) List the parts of the opening statement in the classical order.
4. (5 pts) Name the four stases and write one question of each kind about the thesis "Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address draws its main argument from the Bible."
5. (3 pts) What are the five steps for answering a question at a defense?
6. (3 pts) What is procatalepsis? Give the example from Plato's *Apology*.
7. (4 pts) Explain Franklin's "modest diffidence" and how it differs from weak hedging.
8. (3 pts) Revise for parallelism and active voice: "I will show that the canal was planned by Clinton, the surveyors' skill, and how trade grew."
9. (4 pts) A panelist says, "Your thesis depends on a single source." Answer in three or four sentences using a concessive clause.
10. (4 pts) Name the four moves Paul makes in answering Festus (Acts 26:25-26) and explain how you would use them with a hostile guest question.
11. (3 pts) List three things a specific thank-you letter to a panelist should include.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE DEFENSE DOSSIER

Gather in one folder: your key-word card, the full opening statement, your question bank, the mock-defense feedback and revision list, the program and handout from the public defense, the panel's verdict and required revisions, your one-page reflection, and copies of your thank-you letters. Place the final bound thesis beside it. Together they record the whole course of the senior thesis, from question to defense.

- **Opening statement:** Classical order (exordium to peroration); a one-sentence thesis; three parallel proofs with cited evidence; honest limits; delivered in 9-11 minutes from one card.
- **Answers:** Question bank of 25+ covering all four stases; answers begin directly, name their support, concede what is true, and say "I don't know" honestly when needed.
- **Revision:** Specific changes made after the mock defense and all required revisions after the public defense, approved by the advisor.
- **Style and courtesy:** Parallel roadmap, active voice for claims, varied sentence structures, correct concessive clauses; reflection and thank-you letters are specific, gracious and in correct form.

1. A speech in defense, a reasoned answer to a charge or challenge. It is the word translated “answer” in 1 Peter 3:15 (also used of Paul’s defenses in Acts).
2. Parts: opening statement, questions, deliberation, verdict. Roles: candidate, advisor, readers (panel), chair.
3. Exordium, question and thesis, roadmap, proofs (usually three), limits, peroration.
4. Sample: Fact: Which biblical passages does he quote? Definition: What counts as the “main” argument? Quality: Is the Bible more central than his constitutional reasoning? Procedure: Did you compare earlier drafts and his other speeches?
5. Hear, restate, answer, support, return.
6. Raising an objection oneself and answering it first. Socrates: “Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end?”
7. Franklin avoided words like “certainly” and “undoubtedly” and said “it appears to me ... for such and such reasons.” He softened his tone but kept his reasons. Hedging piles up qualifiers (“kind of, maybe, sort of”) and hides the claim.
8. Sample: I will show that Clinton planned the canal, that self-taught surveyors built it, and that trade grew because of it.
9. Sample: Although one source carries much of the weight, I tested it against two others. Where they agree, I rely on it; where they disagree, I say so in the limits section. I would welcome a second primary source, and I would look in the county archives next.
10. Courtesy (“most noble Festus”), direct answer (“I am not mad”), ground and evidence (“truth and soberness”; “not done in a corner”), return to purpose. With a guest: thank them, answer directly, give one reason or fact, and bring the answer back to the thesis.
11. Thanks for reading and serving; a specific question or comment that helped and what it changed; what you will carry forward. Correct letter form.

FICTION: THE NOVELLA CHAPTER

The longest piece of fiction in the course. You will read Tolkien's lecture "On Fairy-Stories" (in summary) on sub-creation, Secondary Belief and the eucatastrophe, the sudden joyous turn; plan a whole novella the way Stevenson planned *Treasure Island*, from a map to a list of chapters; draft one chapter of 2,500–4,000 words on a daily quota, learning voice, scene and the first page from Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*; and take it through a workshop guided by Pope's *Essay on Criticism*. You finish with a polished chapter, a plan for the whole book and a revision memo.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written complete short stories with dialogue and a clear beginning, middle and end (earlier creative units).
- Can draft and revise a multi-page piece independently, as in the senior thesis (Units 1–3).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain Tolkien's ideas of sub-creation, Secondary Belief, Recovery, Escape, Consolation and eucatastrophe.
- ☐ I can outline a longer work with a synopsis, cast list, map and chapter list, using reversal and recognition.
- ☐ I can draft a chapter built from scenes, with a consistent point of view and a first page that plants what the story needs.
- ☐ I can give and receive workshop criticism that is specific, truthful and gracious.
- ☐ I can revise from the largest level to the smallest and explain my choices in a revision memo.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Stevenson, Essays in the Art of Writing (Project Gutenberg #492)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/492>): Contains "My First Book: Treasure Island," the model for 4.2.
- **Dickens, A Christmas Carol (Project Gutenberg #46)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/46>): A complete novella in five staves; read it whole for the reverse outline in 4.2 and the model in 4.3.
- **Pope, An Essay on Criticism (Project Gutenberg #7409)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7409>): The model for 4.4; Part II is about the faults of critics.
- **Andrew Lang, The Blue Fairy Book (Project Gutenberg #503)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/503>): Tolkien's lecture honored Lang; these are the kinds of tales he was defending.

- **Aristotle, Poetics, tr. S. H. Butcher (Project Gutenberg #1974)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1974>): Chapters 7-11 on plot, reversal and recognition.

4.1 TOLKIEN’S “ON FAIRY-STORIES”: SUB-CREATION AND THE GOOD TURN 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Summarize the main claims of Tolkien’s “On Fairy-Stories”: Faërie, sub-creation, Secondary Belief, Recovery, Escape, Consolation and eucatastrophe.
- Explain why Tolkien ties the happy ending of a fairy-story to the Gospel, and test a story ending to see whether it is an earned turn or a cheat.
- Draft a novella premise, the laws of its world, and the turn your story will move toward.

Warm-up. Name a story whose ending made you catch your breath with joy, not because everything was easy but because rescue came when all seemed lost. In three sentences, say what had been lost, what turned, and why the turn felt true and not cheap.

Video slot. Video coming. J. R. R. Tolkien’s essay “On Fairy-Stories” explained (eucatastrophe, sub-creation); a lecture from a college, library or literary society. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

novella

A work of fiction longer than a short story and shorter than a novel, roughly 17,500 to 40,000 words, usually with one main plot line and a small cast. Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* is a novella.

sub-creation

Tolkien’s word for the making of a Secondary World by a human author, who makes because he is himself made by the Maker.

Secondary World / Secondary Belief

The invented world inside a story, and the reader’s belief in it while reading, which holds as long as the world is consistent with its own laws.

eucatastrophe

Tolkien’s coined word (Greek *eu*, “good,” plus *catastrophe*, “overturning”): the sudden joyous turn at the end of a fairy-story, a grace that cannot be counted on to recur.

Recovery, Escape, Consolation

The three gifts Tolkien says fairy-stories give: seeing ordinary things freshly again, escape from what is false or ugly (not desertion of duty), and the consolation of the happy ending.

CORE IDEAS

A long piece, planned well. In Units 1–3 you wrote and defended a thesis. Now you turn to the longest piece of fiction this course asks of you: a *novella*. You will not write the whole

book in four lessons. You will plan the whole thing, outline it chapter by chapter, and finish one chapter well enough to read aloud to others. The classical order still holds. Before you invent, you read a master, and the master for this unit is a scholar who thought harder than almost anyone about why people tell stories of other worlds: J. R. R. Tolkien.

The lecture. Tolkien gave “On Fairy-Stories” as the Andrew Lang Lecture at the University of St Andrews in Scotland on 8 March 1939, honoring the man who had gathered the colored Fairy Books (*The Blue Fairy Book* and the rest). He revised it for *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* (1947) and printed it again in *Tree and Leaf* (1964). He clears away two mistakes first. A fairy-story is not a story about tiny winged creatures; it is a story that takes place in, or touches, Faërie, which he calls “the Perilous Realm,” where enchantment is real and the reader is in danger as well as delight. And fairy-stories do not belong only to children. They were pushed into the nursery, he argues, the way old furniture is moved to the playroom when grown-ups stop wanting it, not because children made a special claim on them.

Sub-creation. The heart of the essay is Tolkien’s claim that making stories is a human right drawn from our nature. We make because we are made, and made in the image of a Maker (Genesis 1:27). The storyteller is a *sub-creator*: he builds a Secondary World that the reader’s mind can enter. Tolkien did not like Coleridge’s phrase “willing suspension of disbelief.” A good story, he says, does not ask you to put up with nonsense; it wins real belief, Secondary Belief, for as long as you are inside it. That belief breaks the moment the world contradicts itself. For a writer this is very practical: your world must have laws, and you must keep them, especially when breaking them would be convenient.

Recovery, Escape, Consolation. Tolkien names three gifts. *Recovery* is seeing again: after a story in which a stone or a horse or bread or wine has weight and wonder, you see the real ones freshly, as if a dirty window had been washed. *Escape* he defends against the sneer of “escapism.” A prisoner who tries to get home is not the same as a deserter who runs from his post; to long for a world without ugliness, cruelty and death is not cowardice. *Consolation* is the happy ending, which he calls the highest function of the fairy-story.

Eucatastrophe. Tolkien coined a word for that ending: *eucatastrophe*, the good catastrophe, the sudden joyous turn. It does not pretend that sorrow and failure are unreal; the story must make defeat possible, even likely. What it denies is final, universal defeat. The turn comes as grace, not as a reward the hero earned by being clever, and a good one gives the reader a catch of the breath and sometimes tears. Notice the craft lesson hidden here. A turn is only joyous if the darkness before it was real. A rescue that costs nothing and threatens nothing is not eucatastrophe; it is a cheat.

The Epilogue. Tolkien ends with his boldest claim. The Gospels, he says, contain a story with all the marks of a fairy-story, and that story has entered history. The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of man’s history, and the Resurrection is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation. The joy we feel at a good turn in a tale is a small echo of the joy of the true story. This does not mean your novella must preach. It means the shape of a story, loss and then unlooked-for rescue, is not a trick; it tells the truth about the world God made.

What you will do with it. Your novella need not have elves or dragons. It may be a Secondary World, our world with one door into Faërie, or a historical tale with no magic at all, as long as it has a real danger and a real turn. Today you decide three things: the world and its laws, the person who must cross it, and the turn you are writing toward. Knowing the end before you begin is how Tolkien, Stevenson and Dickens all worked, and it is the subject of Lesson 4.2.

The model. *J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories" (Andrew Lang Lecture, 1939; published 1947; in *Tree and Leaf*, 1964). In copyright: summarized for this course, not quoted.*

Tolkien begins by asking what fairy-stories are, where they come from, and what use they are. He answers the first question by saying a fairy-story is defined not by fairies but by Faërie, a perilous realm of enchantment that a mortal may enter. To the second he answers that the origin of such stories is less important than the human gift of making them: the mind that can join *green* to *grass* can also imagine green sun, and the writer who makes that image believable has become a sub-creator. He argues that children are not the special audience of fairy-stories; the stories were left in the nursery when grown-ups lost interest. He then names the gifts of Fantasy: Recovery, the regaining of a clear view of ordinary things; Escape, which he defends as the prisoner's longing for home rather than the deserter's flight; and Consolation, the happy ending. For the sudden joyous turn of that ending he coins the word eucatastrophe, which does not deny sorrow and failure but denies universal final defeat. In his Epilogue he says the Gospel contains a fairy-story that is also true history: the Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of human history, and the Resurrection is the eucatastrophe of the Incarnation. The joy of a good story's turn, he suggests, is a far-off gleam of that joy.

PICTURE STUDY



The Knight at the Crossroads, Viktor Vasnetsov, 1882 · Oil on canvas · State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg
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Vasnetsov painted scenes from Russian folk tales and epic songs (*byliny*). In the old tales a hero comes to a stone at a crossroads carved with warnings: take one road and lose your horse, take another and lose your life. Vasnetsov shows the moment before the choice. The knight has stopped, his spear lowered, reading the stone in the last light. Nothing has happened yet, and everything is about to. That is the Perilous Realm Tolkien describes: a place where the danger is real and the reader leans forward.

Look closely

- Find the inscription on the stone. Why does the painter let you see it is writing without letting you read it easily?
- Look at the horse's head and the knight's posture. Is he afraid, weary, or deciding?
- Find the signs that others came this way before. What do they tell you about the stakes?

Talk about it

1. Write the three warnings you would carve on the stone for the hero of your own novella. Each should name a cost.
2. Tolkien says a eucatastrophe needs real danger first. What in this painting makes the danger real without showing any violence?

WRITING PROJECT: THE NOVELLA PREMISE AND WORLD LAWS

This is the foundation for the whole unit. You will build on it in 4.2 (the outline), 4.3 (the chapter) and 4.4 (the workshop). Keep everything in one folder or notebook section labeled “Novella.”

Your novella may be fantasy, our world touched by Faërie, or a historical or realistic story. Whatever its kind, it needs a real danger and a real turn.

You will need

- Writing notebook and a folder for the unit
- A KJV Bible
- Optional: Tolkien’s essay in *Tree and Leaf* or *The Tolkien Reader* from the library

Steps

1. Write a one-sentence premise: a person, in a place, wants something, but something stands in the way. (Example shape: “A ___ in ___ must ___ before ___, but ___.”)
2. List five laws of your world (magic, geography, customs, technology, or the hard facts of a real historical setting). Beside each, write what it costs or forbids. A law with no cost is a loophole.
3. Describe your main character in one paragraph: what he or she wants, fears and owes to someone else.
4. Write your turn in three sentences: the darkest point, the unlooked-for rescue, and why it is grace and not a trick. Check that nothing in it breaks a law from step 2.
5. Write a 250–350-word Recovery scene: one ordinary thing in your world (bread, a well, a door, a horse) seen so freshly that a reader would look at the real one differently.
6. Read your premise and turn aloud to a parent and ask: “Does the rescue feel earned by the danger before it?”

Check your work

- My premise names a person, a place, a want and an obstacle in one sentence.
- Every world law has a cost, and my turn breaks none of them.
- My Recovery scene uses concrete nouns and strong verbs, not a string of adjectives.
- Participial and appositive phrases sit next to the word they modify (no dangling modifiers).
- Commas set off nonessential appositives and introductory phrases.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Genesis 1:27 and, under it, write one sentence explaining in your own words why Tolkien thought men and women make stories.
2. Make a two-column list: five stories with an earned joyous turn, and five endings you felt were cheats. Beside each, name what made the difference.

3. Imitate Tolkien's "green sun" idea: write three short phrases that join an ordinary noun to an unexpected quality, then choose one and write a sentence that makes it believable.

History note. Tolkien delivered "On Fairy-Stories" at St Andrews on 8 March 1939, while he was writing the early chapters of the sequel to *The Hobbit* that became *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–1955). Many readers see the lecture as the theory behind that book. It first appeared in print in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* (1947), a memorial volume edited by C. S. Lewis.

 **Style Clinic. Phrases that build a world while the story moves** (Grammar Level 3, Unit 17). Beginners stop the story to explain the world: "The Fen was a swamp. It was dangerous. Nobody went there." Instead, fold the facts into phrases attached to action. An *appositive* renames a noun: "Maren crossed the Fen, a swamp no ferryman would enter after dark." A *participial phrase* describes a noun with a verb form: "Testing each tussock with her staff, she crossed." Keep the participial phrase beside the noun it describes. "Testing each tussock, the mist rose around her" says the mist was testing tussocks; that is a dangling modifier. Fix: "Testing each tussock, she watched the mist rise around her." Use commas around nonessential appositives.

For families. Tolkien's essay is still in copyright, so this lesson summarizes it and quotes only a short phrase. If your library has *Tree and Leaf*, *The Tolkien Reader* or the expanded edition *Tolkien On Fairy-stories* (ed. Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson, 2008), a senior can read the whole essay in two sittings; the Epilogue is short and worth reading aloud together. The novella project allows fantasy or realistic fiction; either is fine. Vasnetsov's painting shows a few scattered bones and a skull in the grass, as in the folk tale; there is no blood or violence.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's planned ending: "Just as the soldiers break down the door, Tam remembers that he has had the Ring of Unmaking in his pocket all along. He puts it on and the army vanishes." Is this a eucatastrophe or a cheat? Revise the plan.

1. Test against the world laws: the ring was never mentioned, has no cost, and solves everything. It breaks Secondary Belief.
2. Test against Tolkien: a eucatastrophe is unlooked-for by the hero, but it must not feel arbitrary to the reader. The ground must be laid earlier.
3. Revise by planting the rescue early, giving it a cost, and making it come as grace rather than as the hero's trick.

Answer: Revised plan: In Chapter 2 Tam shares his last bread with an old ferryman who says he owes him a crossing. In the last chapter the soldiers break the door, Tam is caught, and all seems lost; then the ferryman, who has rowed all night against the flood to keep his word, comes for the prisoners at the water gate. The rescue was planted, cost the ferryman dearly, and was not Tam's doing. That is a turn, not a trick.

Example 2. Revise this world-building info-dump into a sentence or two that keeps the story moving: "Hollin was a mining town. The mines were very deep. The miners carried lamps of glowstone. Glowstone went dark if a lie was spoken near it."

1. Find the one fact that matters for the plot: glowstone goes dark at a lie.
2. Attach the other facts as phrases to a character doing something.
3. End on the law in action, so the reader learns it by watching it work.

Answer: Sample: Halfway down the deepest shaft in Hollin, her glowstone lamp swinging from her belt, Bet heard the foreman say the lower tunnel was safe, and the lamp went dark.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where and when did Tolkien first give "On Fairy-Stories"?
2. **EASY** According to Tolkien, what defines a fairy-story, if not fairies?
3. **EASY** Define eucatastrophe in one sentence.
4. **EASY** Name Tolkien's three gifts of fairy-stories.
5. **MEDIUM** Tolkien rejects Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief." What does he put in its place, and why does it matter to a writer?
6. **MEDIUM** Explain Tolkien's distinction between the prisoner and the deserter in one or two sentences.
7. **CHALLENGE** In the Epilogue, what are the two eucatastrophes Tolkien names, and what larger claim do they support?

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT/SAT-style): “Some say stories of other worlds are mere escape from real life. Others say they help us see real life more clearly.” Write a short argumentative essay taking a position, with at least two examples from literature or history.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Inventing a world with no costs, so that magic or luck can solve any problem and the ending feels cheap.
- Opening with pages of history and geography before anything happens. Let the reader learn the world by watching it work.
- Treating a happy ending as weakness. Tolkien’s point is that the turn is powerful only when the danger before it was real.
- Writing a premise with no obstacle: a person who wants something and simply gets it is not yet a story.

Make it a game · The Crossroads Stone. One player names a hero and a goal. Each other player in turn carves a warning on the crossroads stone: a road and its cost (“Go left and keep your gold, but lose your name”). The hero’s player must choose a road and tell, in three sentences, how the story turns. Score a point for any turn the group agrees is earned and breaks no warning.

Scripture. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27, KJV)

Tolkien grounds sub-creation here: we make stories because we are made in the image of the Maker.

Practice: answers

1. As the Andrew Lang Lecture at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, on 8 March 1939.
2. Faërie, the Perilous Realm: the story takes place in or touches a realm of real enchantment.
3. The sudden joyous turn at the end of a story, a good overturning that denies final defeat without denying sorrow.
4. Recovery, Escape and Consolation.
5. Secondary Belief: real belief in the story’s world while inside it. It means the writer must keep the world consistent; a broken law breaks the spell.
6. A prisoner who escapes toward home does a good thing; a deserter who abandons his duty does a shameful thing. Fairy-stories offer the first kind of escape, from what is false and ugly, not the second.
7. The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of human history, and the Resurrection is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation. They support his claim that the Gospel is a true story with the shape of a fairy-story, so the joy of a happy ending echoes real joy.
8. Sample thesis and plan: “Stories of other worlds do not take us away from real life so much as return us to it with clearer eyes.” Body 1: Recovery: after *A Christmas Carol*, an ordinary Christmas dinner looks like a gift, not a habit. Body 2: Escape rightly understood: Tolkien’s

prisoner and deserter; Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, written in Bedford jail, sent readers back to their own duties. Concession: some fantasy is idle; but abuse does not take away use. Conclusion: the best invented worlds teach us to love the real one.

4.2 OUTLINING A LONGER WORK: FROM MAP TO CHAPTER LIST 🍷

OBJECTIVES

- Reverse-outline a finished novella (Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*) to see how its parts carry the whole.
- Use Aristotle’s beginning, middle and end, with reversal and recognition, to shape a plot of five to ten chapters.
- Write a planning packet for your novella: a one-paragraph synopsis, a cast list, a map or setting sketch, and a chapter list with one sentence per chapter.

Warm-up. Stevenson began *Treasure Island* with a map. Take two minutes and sketch the main place of your novella: a house, a valley, a town, a ship. Mark three spots where something important will happen and give each a name.

Video slot. Video coming. How novelists outline (plot structure, Freytag’s pyramid, Aristotle’s Poetics) from a university writing center or library. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

synopsis

A summary of the whole plot, beginning to end, including the ending. A one-paragraph synopsis is the backbone of an outline.

chapter list

A numbered list with one sentence for each chapter, saying what changes in it. Stevenson called his “a list of chapters.”

reversal (peripeteia)

Aristotle’s term for a change of fortune to its opposite, as when a plan to escape leads straight into the enemy’s camp.

recognition (anagnorisis)

Aristotle’s term for a change from ignorance to knowledge, when a character learns who someone really is or what has really happened.

reverse outline

An outline made from a finished work, to see its plan. It is Franklin’s method applied to fiction: outline the master, then build your own.

CORE IDEAS

Counting the cost. A short story can sometimes be written in a single rush. A novella cannot. At twenty or thirty thousand words, a story wanders, stalls or contradicts itself

unless the writer knows where it is going. Our Lord asked which of us would build a tower without first sitting down to count the cost (Luke 14:28). The outline is that sitting down. It is not a cage; writers change their outlines as they go. But a builder who changes the plan still began with one.

Stevenson's map. In "My First Book," written for *The Idler* in 1894, Stevenson tells how *Treasure Island* began. On a rainy holiday in Braemar, Scotland, in 1881, he drew a map of an island to amuse his stepson, and as he looked at it the characters seemed to walk among its woods. The next step is the one beginners skip: he sat down and wrote out a list of chapters. He also admits how often he had done the same thing before and gone no further. The list is necessary, but it is not enough; it must be followed by daily work, which is the subject of 4.3.

Aristotle's shape. In the *Poetics* Aristotle says a plot must be a whole, with a beginning (which needs nothing before it), a middle (which follows from the beginning and leads to the end) and an end (which follows from what came before and needs nothing after). The best plots, he says, turn on a *reversal*, a change of fortune to its opposite, and a *recognition*, a change from ignorance to knowledge, ideally at the same moment. In 1863 the German critic Gustav Freytag drew the shape of a five-act play as a pyramid: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, catastrophe or resolution. Your novella will be smaller than a five-act tragedy, but the shape helps. Tolkien's eucatastrophe (4.1) is a reversal from near-defeat to unlooked-for joy.

Reverse-outline the master. Before outlining your own book, outline one that works. Dickens divided *A Christmas Carol* (1843) into five "staves," the old word for verses of a song. Stave One: Marley's ghost warns a miser. Stave Two: the Ghost of Christmas Past shows him what he lost. Stave Three: the Ghost of Christmas Present shows him what he is missing now. Stave Four: the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows him where his road ends. Stave Five: he wakes on Christmas morning and keeps his promise. Notice that each stave has its own small beginning, middle and end, and that each one changes Scrooge a little more. The recognition (the name on the gravestone) and the reversal (the miser becomes a giver) come together.

The planning packet. Build your outline from four documents. First, a *one-paragraph synopsis*, ending included; if you cannot say how it ends, you are not ready to write. Second, a *cast list*: no more than five or six important characters, each with a want and a secret. Third, a *map or setting sketch*, Stevenson's way, because places generate scenes. Fourth, a *chapter list*: five to ten chapters, each one sentence long, each naming what changes. A chapter in which nothing changes is a chapter to cut or combine.

What a chapter must do. Every chapter is a small story with its own question. A character wants something in this chapter, meets something in the way, and ends in a different place than he began: more danger, a new fact, a choice made. End most chapters on a turn or an open question, as Dickens ends his first stave with the first of three spirits promised for the next night. Mark on your list which chapter holds the darkest point and which holds the turn.

Then choose the one chapter you will draft in 4.3. It need not be Chapter 1; many students write best when they draft the chapter they can already see most clearly.

The model. Robert Louis Stevenson, *"My First Book: Treasure Island" (1894), in Essays in the Art of Writing (1905), Project Gutenberg #492*

On one of these occasions, I made the map of an island; it was elaborately and (I thought) beautifully coloured; the shape of it took my fancy beyond expression; it contained harbours that pleased me like sonnets; and with the unconsciousness of the predestined, I ticketed my performance 'Treasure Island.' I am told there are people who do not care for maps, and find it hard to believe. The names, the shapes of the woodlands, the courses of the roads and rivers, the prehistoric footsteps of man still distinctly traceable up hill and down dale, the mills and the ruins, the ponds and the ferries, perhaps the *Standing Stone* or the *Druidic Circle* on the heath; here is an inexhaustible fund of interest for any man with eyes to see or twopence-worth of imagination to understand with! No child but must remember laying his head in the grass, staring into the infinitesimal forest and seeing it grow populous with fairy armies.

Somewhat in this way, as I paused upon my map of 'Treasure Island,' the future character of the book began to appear there visibly among imaginary woods; and their brown faces and bright weapons peeped out upon me from unexpected quarters, as they passed to and fro, fighting and hunting treasure, on these few square inches of a flat projection. The next thing I knew I had some papers before me and was writing out a list of chapters. How often have I done so, and the thing gone no further! But there seemed elements of success about this enterprise. It was to be a story for boys; no need of psychology or fine writing; and I had a boy at hand to be a touchstone

PICTURE STUDY



The Voyage of Life: Youth, Thomas Cole, 1842 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Thomas Cole planned *The Voyage of Life* as one story told in four paintings: Childhood, Youth, Manhood and Old Age. A traveler rides a boat down the river of life, watched over by a guardian angel. Cole painted the first set in 1840 (now in Utica, New York) and this second set in Rome in 1842. Because he planned all four at once, every picture prepares the next. In *Youth*, the young man has taken the tiller himself and steers toward a castle in the air. He does not see what the viewer sees: the river turns away from the castle toward rapids. That is outlining in paint. The artist knows the end, and the middle points to it.

Look closely

- Follow the river with your eye. Where does it really go, and where does the young man think it goes?
- Find the angel. Where is she, and what is she doing as he sails on?
- Find the figurehead on the boat. What does the boat carry from the first painting into this one?

Talk about it

1. Cole's four paintings are like four chapters. Write a one-sentence "chapter summary" for *Youth* that names what changes in it.
2. How does Cole use what the viewer knows and the traveler does not? Plan one place in your novella where the reader knows more than the hero.

WRITING PROJECT: THE NOVELLA PLANNING PACKET

Turn your 4.1 premise into a full plan. This packet will be handed in with your chapter at the end of the unit, so make it neat enough for a reader.

You will need

- Your 4.1 premise, world laws and turn
- Writing notebook, plain paper for a map, colored pencils
- *A Christmas Carol* (Project Gutenberg #46) for the reverse outline

Steps

1. Reverse-outline *A Christmas Carol*: one sentence per stave, naming what changes in Scrooge. Mark the recognition and the reversal.
2. Draw your map or setting sketch, Stevenson's way. Label at least five places and note what happens at each.
3. Write your cast list: five or six characters, each with a want, a fear, and one thing the others do not know.
4. Write a one-paragraph synopsis (150–250 words), beginning to end, including the darkest point and the turn.
5. Write your chapter list: five to ten numbered chapters, one sentence each, in parallel form. After each, note in brackets what changes: [new danger], [new fact], [choice made], [turn].
6. Star the chapter you will draft in 4.3 and write three sentences on what it must accomplish for the whole book.
7. Ask a parent to read only the chapter list and tell you the story back. Where they stumble, your plan has a gap.

Check your work

- My synopsis tells the ending; it does not stop at a cliffhanger.
- Every chapter on my list names a change; none is only description or travel.
- The darkest point and the turn are marked, and the turn breaks none of my world laws.
- My chapter sentences are parallel in form (all begin with a subject and active verb, or all with a participle).
- Character and place names are capitalized and spelled the same way every time.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy by hand the last four sentences of the Stevenson passage, from "The next thing I knew" to "touchstone." Underline the sentence that is a warning.
2. Imitate Stevenson's long sentence of map features ("The names, the shapes of the woodlands...") with a list of seven features from your own map, ending with an exclamation about what they promise.

3. Name your “touchstone”: the one real reader you are writing for (a brother, a grandmother, a friend), and list three things that reader would not forgive in a story.

History note. Stevenson began *Treasure Island* at Braemar in the late summer of 1881 for his thirteen-year-old stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, reading each chapter aloud to the family as it was written. It ran as a serial in the boys’ paper *Young Folks* in 1881–1882 under the pen name “Captain George North” and came out as a book in 1883. “My First Book” appeared in *The Idler* in August 1894, a few months before his death in Samoa.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism in the chapter list** (Grammar Level 3, Unit 24, usage and style). Items in a list should share a grammatical form. Unparallel: “1. Mara finds the letter. 2. The journey to the coast. 3. Meeting the smuggler, who lies.” Parallel: “1. Mara finds the letter. 2. Mara travels to the coast. 3. The smuggler lies to her.” Each item is now a clause with a subject and an active verb, which forces you to say what *happens*. A noun phrase like “The journey to the coast” hides the fact that nothing changes. Parallelism here is not just neatness; it is a test of plot.

For families. Some students resist outlining because it feels like it spoils the fun of discovery. Let them discover inside the chapters; the outline only fixes the beginning, the end and the main turns. The “touchstone” idea is Stevenson’s: he wrote for one boy at hand. A parent or sibling who agrees to be the touchstone reader for this unit is a great help. Aristotle’s *Poetics* is available free in S. H. Butcher’s translation on Project Gutenberg (#1974) if a student wants to read chapters 7–11 on plot.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student’s chapter list: “1. Introduction to the village of Ardmore. 2. Description of the castle. 3. Owen meets the old woman. 4. More about the castle’s history. 5. Owen fights the guards and wins. 6. The end.” Diagnose and revise.

1. Chapters 1, 2 and 4 are description; nothing changes in them. Chapter 6 is not a chapter at all.
2. There is no darkest point before the win, so the win cannot be a turn.
3. Revise each item into a clause naming a change, merge the description into scenes, and add a reversal and a recognition.

Answer: 1. Owen’s brother is taken to Ardmore Castle for unpaid tax. [new danger] 2. Owen bargains with an old woman, who gives him a key in exchange for a promise. [choice made] 3. Owen enters the castle and finds the brother already gone. [reversal] 4. Owen is caught and learns the old woman is the steward’s mother. [recognition] 5. Owen keeps his promise to her at great cost, and she frees both brothers. [turn]

Example 2. Turn this vague synopsis into one that would guide drafting: “A girl goes on a journey and learns a lot about herself and courage, and in the end things work out.”

1. Name the person, place, want and obstacle (the premise from 4.1).
2. State the darkest point concretely.
3. State the ending concretely, and how it comes.

Answer: Sample: In the winter of 1777, twelve-year-old Hannah Reed must carry a message through the British lines to the Continental camp at Valley Forge, because her father is sick. She is stopped, searched and lets the message be found, believing she has failed. At the camp she learns the paper was a decoy; the real message was the description her captor gave her of his own regiment, which she has memorized. Her honest account, not her cleverness, saves the camp from surprise.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What did Stevenson do right after he saw his characters “among imaginary woods”?
2. **EASY** What does Aristotle say a beginning, middle and end are?
3. **EASY** Define reversal and recognition.
4. **EASY** How many parts does *A Christmas Carol* have, and what did Dickens call them?
5. **MEDIUM** Stevenson writes, “How often have I done so, and the thing gone no further!” What warning does this give a student writer?
6. **MEDIUM** Make this chapter list parallel: “1. Arrival at the inn. 2. The stranger warns Jim. 3. Jim finding the chest.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Where in *A Christmas Carol* do recognition and reversal come together? Explain in two sentences.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a one-sentence chapter summary for each of Cole’s four *Voyage of Life* paintings, as if they were a four-chapter novella.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Outlining only the beginning and hoping the ending will appear. Write the ending into the synopsis now.
- Filling chapters with description, travel or backstory in which nothing changes.
- Too many characters. A novella has room for a handful; combine minor ones.
- Treating the outline as law. Revise it when the drafting shows a better road, but write the change down.

Make it a game · Three-Line Classic. A player names a well-known story (a fairy tale, a Bible narrative, a classic novel). The next player must tell it in exactly three sentences: beginning, turn, end. The group votes whether the turn is a true reversal. Then reverse it: give a three-sentence plot and let the others guess the story.

Scripture. “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?” (Luke 14:28, KJV)

An outline is the writer’s sitting down first: it shows whether the plan will carry to the end.

Practice: answers

1. He wrote out a list of chapters.
2. A beginning needs nothing before it; a middle follows from the beginning and leads to the end; an end follows from what came before and needs nothing after.
3. Reversal: a change of fortune to its opposite. Recognition: a change from ignorance to knowledge.
4. Five, called staves.
5. A plan alone does not make a book; many outlines are abandoned. The plan must be followed by steady work.
6. 1. Jim arrives at the inn. 2. A stranger warns Jim. 3. Jim finds the chest.
7. In Stave Four, when Scrooge sees his own name on the neglected grave, he recognizes that the unmourned dead man is himself; at that moment his fortune turns, as he begs to be allowed to change. Stave Five shows the reversal worked out in deeds.
8. Sample: 1. A child sets out on the river of life under an angel’s care. 2. A young man takes the tiller and steers for a castle in the air. 3. A grown man, his tiller broken, prays as his boat plunges through the rapids. 4. An old man, his voyage ended, is led by the angel toward the light.

4.3 DRAFTING THE CHAPTER: VOICE, SCENE AND THE FIRST PAGE

OBJECTIVES

- Analyze how Dickens’s first page of *A Christmas Carol* sets voice, character and the one fact the story depends on.
- Tell scene from summary and build a chapter mostly from scenes, each with a want, an obstacle and a change.
- Draft one complete chapter of your novella (2,500–4,000 words) on a steady daily quota.

Warm-up. Write the first sentence of your chapter three different ways in five minutes: once as a plain fact, once as a line of dialogue, once as a strange image. Read them aloud. Which one makes you want to read the second sentence?

Video slot. Video coming. Charles Dickens and the writing of *A Christmas Carol* (a museum or library talk, e.g., the Charles Dickens Museum, London). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

scene

Story told moment by moment, with action and often dialogue, so the reader seems to be present. Time in the story passes about as fast as reading time.

summary

Story told in compressed form, covering hours or years in a few sentences. It connects scenes.

point of view

The position from which the story is told: first person (“I”), third person limited (one character’s view), or an omniscient storyteller who knows all and may comment, as Dickens does.

voice

The sound of the teller: word choice, rhythm and attitude. Dickens’s narrator is chatty, ironic and warm.

quota

A fixed amount of new writing each session (for example, 500 words), kept until the draft is done.

CORE IDEAS

Drafting is its own work. Planning (4.2) decides where the story goes; revising (4.4) makes it better. Drafting is the middle labor of getting it down, and it needs a different habit.

Quintilian advised young orators to write carefully rather than fast at first, because speed grows out of good habits and not the other way round. But careful is not the same as stalled. Set a daily quota, perhaps 500 words, and keep it. Do not rewrite yesterday's pages until the chapter is finished. A chapter of 3,000 words is six sessions of 500, and six sessions will come to an end. Stevenson's warning still stands: many outlines go no further. Yours will, if you keep the quota.

The first page. Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in about six weeks in the autumn of 1843, and its first sentence states the one fact the whole book hangs on: Marley was dead. A ghost story is nothing unless the reader is sure the man is dead, so Dickens nails it down with a register, four signatures, a business name and a proverb. Your first page must do the same work. Ask: what must my reader believe, know or fear for this chapter to matter? Put that early, and make it concrete. A fact with a signature on it beats a paragraph of mood.

Voice and point of view. Read the model aloud. The narrator interrupts himself ("Mind!"), jokes about door-nails and coffin-nails, and pretends not to know how many years Scrooge and Marley were partners. He is a storyteller by the fire, and you like him at once. That is voice. Choose yours before you draft. Stevenson chose first person for *Treasure Island*: Jim Hawkins tells his own story, so the reader knows only what Jim knows. Third person limited follows one character closely. The omniscient storyteller can comment, as Dickens does, but must earn the right by being worth listening to. Whatever you choose, keep it for the whole chapter.

Scene and summary. A scene happens in front of the reader: a place, a time, people speaking and acting, and something at stake. Summary carries the reader across the time between scenes. Most beginners summarize what they should dramatize ("They argued for an hour and Kit finally agreed") and dramatize what they should summarize (every step of a walk to the market). Build your chapter from two to four scenes. In each one, someone wants something, something stands in the way, and the scene ends with something changed. Join them with brief summary.

Character by deed. Look at the model's third paragraph. Dickens does not tell you Scrooge is cold; he tells you that on the very day of his only friend's funeral, Scrooge made a good bargain. A few paragraphs later he does let loose a famous list ("a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!"), but only after the deed has convinced you. Give your characters something to *do* on the first page that reveals them. Let dialogue reveal too: people in conflict talk past each other, avoid things and interrupt. Cut any line in which a character tells another something both already know, only so the reader can hear it.

Ending the chapter. End where something has turned: a decision, a discovery, a danger at the door. Dickens ends his first stave with Scrooge in bed, the first of three spirits promised for when the bell tolls one. Do not tie every thread. Write the last sentence with as much

care as the first; it is the one the reader carries into the next chapter, and in a workshop it is the one your listeners will remember. When the draft is done, set it aside for at least a day before 4.4. You will hear it better fresh.

The model. *Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol (1843), Stave One, "Marley's Ghost," Project Gutenberg #46*

Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend, and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral, and solemnised it with an undoubted bargain.

PICTURE STUDY



The Boyhood of Raleigh, Sir John Everett Millais, 1870 · Oil on canvas · Tate Britain, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Millais painted this picture at Budleigh Salterton on the Devon coast, near where Sir Walter Raleigh grew up, and used his own two sons as models. A sailor home from far voyages sits on the shore with two boys and points out to sea. We cannot hear his story, and we do not see the lands he describes. Everything is in the listeners' faces and in the sailor's arm. Millais understood what Dickens understood: a story is something told to someone, and the teller's first job is to hold the listener.

Look closely

- Follow the sailor's pointing arm. What is at the end of it? Why does the painter leave it empty?
- Compare the two boys. Which one is lost in the story, and how can you tell?
- Find the objects lying on the ground near them. What might they suggest about the sailor's travels?

Talk about it

1. Write the first three sentences of the sailor's story in his own voice, so that a boy would lean in as the one in the painting does.
2. This boy grew up to be an explorer. How does the painting show a beginning that points to an end? Name the first-page fact your own chapter must plant.

WRITING PROJECT: DRAFT ONE CHAPTER

Draft the chapter you starred in 4.2. Aim for 2,500–4,000 words. Do not stop to polish; keep the quota until the chapter is finished, then rest it a day before the workshop.

You will need

- Your planning packet from 4.2 (synopsis, cast, map, chapter list)
- A notebook or computer, and a simple log to record each day's word count
- *A Christmas Carol*, Stave One, for reference

Steps

1. Plan the chapter's scenes on one card: two to four scenes, each with who wants what, what stands in the way, and what has changed by the end.
2. Choose your point of view and write one sentence describing your narrator's voice (for example, "a plain-spoken old miller looking back"). Keep it beside you as you write.
3. Write the first page, planting the one fact the chapter depends on, made concrete, Dickens's way.
4. Draft daily to your quota (400–600 words), logging the count. Do not revise earlier pages until the end.
5. Write the last paragraph with care: end on a turn, a choice or a door opening.
6. Read the whole chapter aloud once, marking (not fixing) any place where you stumble, are bored or are confused. Bring the marked copy to 4.4.

Check your work

- The chapter has two to four real scenes, and each one ends with something changed.
- Point of view and verb tense stay the same throughout.
- Dialogue is punctuated correctly, with a new paragraph for each new speaker.
- No line of dialogue only tells a character what both already know.
- The first page plants the key fact, and the last paragraph turns.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy by hand the first paragraph of the model, then write an imitation that nails down the one fact your own story depends on, using a document, witnesses and a proverb or saying.
2. Imitate Dickens's comic "Mind!" paragraph: let your narrator interrupt himself to quibble with a common saying.
3. Take one summary sentence from your outline ("They argued and Kit agreed") and turn it into a twelve-line scene with dialogue.

History note. Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in October and November 1843, walking the streets of London at night as he composed. Chapman and Hall published it on 19 December 1843, with color plates by John Leech, and the first printing of 6,000 copies

sold out by Christmas Eve. Dickens later read it aloud on public tours, cutting and reshaping the text for listeners, which shows how much he thought of a story as something spoken.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuating dialogue** (Grammar Level 3, Unit 23, punctuation mastery). (1) Commas and periods go inside the closing quotation mark: *"The tide is turning," she said.* (2) A dialogue tag after a quotation takes a lowercase letter unless it is a proper noun: *"Run!" he shouted.* (3) An interrupted sentence resumes in lowercase: *"If you go," said Tom, "take the lantern."* (4) A new speaker means a new paragraph. (5) Use *said* most of the time; it is invisible. Strings of *exclaimed*, *retorted*, *hissed* draw attention from the words. Let the line itself carry the feeling.

For families. This lesson spans a week or more of daily drafting. The two teaching sessions introduce the model and the scene plan; the rest is quota work, 30–45 minutes a day. Resist the urge to correct the draft while it is being written; the workshop in 4.4 is the place for that. The model is from Project Gutenberg #46; the punctuation ("Change," for the Royal Exchange, and the British spelling "solemnised") is Dickens's.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this summary opening into a scene: "Elias had always been afraid of the river. His father had drowned in it when Elias was six. Now he was sixteen and had to cross it to get help for his mother, who was very sick."

1. Find the moment of action: Elias at the river's edge, needing to cross.
2. Plant the backstory in a concrete detail rather than a statement.
3. Give him something to want and something in the way, right now.

Answer: Sample: The ferry rope was still tied to the willow where his father had tied it ten years before, gray now, and stiff with ice. Elias put his hand on it and took it away again. Behind him, through the cabin wall, he could hear his mother coughing. The doctor lived on the other side.

Example 2. Fix this “as you know” dialogue: “As you know, Brother Anselm, our abbey has stood on this hill for three hundred years and the king’s men are coming tomorrow to take the silver.” “Yes, Brother Paul, and as you know, the silver is hidden in the crypt.”

1. Neither monk needs to be told these things; the lines exist only for the reader.
2. Let the facts come through conflict: one wants to act, the other hesitates.
3. Let the reader infer the rest from what they do not say.

Answer: Sample: “They’ll be here by noon,” said Paul. Anselm went on sweeping the chapter-house floor. “Three hundred years,” Paul said, “and you sweep.” “The floor is dirty.” Paul looked down at the flagstone under Anselm’s broom, the one that rang hollow, and said nothing more.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the one fact Dickens nails down on his first page, and why does the story need it?
2. **EASY** Name three pieces of evidence Dickens gives that Marley was dead.
3. **EASY** Define scene and summary.
4. **EASY** What point of view does *Treasure Island* use, and who tells it?
5. **MEDIUM** How does Dickens reveal Scrooge’s character in the third paragraph without calling him a miser?
6. **MEDIUM** Punctuate: if you go said the captain take the lantern
7. **CHALLENGE** Describe the narrator’s voice in the model in three adjectives, and give a line that shows each.
8. **CHALLENGE** You need 3,000 words and have twelve days with two days off. Set a quota and explain how you will protect it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Opening with backstory or weather instead of a person doing something under some pressure.
- Summarizing the key moments (arguments, decisions, discoveries) that should be scenes.
- Shifting point of view or verb tense in the middle of the chapter.
- Rewriting the first page again and again and never reaching the last one.

Make it a game · Dead as a Door-Nail. Each player draws a slip with a “fact” (“The bridge is out,” “The letter was never sent,” “The dog cannot be trusted”). In two minutes, write three sentences that nail the fact down as firmly as Dickens nails down Marley’s death, using evidence, not repetition. Read aloud; the group awards a point for the most convincing and a point for the funniest.

Scripture. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Ecclesiastes 9:10, KJV)

Drafting is daily, wholehearted work; the chapter gets written by doing the day’s quota with all your might.

Practice: answers

1. That Marley was dead. The story is about his ghost, so the reader must be sure he is dead.
2. Three of: the burial register, signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker and the chief mourner; Scrooge’s signature; the proverb “dead as a door-nail.”
3. Scene: story told moment by moment so the reader seems present. Summary: story compressed to cover time between scenes.
4. First person; Jim Hawkins.
5. By a deed: on the very day of his only friend’s funeral he did good business and “solemnised it with an undoubted bargain.”
6. “If you go,” said the captain, “take the lantern.”
7. Sample: chatty (“Mind! I don’t mean to say...”), ironic (“not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event”), playful (“the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile... or the Country’s done for”).
8. Sample: 300 words a day for ten days, with a 500-word cushion on two days; write first thing after breakfast before other schoolwork, log each day’s count, and never reread more than the last paragraph before starting.

4.4 WORKSHOP: READING ALOUD, JUDGING FAIRLY, REVISING WELL

OBJECTIVES

- Explain Pope’s warning that pride blinds judgment, and apply it to both the writer and the critic in a workshop.
- Run or take part in a three-round workshop (what works, questions, suggestions) and give criticism that is specific, truthful and gracious.
- Revise your chapter from the largest level to the smallest and hand in a final chapter, planning packet and revision memo.

Warm-up. Think of the most useful correction anyone ever gave you, in writing, music, sport or work. What made it useful: who said it, how, and when? Write three sentences, then list three things that make criticism useless.

Video slot. Video coming. The Inklings (C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien) and their Oxford reading group, from a college, library or literary society. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

workshop

A meeting in which writers read their work to one another and receive criticism in an agreed order, for the sake of revision.

criticism

Judgment of a work’s strengths and faults by a standard. In the old sense (Pope’s), it means discerning judgment, not fault-finding.

revision

“Seeing again”: changing a draft at every level, from the shape of the story to the single word, not only correcting errors.

revision memo

A short note in which the writer lists the criticism received, what was changed, and what was kept and why.

Inklings

An informal group of Oxford friends, including C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, who read their work aloud to each other for criticism in the 1930s and 1940s.

CORE IDEAS

Iron sharpens iron. No writer sees his own work clearly. You know what you meant, so you read what you meant, not what is on the page. That is why writers have always gathered to

read to each other. In Oxford in the 1930s and 1940s, C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and their friends, who called themselves the Inklings, met on Thursday evenings in Lewis's rooms at Magdalen College. Tolkien read chapters of *The Lord of the Rings* there as he wrote them, and the friends did not always praise. Tolkien later wrote that without Lewis's encouragement he doubted he would ever have finished it. Solomon put it in one line: "Iron sharpeneth iron" (Proverbs 27:17).

Pope on pride. Alexander Pope published *An Essay on Criticism* in 1711, when he was only twenty-two. In the model he names the chief cause of bad judgment: pride, which fills up whatever gaps our real gifts leave. Pride works on both sides of a workshop. The proud writer cannot hear a fault; he explains, defends and argues, and so learns nothing. The proud critic wants to show off his learning and finds faults to display his taste. Pope's remedy is humility put to work: do not trust yourself, but use every friend, and even every foe, to learn your defects. His famous warning follows. A little learning is dangerous, because a shallow critic is quick and sure, while deep study makes a man slower and more sober in judgment.

The three rounds. A good workshop keeps an order so that pride has less room. The writer gives copies a day or two ahead, or reads the chapter aloud (reading aloud is best for fiction; your ear catches what your eye skims). Then the listeners speak in three rounds while the writer stays silent and takes notes. *Round one: what works.* Name a specific line, moment or choice that succeeded, and say why. *Round two: questions.* Where were you confused, bored or unconvinced? Ask as a reader, not a judge: "Why does Kit trust the stranger so quickly?" *Round three: suggestions.* Offer possibilities, not orders: "What if the letter were found in Chapter 1?" At the end the writer may ask questions to understand the criticism, but not to defend the draft, and then says thank you.

Judging fairly. Criticize the work, not the writer. Judge the chapter by what it is trying to do; a ghost story should not be faulted for not being a comedy. Be specific; "I liked it" and "it was confusing" help no one, but "I lost track of who was speaking in the cellar scene" does. Be truthful: flattery is a kind of lie, and Scripture tells us to put away lying and speak truth with our neighbor (Ephesians 4:25). Be gracious: let your speech be "alway with grace, seasoned with salt" (Colossians 4:6). Salt stings a little, but it preserves.

Revise from large to small. After the workshop, sort the notes. Do not fix commas before you know whether the scene will survive. Work in this order. (1) *Story*: does the chapter do its job in the outline, and does it plant what the turn will need? (2) *Scenes*: does each scene have a want, an obstacle and a change? Cut or merge any that do not. (3) *Paragraphs*: is the first page concrete, is the last paragraph a turn? (4) *Sentences*: strong verbs, active voice, phrases in their places. (5) *Proofreading*: spelling, dialogue punctuation, names. You will not take every suggestion. When two readers stumble at the same place, though, something is wrong there, even if neither suggestion is the right fix.

Finishing the course. Your unit ends with a finished chapter, a planning packet that shows the whole novella, and a revision memo. That is a real accomplishment. Many people talk about the book they will write; you have planned one and written part of it well. If you want to finish it, the optional Fiction & Poetry Workshop semester, or a summer of daily quotas,

can carry it to the end. Paul could say at the close of his life that he had finished his course (2 Timothy 4:7). Finishing is a virtue, in writing as in everything else.

The model. *Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism (1711), Part II, Project Gutenberg #7409*

Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.
Whatever nature has in worth denied,
She gives in large recruits of needful pride;
For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find
What wants in blood and spirits, swelled with wind:
Pride where wit fails steps in to our defense,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense.
If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day
Trust not yourself, but your defects to know,
Make use of every friend--and every foe.

A little learning is a dangerous thing
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again

PICTURE STUDY



*The Syndics of the Drapers' Guild (De Staalmeesters), Rembrandt van Rijn, 1662 · Oil on canvas ·
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain*

The men in this picture were the *staalmeesters*, the sampling officials of the Amsterdam cloth-makers' guild. Their job was to judge cloth: to test samples against the guild's standard and decide whether each bolt was good enough to sell. Rembrandt shows them at their table with the sample book open, as if someone has just come in, perhaps a weaver whose cloth they are judging. They are serious but not cruel. They judge by a standard, they judge together, and they look the maker in the eye. That is a workshop.

Look closely

- Find the open book on the table. What do you think is in it, and why is it at the center?
- Find the man who is half rising. What might have made him stand?
- Look at the faces one by one. Do any look harsh? Do any look kind? How does Rembrandt make them look fair?

Talk about it

1. If these five men judged your chapter as they judged cloth, what standard would they hold it to? Write three questions they might ask.
2. The syndics judge as a group, not alone. Using Pope's lines, explain why a group judges better than one proud critic.

WRITING PROJECT: THE WORKSHOP AND THE FINAL CHAPTER

Hold a workshop with at least two readers besides yourself: parents, siblings, a co-op class, or a small online group your parents approve. Then revise and hand in the final package.

You will need

- Your drafted chapter from 4.3, with your read-aloud marks
- Copies for each reader (or plan to read aloud)
- Your planning packet from 4.2
- A workshop note sheet for each reader, with three columns: Works / Questions / Suggestions

Steps

1. Before the workshop, write a one-paragraph "reader's note": what this chapter must accomplish in the novella and one question you want answered.
2. Read your chapter aloud (or circulate it two days ahead). Readers fill in their three columns as they listen.
3. Hold the three rounds: what works, questions, suggestions. Stay silent and take notes. At the end, ask only questions of understanding, and thank your readers.
4. Sort the notes by level (story, scene, paragraph, sentence, proofreading) and mark any place where two readers agreed.
5. Revise from largest to smallest, as in the core ideas. Then read the whole chapter aloud once more.

6. Write a one-page revision memo: three criticisms you acted on and what you changed, and one you did not take and why.
7. Hand in the final chapter, the planning packet and the memo together.

Check your work

- The chapter does the job my outline gives it and plants what the turn will need.
- Every scene has a want, an obstacle and a change.
- I changed weak passive constructions to active voice where the doer matters.
- Dialogue is punctuated correctly, and each new speaker starts a new paragraph.
- Point of view, tense and names are consistent; spelling and punctuation are proofread.
- My revision memo is honest about what I changed and what I kept.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the twelve lines of Pope by hand. Memorize the two lines beginning “Trust not yourself.”
2. After the workshop, copy the single most useful sentence a reader said to you, and write two sentences on why it helped.
3. Imitate Pope’s couplets: write two rhymed couplets of advice to a young critic about how to speak in a workshop.

History note. The Inklings met from the early 1930s into the late 1940s, usually on Thursday evenings in C. S. Lewis’s rooms at Magdalen College, Oxford, with less formal meetings at the Eagle and Child pub. Members read aloud from work in progress. Tolkien read much of *The Lord of the Rings* there in draft, and he later wrote that he owed Lewis an unpayable debt for his encouragement. Rembrandt’s *Syndics* (1662) was one of his last group portraits.

 **Style Clinic. Active and passive voice** (Grammar Level 3, Unit 20, voice and mood). In the active voice the subject acts: *The wolf tore the net*. In the passive the subject receives the action: *The net was torn (by the wolf)*. In fiction the passive often hides the doer and slows the scene: “The door was opened and a shot was heard” leaves the reader asking who. Revise: “Hal opened the door. Somewhere below, a rifle cracked.” Keep the passive when the doer is unknown or rightly hidden (“The letter had been opened”), which can build suspense. In revision, circle every *was* or *were* plus a past participle and ask: does the reader need to know who did it?

For families. A workshop can be as simple as the family at the supper table after the meal. Model the three rounds yourself the first time: begin with specific praise, ask real questions, and offer suggestions as possibilities. Protect the writer from interruptions and protect the readers from being argued with. The Pope text is copied from Project Gutenberg #7409, which prints a few lines without end punctuation; standard editions read “A little learning is a dang’rous thing; / Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:”. The Pierian spring, in Macedonia, was sacred to the Muses in Greek legend, and so

stands for learning. If a student wants to finish the novella, a daily quota over the summer will do it.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn these unhelpful workshop comments into useful ones: (a) “It was really good!” (b) “The middle was boring.” (c) “You should make it a mystery instead.”

1. Make praise specific: name the line or choice and why it worked.
2. Turn a judgment into a reader’s report: where exactly, and what happened in you as a reader.
3. Judge the chapter by its own aim, and offer a possibility, not an order.

Answer: (a) “The moment Elias touches the frozen ferry rope and pulls his hand back told me everything about his father without a word.” (b) “On page 4, during the walk to the mill, I started skimming; nothing was at stake until Ma appears. Could the walk be one sentence of summary?” (c) “Since the chapter’s job is to set up the crossing, what if we learned in this chapter that someone cut the rope? It would add a question without changing the kind of story.”

Example 2. Two readers said the climax of the chapter felt flat. Revise: “The bridge was reached by Hannah at midnight. A voice was heard, and she was told to stop. It was decided by her that she would run.”

1. Find the passive verbs: was reached, was heard, was told, was decided. The doers are hidden.
2. Put Hannah and the sentry in the subject position with strong active verbs.
3. Turn the summary of a decision into a moment the reader watches.

Answer: Sample: Hannah reached the bridge at midnight. “Halt!” A lantern swung up out of the dark, and behind it a red coat. She stood still long enough to count three heartbeats. Then she ran.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** According to Pope, what is the chief cause of bad judgment?
2. **EASY** What remedy does Pope give in the line beginning “Trust not yourself”?
3. **EASY** Name the three rounds of a workshop in order.
4. **EASY** Who were the Inklings, and what did they do?
5. **MEDIUM** Why does Pope say “a little learning is a dangerous thing”? Apply it to a workshop critic.
6. **MEDIUM** Change to active voice: “The map was drawn by Stevenson, and a list of chapters was written.”

7. **CHALLENGE** Why should the writer stay silent during the three rounds? Give two reasons.
8. **CHALLENGE** Using Ephesians 4:25 and Colossians 4:6, write a two-sentence rule for workshop criticism.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Defending the draft during the workshop instead of listening and taking notes.
- Giving vague praise or vague complaint instead of naming the exact place and effect.
- Proofreading first and leaving the larger problems of story and scene untouched.
- Taking every suggestion, so the chapter becomes a committee's story instead of yours.

Make it a game · The Sample Book. Like Rembrandt's syndics judging cloth, each player brings one paragraph (from any draft) without a name on it. The paragraphs are shuffled and read aloud. For each one, the group must give one specific "works," one question and one suggestion within two minutes. A point goes to every comment the writer, revealed at the end, agrees was specific and fair.

Scripture. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."
(Proverbs 27:17, KJV)

A workshop is friends sharpening one another; the friction is for the edge, not for the wound.

Practice: answers

1. Pride, "the never-failing vice of fools."
2. Do not trust your own judgment of yourself; to learn your defects, use every friend and every foe.
3. What works, questions, suggestions.
4. An informal group of Oxford friends, including C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, who read their work aloud to each other for criticism.
5. Shallow learning makes a man confident without making him wise; deeper study sobers him. A critic who knows one rule may condemn a chapter quickly, while a more thoughtful reader judges it by its aims.
6. Stevenson drew the map and wrote a list of chapters.
7. Sample: (1) Defending the draft shows pride and stops the writer from hearing what readers actually experienced. (2) The readers will not have the writer beside them when the book is published, so their unexplained reactions are the true test.
8. Sample: Tell the writer the truth about the page, because flattery is a kind of lie and helps no one. Say it with grace, specific and kind, seasoned with salt that preserves rather than wounds.

UNIT 4 REVIEW

Closed book except for the student's own planning packet. Short answers are scored for accuracy; written items are scored with the unit checklists. Allow about 60 minutes.

1. (4 pts) Define eucatastrophe and explain why it requires real danger first.
2. (3 pts) What is sub-creation, and on what does Tolkien ground the human right to make stories?
3. (3 pts) Name and briefly explain Recovery, Escape and Consolation.
4. (2 pts) What two eucatastrophes does Tolkien name in his Epilogue?
5. (4 pts) Define reversal and recognition, and give an example of each from *A Christmas Carol*.
6. (3 pts) Make this chapter list parallel: "1. Arrival at the mill. 2. Ruth hears the warning. 3. The flood comes and destroying the bridge."
7. (3 pts) Distinguish scene from summary, and say which should carry a character's key decision.
8. (2 pts) Punctuate: we must cross tonight said the ferryman or not at all
9. (2 pts) Change to active voice: "The warning was ignored by the captain, and the ship was lost."
10. (4 pts) Quote or paraphrase Pope's remedy for pride in judgment, and name the three rounds of a workshop.
11. (10 pts) Write the first paragraph (100–150 words) of a new chapter that plants one fact the story depends on, Dickens's way, with concrete evidence and a consistent voice.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE NOVELLA CHAPTER

Place in your senior portfolio the revised chapter (2,500–4,000 words) with a title page, followed by your planning packet (synopsis, cast list, map and chapter list) and your one-page revision memo.

- **Design of the whole:** The synopsis and chapter list show a complete plot with a real danger, a darkest point and an earned turn that breaks none of the world's laws.
- **Craft of the chapter:** Built from scenes, each with a want, an obstacle and a change; a first page that plants what matters; a last paragraph that turns.
- **Voice and style:** Consistent point of view and tense, distinct dialogue, strong verbs and active voice, phrases placed beside what they modify.
- **Revision and mechanics:** The memo shows thoughtful use of workshop criticism; dialogue punctuation, spelling and names are clean.

Answer key

1. The sudden joyous turn at the end of a story, a good overturning that denies final defeat. Without real danger the turn costs nothing and feels like a cheat.

2. The making of a Secondary World by a human author; he grounds it in our being made in the image of the Maker.
3. Recovery: seeing ordinary things freshly. Escape: the prisoner's flight toward home, not the deserter's flight from duty. Consolation: the happy ending.
4. The Birth of Christ (of human history) and the Resurrection (of the story of the Incarnation).
5. Reversal: change of fortune to its opposite (the miser becomes generous). Recognition: ignorance to knowledge (Scrooge sees his own name on the grave).
6. 1. Ruth arrives at the mill. 2. Ruth hears the warning. 3. The flood destroys the bridge.
7. Scene is moment by moment; summary compresses time. A key decision should be a scene.
8. "We must cross tonight," said the ferryman, "or not at all."
9. Sample: The captain ignored the warning, and the reef took the ship.
10. "Trust not yourself, but your defects to know, / Make use of every friend--and every foe." Rounds: what works, questions, suggestions.
11. Scored with the 4.3 checklist: a concrete fact planted early, consistent point of view and tense, strong verbs, correct punctuation.

POETRY: A CHAPBOOK

In this creative-writing unit you gather the poems you have written since ninth grade and make them into a real book. You will study George Herbert's *The Temple* (1633), the great example in English of a book of short poems built as one whole; learn from the book of Psalms how to open, order and close a collection; follow William Morris's principles of paper, type, spacing and page to lay out your poems; and finally print, sew, dedicate and read aloud a hand-bound chapbook of twelve to twenty poems.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has a body of finished poems from Grades 9–11 (at least fifteen), or is ready to write several new ones during the unit.
- Can use a word processor to set margins, typefaces and page numbers.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain how *The Temple* is built as one book, from “The Church-porch” to “The Church Militant.”
- ☐ I can choose a governing image and order a collection with a deliberate opening, arc and close.
- ☐ I can lay out poems with mirrored margins, one readable typeface, kept indentation and sound page breaks.
- ☐ I can impose, print, fold and bind a booklet whose page count is a multiple of four.
- ☐ I can write a dedication and afterword that serve the reader, and read my poems aloud with care.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **George Herbert, *The Temple* (Christian Classics Ethereal Library)** (<https://www.ccel.org/h/herbert/temple/>): The full 1633 collection, free online, poem by poem in book order.
- **Izaak Walton, *Lives*, Volume 2, including the Life of George Herbert (Project Gutenberg #13139)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13139>): Walton's 1670 life tells how Herbert sent his poems to Nicholas Ferrar.
- **Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (Project Gutenberg #29433)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/29433>): Source of the 5.1 model, Emerson's quotation of Herbert's “Man.”
- **William Morris, *The Art and Craft of Printing* (Project Gutenberg #31596)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/31596>): Morris's Note on the Kelmscott Press and his lecture “The Ideal Book.”
- ***The Oxford Book of English Verse, 1250–1900* (Project Gutenberg #66619)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/66619>): A selection of Herbert's poems among the poets of his century, for comparison and copywork.

5.1 HERBERT'S THE TEMPLE AS A BOOK ✍️ ★

OBJECTIVES

- Describe how George Herbert's *The Temple* (1633) is built as one book in three parts, not as a pile of separate poems.
- Read Herbert's "Man" as Emerson quoted it, and explain what is lost when a poem's last stanzas are cut away.
- Gather twelve to twenty of your own poems and write a one-page plan for a chapbook with a governing image.

Warm-up. Walk through your church building in your mind, from the parking lot to the front. List every threshold, room and object you pass. If you had to write one poem for each, which would come first, and which would have to come last?

Video slot. Video coming. George Herbert, Bemerton and *The Temple* (a cathedral, college or literary-society lecture); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

chapbook

A small, inexpensive booklet. Chapmen once sold such booklets door to door; today the word usually means a short collection of about fifteen to thirty poems, often hand-bound.

sequence

A group of poems meant to be read in order, so that each poem gains meaning from the ones around it.

governing image

One picture or idea that holds a whole collection together, as the church building holds *The Temple* together.

frame poem

A poem placed at the door or the end of a book to tell the reader how to enter or how to leave it, such as Herbert's "Superliminare" at the threshold of "The Church."

posthumous

Published after the author's death. *The Temple* was printed at Cambridge in 1633, a few months after Herbert died.

CORE IDEAS

From poems to a book. All through high school you have written single poems: a sonnet, an ode, a blank-verse meditation. A single poem is a room. A book of poems is a house, and a house is more than a heap of rooms. Its rooms are placed: a door, a hall, rooms that open into one another, a place to rest at the end. This unit asks you to build such a house in

miniature: a chapbook of your own poems, bound by hand. We begin with the finest example in English of a book of short poems that is truly one book: George Herbert's *The Temple*.

The man and the manuscript. George Herbert (1593–1633) was a brilliant Cambridge scholar and the university's Public Orator, a man many expected to rise at court. Instead he was ordained and spent his last years as the country parson of Bemerton, a small parish near Salisbury. When he knew he was dying, he sent his poems to his friend Nicholas Ferrar, who led a household of prayer at Little Gidding. Izaak Walton, in his *Life of Herbert* (1670), reports Herbert's message: Ferrar would find in the book "a picture of the many spiritual conflicts" between God and his soul, and he should print it if it might help "any dejected poor soul," and otherwise burn it. Ferrar printed it. Herbert never held the finished book, yet he had shaped it with great care, and an earlier manuscript shows him adding, cutting and rearranging poems for years.

Three parts, one building. *The Temple* is laid out like a church. It opens with "The Church-porch," a long poem of plain moral advice in six-line stanzas, the kind of counsel you give a young man before he walks in the door: do not lie, do not waste time, keep your temper, pay your debts. Then comes a short threshold poem, "Superliminare," which tells the reader, now "sprinkled and taught" by the porch, to approach and taste the church's feast. The great middle section, "The Church," holds most of the poems. It begins with "The Altar," a poem printed in the shape of an altar, followed by "The Sacrifice," spoken by Christ on the cross. The order says something: worship begins at the altar, and the altar points to Calvary. The book ends with "The Church Militant," a long poem tracing the Church's course through history.

Rooms in the building. Inside "The Church" you will find poems named for parts of the building and the year of worship: "Church-monuments," "Church-music," "The Church-floor," "The Windows," "Easter," "Whitsunday," "Christmas," "Sunday." Between them run poems of struggle and comfort, "Affliction," "The Collar," "The Flower." The governing image does not make the book stiff. It gives the reader a sense of place, so that even a poem about anger or dryness of soul is heard as a voice inside a church. And the last poem of "The Church" is "Love," in which the speaker, unworthy and hanging back, is welcomed by the Lord to sit and eat. A long book of struggle ends at a table. Herbert did not leave that to chance.

What order does to a poem. A poem in a well-ordered book is read twice at once: on its own, and as a step on a road. "Easter Wings" means more because it follows the poems of the Passion. "The Flower," in which the speaker's shriveled heart "was gone / Quite under ground" and yet grows green again, means more because the reader has walked through "Affliction" first. When you plan a chapbook, you are not only choosing good poems. You are choosing a road and deciding what the reader will carry from one poem into the next.

The model and its missing stanzas. The model is part of Herbert's poem "Man," as Ralph Waldo Emerson quoted it in *Nature* (1836). Emerson gives five stanzas of the poem's nine: stanzas three through seven, in which Herbert marvels that man is "all symmetry" and that the whole world waits on him like a servant. Emerson stops there. But Herbert's poem does not. Its first two stanzas begin with "My God," and its last two turn the wonder into prayer:

since God has built so fine a palace, Herbert asks Him to come and dwell in it, so that man may at last dwell with Him. Cut off the ends and the poem becomes a hymn to man. Keep them and it becomes a prayer to God. The frame tells you what the middle means. That is the first lesson of making a book.

Your chapbook. Your chapbook will hold twelve to twenty poems in sixteen to twenty-eight pages. This lesson is the gathering: pile up every poem you have written since ninth grade, choose a governing image, and write a plan. Then 5.2 orders, 5.3 prints and 5.4 binds.

The model. *George Herbert, "Man," from The Temple (1633), as quoted in Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nature (1836), Project Gutenberg #29433*

A perception of this mystery inspires the muse of George Herbert, the beautiful psalmist of the seventeenth century. The following lines are part of his little poem on Man.

"Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And to all the world besides.
Each part may call the farthest, brother;
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.

"Nothing hath got so far
But man hath caught and kept it as his prey;
His eyes dismount the highest star;
He is in little all the sphere.
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
Find their acquaintance there.

"For us, the winds do blow,
The earth doth rest, heaven move, and fountains flow;
Nothing we see, but means our good,
As our delight, or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.

"The stars have us to bed:
Night draws the curtain; which the sun withdraws.
Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind,
In their descent and being; to our mind,
In their ascent and cause.

"More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of. In every path,

He treads down that which doth befriend him
When sickness makes him pale and wan.
Oh mighty love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him."

PICTURE STUDY



George Herbert at Bemerton, William Dyce, 1860 · Oil on canvas · Guildhall Art Gallery, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

William Dyce, a Scottish painter who loved the old English church, imagined Herbert as the parson of Bemerton, standing in the quiet of his garden by the river. Far off across the water meadows rises the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, where, Walton tells us, Herbert walked twice a week to hear the music. Dyce painted every leaf with care, as if the plain country place were itself a kind of temple.

Look closely

- Find Herbert. What is he holding, and what is he doing with it?
- Find the cathedral spire. How far away is it, and how does the painter lead your eye there?
- Look closely at the ground and the plants around him. Which details seem chosen, not accidental?

Talk about it

1. Dyce gives the painting a near place (the garden) and a far place (the cathedral). Write a paragraph on how a chapbook might also move from near to far.
2. If this painting were the cover of your chapbook, what title would fit it? Explain your choice in three sentences.

WRITING PROJECT: THE GATHERING AND THE PLAN

Before Herbert's book could be ordered, the poems had to be gathered. Today you gather yours and decide what kind of house you are building.

You will finish with a pile of candidate poems and a one-page chapbook plan.

You will need

- Every poem you have written in Grades 9–12 (notebooks, files, contest entries)
- Index cards or slips of paper, one per poem
- Writing notebook
- A copy of a few Herbert poems (see the unit kits: the CCEL text of *The Temple*)

Steps

1. Gather every poem you have. Copy the title and first line of each onto its own card.
2. Read all of them aloud in one sitting. Mark each card A (keep), B (keep if revised) or C (set aside). Aim for twenty to twenty-five A and B cards.
3. Spread the A and B cards on a table and look for what recurs: a place, a season, a kind of work, a person, a question. Write down three possible governing images.
4. Choose one governing image and write a working title. (Herbert's was a building; yours might be a farm year, a voyage, a house, a day from dawn to night.)
5. Write a one-page plan: title, governing image, the poem you think must open the book, the poem you think must close it, and two or three gaps you may need to fill with a new poem.
6. Write one new poem, or thoroughly revise a B poem, to fill one gap.

Check your work

- My plan names a title, a governing image, a first poem and a last poem.
- Each poem I kept earns its place; none is there only because I worked hard on it.
- Titles in my plan are punctuated correctly: poem titles in quotation marks, the chapbook title in italics or underlined.
- Lists of titles and images in my plan are parallel in form.
- My new or revised poem uses concrete nouns and strong verbs, not abstract labels.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the stanza beginning "The stars have us to bed" by hand, keeping its indentation.
2. List the three parts of *The Temple* and one sentence on what each does for the reader.
3. Write five possible titles for your chapbook, each built on a single concrete image.

History note. *The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* was printed at Cambridge in 1633 and went through many editions in the seventeenth century. (In Herbert's day "ejaculation" meant a short, sudden prayer, as in "ejaculatory prayer.") An

earlier manuscript of Herbert's poems, the Williams manuscript, holds fewer poems than the printed book, which shows that he went on writing, revising and reordering. Emerson's quotation in *Nature* differs in small points from the 1633 text; the model keeps Emerson's wording exactly as printed in the Gutenberg edition.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism (Level 3, usage and style).** Herbert balances his lines: "In their descent and being; to our mind, / In their ascent and cause." A table of contents, a list of sections or a plan should be parallel too. Not parallel: *Morning; Working in the Field; How Night Comes*. Parallel: *Morning; Field; Night*, or *In the Morning; In the Field; At Night*. Check every list in your chapbook plan and make its items the same grammatical form.

For families. This unit produces a real, hand-bound book. Over four lessons the student needs about twelve to twenty finished poems; most will come from earlier years, so help find old notebooks and files. The full text of *The Temple* is free at the Christian Classics Ethereal Library (see kits). Walton's *Life of Mr. George Herbert* (1670) is on Project Gutenberg (#13139) and is a lovely family read-aloud. The poems of Herbert are devotional and wholly suitable; a few, such as "Affliction (I)" and "The Collar," speak frankly of spiritual struggle, which is part of their honesty and comfort.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student has eighteen poems: six about the family farm through the seasons, four about his grandfather, three sonnets on Scripture verses, three nature poems from summer camp, and two poems on chess. Find a governing image.

1. Look for what most poems share: twelve of the eighteen (farm, grandfather, nature) are about land and work outdoors.
2. Ask whether the others can belong. The Scripture sonnets can if they speak of sowing, harvest or vines. The chess poems do not fit.
3. Choose an image that orders as well as unites: the farm year, from plowing to harvest to winter.

Answer: Governing image: the farm year. Working title: *Furrow and Sheaf*. Keep sixteen poems, set aside the two chess poems for another day, and write one new poem for the winter section, which is thin.

Example 2. Emerson quotes stanzas three through seven of Herbert’s “Man.” Explain, in two or three sentences, how the meaning changes when the first two and last two stanzas are restored.

1. What do the quoted stanzas praise? Man’s design and the world that serves him.
2. What do the missing stanzas do? They address “My God” and end by asking God to dwell in man, His palace.
3. Name the shift: the frame turns wonder at the creature into praise and prayer to the Creator.

Answer: Without its frame, “Man” reads as praise of man, the little world that the great world serves. Herbert’s opening and closing stanzas speak to God and ask Him to dwell in the palace He built, so the marvel becomes a reason for worship. The frame tells the reader what the middle is for.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three parts of *The Temple* in order.
2. **EASY** Who received Herbert’s manuscript and saw it into print?
3. **EASY** What is a chapbook today?
4. **EASY** What poem opens “The Church,” and what is unusual about how it is printed?
5. **MEDIUM** Why might Herbert end “The Church” with “Love,” in which the speaker is welcomed to sit and eat?
6. **MEDIUM** Find one example of balance or parallelism in the model stanzas.
7. **CHALLENGE** Choose a governing image for a chapbook about a family’s move across the country. Name the image and three section titles.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT/ACT-style analysis): In a four-paragraph essay, explain how the order of a collection of short pieces (poems, psalms or stories) shapes the meaning of each piece. Use *The Temple* as one example.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing poems by how hard you worked on them instead of whether they serve the book.
- Picking a governing image so vague (“Life,” “Thoughts”) that it cannot order anything.
- Treating a collection as a portfolio of samples rather than a road the reader walks.

Make it a game · Room by Room. One player names a room or object in a church, house or farm. The next must name a poem title that could stand for it in a book and say where in the book it belongs (beginning, middle or end). Score a point for every placement the others agree with.

Scripture. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16, KJV)

Herbert’s “Man” ends by asking God to dwell in the palace He has built, which is Paul’s teaching turned into prayer and the reason his book is called *The Temple*.

Practice: answers

1. “The Church-porch,” “The Church,” and “The Church Militant” (with “Superliminare” as the threshold between the first two).
2. Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding.
3. A short collection of poems, usually about fifteen to thirty, in a small booklet that is often hand-bound.
4. “The Altar”; it is printed in the shape of an altar.
5. Sample: After many poems of struggle, the book comes to rest in the Lord’s welcome and the communion table, so the reader leaves the church at peace. The ending answers the conflicts that came before.
6. Sample: “As our delight, or as our treasure”; or “In their descent and being; to our mind, / In their ascent and cause.”
7. Sample: Image: the road. Sections: “Leaving,” “Crossing,” “Arriving.” (Parallel one-word gerunds.)
8. Sample thesis: “A collection is an argument made of placement: what comes first teaches the reader how to read, what comes last tells him what it all meant, and the road between gives each piece a weight it could not carry alone.” Body paragraphs might treat the opening of *The Temple* (porch, threshold, altar), its close in “Love,” and a second example such as the Psalms ending in praise.

5.2 ORDERING POEMS: THE DOOR, THE ROAD AND THE REST



OBJECTIVES

- Explain how the book of Psalms is ordered, from the gateway of Psalm 1 to the praise of Psalm 150.
- Use five principles of arrangement (opening, closing, arc, adjacency and pacing) to order a collection.
- Set your chapbook poems in order, divide them into sections if needed, and write a table of contents and a short note defending the order.

Warm-up. Take any five songs, hymns or poems you know well. Put them in the order you would play them for a guest who has never heard them. Which one must go first? Which one must go last? Write one sentence for each choice.

Video slot. Video coming. How the book of Psalms is arranged in five books (a seminary or Bible-overview lecture); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

arrangement

The second canon of rhetoric (Latin *dispositio*): putting the parts of a work in the order that best serves its purpose. In a chapbook, the order of the poems.

arc

The large shape of a collection: the road from first poem to last, such as dawn to night, spring to winter, trouble to peace.

adjacency

The effect two neighboring poems have on each other. A word, image or form in one poem can echo or answer the next.

hinge poem

A poem placed at a turning point, often between sections, that closes one movement and opens the next.

doxology

A short burst of praise to God. Each of the five books of the Psalms ends with one (Psalms 41:13, 72:19, 89:52, 106:48), and Psalm 150 is the doxology of the whole book.

CORE IDEAS

Arrangement is a canon. In the classical canons of rhetoric, invention finds what to say and arrangement decides the order in which to say it. You have arranged essays for years:

introduction, narration, proof, refutation, conclusion. A chapbook needs arrangement just as much, though its order is not a line of argument. It is a road. The reader walks it once, from the first page to the last, and what he meets early colors everything he meets later.

The book of Psalms. The oldest well-ordered collection of poems most of us know is the Psalter. It is divided into five books, and each of the first four ends with a doxology, a short “Blessed be the LORD.” After the second book the editors added a line that sounds like a note in a table of contents: “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended” (Psalm 72:20). The whole book opens with Psalm 1, the model for this lesson, which is not a prayer at all but a gate: two ways, the righteous and the ungodly, the tree and the chaff. Before you read a single lament or song of praise, you are told how to read them: as a man on one of two roads. And the book closes with Psalm 150, nothing but praise. The road runs from instruction, through every kind of trouble and thanksgiving, to praise.

The opening poem. Your first poem is the door. It should be strong, but it need not be your “best” poem. Its job is to teach the reader how to read the book: its voice, its governing image, its seriousness. Herbert opened “The Church” with “The Altar,” a poem about offering the heart to God, because the whole book is that offering. A good opener is often short, clear and concrete. A long, difficult poem at the door makes many readers turn back.

The closing poem. The last poem is where the reader rests. It should answer, gather or quiet what came before. Herbert ended “The Church” with “Love,” a welcome to the table; the Psalter ends with praise. A closing poem often echoes the opening one: a word, an image, a place returned to and seen anew. Avoid ending on your weakest poem simply because it was written last, and avoid ending on a joke unless the whole book has prepared for it.

The road between: arc and sections. Choose an arc that fits your governing image. Common arcs are time (a day, a year, a life), place (a journey, a house room by room), the church year (Advent to Pentecost), or a movement of soul (trouble, struggle, peace). If your book has sixteen or more poems, consider two to four sections, each with a short title. Put a hinge poem at each turn. Sections help a reader breathe; too many make a slim book feel chopped.

Neighbors and pacing. Each poem talks to the one beside it. Lay your poems out and read pairs aloud. Look for links: the last image of one poem may wake the first image of the next (a candle, then a dawn). Look also for contrast. Two long, heavy poems in a row tire the reader; follow a long meditation with a short lyric, a sonnet with free verse, a lament with a song. Do not put two poems with the same opening word or the same ending image side by side unless you mean the echo. Herbert often paired poems on purpose, as when “Easter” is followed directly by “Easter Wings.”

A method. Lay your cards from 5.1 on the floor. Choose the first and last. Lay out the rough arc between them. Then read the whole sequence aloud in one sitting, start to finish, and mark every place you stumble, drift or feel a jolt. Move cards, read again. Expect to cut one or two poems that are good but do not belong. When the order feels right, test it with a

question: could any two poems trade places without loss? If so, the order is not yet doing its work.

The model. *Psalm 1 (KJV), the gateway of the book of Psalms*

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD ; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

PICTURE STUDY



Saint Jerome in his Study, Antonello da Messina, about 1475 · Oil on lime panel · The National Gallery, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Jerome, the scholar who translated the Bible into Latin, sits in a wooden study built inside a vast stone hall. Antonello has arranged everything: books on the shelves, a few pots and a towel, a cat on the platform, birds on the step in front, and a lion padding through the shadows. The painting is small, yet the eye travels in a planned order, through the arch, up the steps, to the open book, and out the windows to the hills.

Look closely

- Where does your eye go first? Trace the path it takes from the front of the painting to the back.
- Find the open book on Jerome's desk. How does the painter make it the center of the whole picture?
- Find the birds on the front step and the lion in the hall. Why might the painter place them at the edges and not the center?

Talk about it

1. Antonello frames the scene with an archway at the front. Write a paragraph comparing the arch to the opening poem of a book.
2. Describe the order in which a visitor would see the objects in this room. Then explain how you want a reader to meet the poems in your chapbook.

WRITING PROJECT: THE ORDER OF THE BOOK

Today your pile of poems becomes a sequence. You will finish with a table of contents and a short note that defends your order.

You will need

- Your poem cards and the poems themselves from 5.1
- A large table or clear floor
- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. Choose your opening poem and your closing poem. Write two sentences on why each belongs where it is.
2. Lay out the arc between them. Decide whether you need sections; if so, name each with a short, parallel title and choose a hinge poem for each turn.
3. Check every pair of neighbors. Mark links (echoed words or images) and contrasts (length, form, mood). Fix any spot where two heavy or two similar poems sit together.
4. Read the whole sequence aloud in one sitting. Mark stumbles. Rearrange and read again.
5. Cut any poem that does not serve the book, even a good one. Write a new poem if a section is thin.
6. Write the table of contents in final order.
7. Write a "Note on the Order" of about 200 words, for yourself and your parent, explaining your opening, your arc, one strong pairing and your ending.

Check your work

- My opening poem teaches the reader how to read the book; my closing poem gives rest or answer.

- No two poems could trade places without loss.
- Section titles are parallel in form.
- In my note, subordinate clauses make the reasons for each choice clear (because, although, so that).
- Every pronoun in my note has a clear antecedent; “it” never leaves the reader wondering which poem I mean.
- Poem titles are in quotation marks and the chapbook title is in italics.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Psalm 1:3 by hand.
2. Write the four doxology references that close the first four books of Psalms, and copy one of them.
3. List five possible pairs of neighboring poems from your chapbook and the link between each pair.

History note. Antonello da Messina’s *Saint Jerome in his Study* (about 1475) is in the National Gallery, London. Jerome (died A.D. 420) is honored for the Latin Bible, later called the Vulgate. The division of the Psalms into five books is ancient; the Hebrew Bible marks it, and many have compared it to the five books of Moses.

 **Style Clinic. Clauses (Level 3).** A note that defends an order is all about relationships, and subordinate clauses carry relationships. Weak: “The book opens with ‘Plowing.’ It is short. It sets the scene.” Stronger: “Because ‘Plowing’ is short and sets the scene in a single field, it opens the book, so that the reader stands on the land before the seasons turn.” Use adverb clauses (because, although, when, so that) to show why; use adjective clauses (which, that, who) to identify which poem you mean. Keep one main idea per sentence so the clauses do not pile up.

For families. Ordering is easier to see than to describe, so let the student use the floor or a large table. Reading the whole sequence aloud in one sitting (fifteen to twenty-five minutes) is the single best test; offer to be the listener and say only where you lost the thread, not how to fix it. On the Psalms: the five-book division and the closing doxologies are in the text itself; the note at Psalm 72:20 is part of the KJV.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's chapbook *Furrow and Sheaf* follows the farm year. Her draft order begins with "Grandfather's Hands" (a long elegy) and ends with "Snow on the Barn" (a short winter poem). What should she change?

1. The opening: a long elegy at the door is heavy and gives away the book's deepest grief at once. A short spring poem would teach the governing image first.
2. The closing: "Snow on the Barn" is quiet, but it does not answer anything. The elegy, placed last, could gather the year into the life of the man who worked it.
3. Check the echo: if the opening poem shows his hands on the plow and the elegy ends with the same hands, the book closes the circle.

Answer: Open with the short spring poem "Plowing," move through the seasons, and end with "Grandfather's Hands," revised so its last image echoes the plow of the first poem. Move "Snow on the Barn" to the head of the winter section as its hinge poem.

Example 2. Two neighboring poems both end with the image of a lamp in a window. Is this a flaw?

1. Ask whether the echo is planned. If both endings are the same picture used the same way, the second feels like a repeat.
2. If the second poem changes the image (the first lamp waits for someone; the second is put out because he has come), the echo becomes a conversation.
3. Decide: separate them, or revise one so the echo means something.

Answer: Unplanned, it is a flaw: separate the poems by at least two others. Planned and changed, it is a strength: keep them together and let the second poem answer the first.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which canon of rhetoric governs the order of a chapbook?
2. **EASY** Into how many books is the Psalter divided, and how does each of the first four end?
3. **EASY** What are the two ways set before the reader in Psalm 1?
4. **EASY** What is a hinge poem?
5. **MEDIUM** Why might your best poem not be the right opening poem?
6. **MEDIUM** Combine with a subordinate clause: "The middle section is short. It is the turn of the book."
7. **CHALLENGE** Name three arcs that could order a chapbook about a mountain hike, and choose the best one for a book that ends in worship.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, SAT-style rhetorical analysis): Explain how the order of Psalm 1's images (walking, standing, sitting; tree, chaff) builds the psalm's

argument.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Ordering poems by the date they were written instead of by what the reader needs.
- Putting two long, heavy poems side by side, or ending a section with a weak poem.
- Making so many sections that a twenty-page book feels chopped into pieces.
- Refusing to cut a good poem that does not fit the book.

Make it a game • Psalter Order. Write the first lines of eight famous psalms (for example 1, 23, 51, 90, 100, 121, 139, 150) on cards. Shuffle. Players race to put them in the Bible's order without looking, then explain why Psalm 1 and Psalm 150 are where they are.

Scripture. "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs." (Ecclesiastes 12:9, KJV)

The Preacher did not only write wise sayings; he "set in order," which is the work of this lesson.

Practice: answers

1. Arrangement (*dispositio*).
2. Five; each of the first four ends with a doxology (Psalms 41:13, 72:19, 89:52, 106:48).
3. The way of the righteous (like a fruitful tree) and the way of the ungodly (like chaff that perishes).
4. A poem at a turning point that closes one section and opens the next.
5. Sample: The opener must teach the reader how to read the book. A best poem may be long, difficult or the emotional peak, which belongs later where the road has prepared for it.
6. Sample: Although the middle section is short, it is the turn of the book.
7. Sample: (1) time: dawn to night; (2) place: trailhead, forest, ridge, summit; (3) soul: weariness, effort, wonder. The place arc ending at the summit, where the speaker sees the whole range and praises its Maker, best leads to worship (compare Psalm 121).
8. Sample thesis: "Psalm 1 argues by order: the descent from walking to standing to sitting shows how sin settles a man in place, and the turn from the rooted tree to the blowing chaff shows where each road ends." Body paragraphs treat the three verbs, the tree, the chaff and the final verse, which names the LORD as the One who knows the way.

5.3 LAYOUT AND PRINTING: THE PAGE AS A PLACE

OBJECTIVES

- Name the four things William Morris said a printer must consider (paper, type, spacing, and the position of the text on the page) and apply each to a chapbook.
- Lay out poems on the page with sound margins, a readable typeface, kept indentation and careful page breaks.
- Plan the front and back matter, impose the pages for a folded booklet, and print a test copy.

Warm-up. Pull three books off a shelf: a Bible, a paperback novel and a book of poems or hymns if you have one. Open each to any spread. Measure the four margins with a ruler. Which margin is widest in each? Which book is easiest on the eye, and why?

Video slot. Video coming. William Morris and the Kelmscott Press (a museum or library video on hand printing); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

spread (opening)

Two facing pages seen together when a book lies open. Morris taught that the spread, not the single page, is the unit of design.

margins

The white space around the text block: inner (gutter), top (head), outer (fore-edge) and bottom (foot). The traditional proportion grows from inner to bottom.

leading

The space between lines of type, named for the strips of lead printers once set between them. Usually a little more than the type size (11-point type on 14-point leading).

imposition

Arranging pages on printed sheets so that, when folded and bound, they fall in the right order. In a folded booklet each sheet carries four pages.

front matter

Pages before the poems: half-title, title page, copyright or colophon, dedication, contents and sometimes an epigraph.

CORE IDEAS

Delivery for a book. The fifth canon of rhetoric is delivery: how a speech reaches the ear. For a book, delivery is the page. A good poem crammed into a corner of a page, in a typeface meant for road signs, has been badly delivered. Layout is not decoration added at the end. It is the last act of courtesy to your reader, the way a host sets the table.

Morris's four things. William Morris (1834–1896), designer, poet and craftsman, founded the Kelmscott Press in 1891 to print books by hand that would be beautiful and “easy to read.” In the model he names what he had to consider: the paper, the form of the type, the spacing of letters, words and lines, and “the position of the printed matter on the page.” Those are your four questions as well. You will not be making linen paper or cutting type, but you will choose a paper, a typeface, a spacing and a page, and each choice either helps or hinders the reader.

Paper and type. For the inside pages use a good, slightly heavy plain paper (24-pound or about 90 gsm is a good weight; cream is kinder to the eye than bright white). For the cover use card stock. Choose one readable book typeface with serifs, such as Garamond, Caslon or Baskerville (free versions exist), and use it for everything: titles in a larger size or small capitals, poems in 11 or 12 point. Morris warned against letters that “dazzle the eye” by “eccentricity of form”; avoid novelty fonts, mixed fonts and body text in bold. Set the poems flush left, not centered. Centering destroys the line’s shape and makes every poem look like a greeting card.

The page and its margins. Morris insisted that the two facing pages are one design. The old printers and scribes he admired gave the inner margin the least space, the top a little more, the outer edge more still, and the bottom the most, so that the two text blocks sit together high on the spread like two windows in one wall. On a half-letter page (5½ by 8½ inches) try about 0.6 inch inside, 0.75 top, 0.85 outside and 1.1 bottom. Put the page number (the folio) in the bottom outer corner or centered at the foot. A generous page says the words are worth the paper.

Poems on the page. Begin each poem at the top of a new page, with its title in small capitals or a slightly larger size and a little space below it. Keep every indentation you made in the draft; Herbert’s indents in “Man” show his line lengths, and losing them flattens the music. A line too long for the page is broken and its remainder indented deeply on the next line (a turnover), so it cannot be mistaken for a new line. Avoid page breaks inside a stanza; if a poem runs to a second page and the break falls between stanzas, the reader may not know a stanza ended, so keep the break at the end of a stanza and keep at least two lines on each side. Herbert’s “Easter Wings” was printed sideways across two facing pages in 1633 so the lines could form two pairs of wings: layout can be part of the meaning, but only when the poem asks for it.

Front and back matter. A well-made chapbook has, in order: a cover; a half-title (the title alone); a title page (title, your name, place and year); a copyright or colophon page; a dedication; a contents page; then the poems, with section-title pages if you use sections. At the back: notes on any poem that needs a source or a Scripture reference, a short acknowledgment, and a colophon telling the typeface, paper and binding (“Set in Garamond and printed on cream paper; sewn by hand”). Right-hand pages are odd-numbered; poems and sections usually begin on the right.

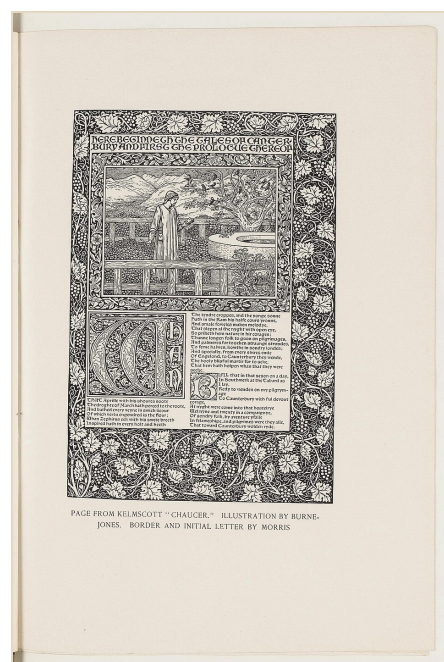
Imposition and the test copy. A booklet made from letter paper folded in half has four pages per sheet, so the page count must be a multiple of four: 16, 20, 24 or 28. On each side

of each sheet the two page numbers add up to the total plus one. In a 16-page book, the outside of the first sheet carries pages 16 and 1, its inside 2 and 15; the next sheet 14 and 3, then 4 and 13, and so on. Most word processors and print dialogs have a “booklet” setting that does this for you, but you must still check. Print one test copy on cheap paper, fold it, number it in pencil, and read it as a stranger would. Fix every surprise before printing the final copy.

The model. *William Morris, “A Note by William Morris on His Aims in Founding the Kelmscott Press” (1895), in The Art and Craft of Printing, Project Gutenberg #31596*

I began printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty, while at the same time they should be easy to read and should not dazzle the eye, or trouble the intellect of the reader by eccentricity of form in the letters. I have always been a great admirer of the calligraphy of the Middle Ages, & of the earlier printing which took its place. As to the fifteenth-century books, I had noticed that they were always beautiful by force of the mere typography, even without the added ornament, with which many of them are so lavishly supplied. And it was the essence of my undertaking to produce books which it would be a pleasure to look upon as pieces of printing and arrangement of type. Looking at my adventure from this point of view then, I found I had to consider chiefly the following things: the paper, the form of the type, the relative spacing of the letters, the words, and the lines; and lastly the position of the printed matter on the page.

PICTURE STUDY



Opening page of The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (the Kelmscott Chaucer), William Morris (type, borders and initials) and Edward Burne-Jones (illustrations), 1896 · Printed book; wood-engraved illustration, borders and initials with type on handmade paper · Copies in many libraries and museums in Britain and America
Wikimedia Commons · Licence Ouverte

Morris called the Kelmscott Chaucer his finest work; it took several years to make and was finished in 1896, the year he died. Morris designed the type, the borders and the great initial letters; his friend Edward Burne-Jones drew the pictures, which were cut on wood. Every part of the page, black and white, picture and text, was planned as one design across the two facing pages.

Look closely

- Measure the margins with your eye. Which is widest? Which is narrowest?
- Find the large initial letter. How does it lead your eye into the text?
- Compare the darkness of the border, the picture and the type. Does any part shout louder than the rest?

Talk about it

1. Morris loved ornament, yet he said early books were beautiful “by force of the mere typography.” Write a paragraph on how a plain chapbook can still be beautiful.
2. Choose one element of this page (border, initial, columns, margins) and explain whether your chapbook should borrow it or leave it out.

WRITING PROJECT: SETTING THE PAGES AND PRINTING A TEST COPY

Your poems are chosen and ordered. Now give them a page. You will finish with a complete test copy, folded and numbered, ready to correct.

You will need

- Your ordered poems and table of contents from 5.2
- A word processor with a booklet or two-pages-per-sheet setting (or careful hand layout)
- Plain paper for the test copy; cream 24 lb paper and card stock for the final (5.4)
- Ruler and pencil

Steps

1. Set up the page: half-letter (5½ × 8½ inches), mirrored margins as in the core ideas, one serif typeface, 11 or 12 point on 14 or 15 point leading.
2. Make a page plan in pencil: list every page by number from the half-title to the colophon. Adjust (add a section page, an epigraph or a blank) until the total is a multiple of four.
3. Set each poem, beginning on a new page. Keep all indents. Fix turnovers and stanza breaks across pages.
4. Set the front matter (half-title, title page, colophon, dedication, contents) and back matter (notes, acknowledgment, colophon). Make sure the page numbers in the contents are right.
5. Print a test copy using the booklet setting. Fold it, check that the pages fall in order, and number them in pencil if needed.

6. Read the test copy aloud from cover to cover. Mark typing errors, bad breaks and any page that feels crowded or empty.
7. Correct the file and save it as a final, dated version.

Check your work

- The page count is a multiple of four, and the pages fall in order when folded.
- Margins mirror on each spread; the bottom margin is the widest.
- Every poem keeps its indentation; no stanza breaks across a page without a clear stanza end.
- Titles are punctuated consistently: poem titles in quotation marks in the notes and contents prose, the book title in italics.
- The colophon and copyright lines use colons, commas and capitals correctly.
- The contents page numbers match the printed pages.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the last sentence of the Morris model by hand and underline his four things.
2. Draw a two-page spread and mark the four margins in their proportions.
3. Write the page pairs for a 20-page booklet (each pair adds up to 21).

History note. Morris founded the Kelmscott Press at Hammersmith in 1891 and printed some fifty books before the press closed in 1898. The Note in the model was written in 1895 and printed after his death. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1896) has 87 illustrations after Burne-Jones. The facing-page margin proportion Morris praised comes from medieval manuscripts and early printed books.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuation mastery (Level 3): colons and titles.** Morris uses a colon the right way: a complete clause, then the list it announces (“I had to consider chiefly the following things: the paper, the form of the type ...”). Do not put a colon between a verb and its objects (“The book contains: poems”). In your front and back matter, italicize the chapbook title (*Furrow and Sheaf*) and put poem titles in quotation marks (“Plowing”) when you name them in sentences; on the poem’s own page, the title stands alone without quotation marks. Use semicolons, as Morris does, to separate list items that already contain commas.

For families. Any word processor can do this lesson; look for “Book fold” (in Word, Layout > Margins > Custom Margins > Multiple pages) or a “Booklet” option in the print dialog. Print the test copy on cheap paper. A home inkjet or laser printer that prints both sides works well; if yours does not, print the odd sides, turn the stack and print the even sides, testing first with two sheets. A copy shop can print the final on cream paper if needed. The Morris text is free in *The Art and Craft of Printing* (Project Gutenberg #31596), which also contains his lecture “The Ideal Book.”

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's chapbook has 15 poems, each one page, and she wants a half-title, title page, colophon, dedication and contents in front, and notes and a colophon in back. How many pages is that, and what should she do?

1. Count: 5 front pages + 15 poem pages + 2 back pages = 22.
2. The next multiple of four is 24, so she has 2 pages to add or must cut to 20.
3. Good additions: an epigraph page plus a blank so the first poem begins on a right-hand page, or two section-title pages.

Answer: Twenty-two pages; add two (for example, two section-title pages) to make 24, the next multiple of four. Then the 24-page booklet needs six sheets, and the page pairs on each side add up to 25.

Example 2. Revise this layout: a poem is centered on the page in 14-point bold Comic-style type, with its indents removed so all lines start at the margin.

1. Typeface: change to one serif book face, 11 or 12 point, regular weight.
2. Alignment: set flush left so each line's length and shape can be seen.
3. Indents: restore the poet's indents so the pattern of long and short lines returns, as in Herbert's "Man."

Answer: Set in 12-point Garamond, regular, flush left, with the original indents restored and the title in small capitals with a line of space below. The poem now reads as a poem rather than a sign.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name Morris's four things a printer must consider.
2. **EASY** Which margin is traditionally the widest? Which the narrowest?
3. **EASY** Why must a folded booklet's page count be a multiple of four?
4. **EASY** What is a colophon?
5. **MEDIUM** In a 16-page booklet, which pages print on the inside of the first sheet?
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the punctuation: My chapbook includes: Plowing, Harvest Moon and Grandfather's Hands.
7. **CHALLENGE** When should a poem be centered or shaped on the page? Give an example and a rule.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT-style): Morris says books should be beautiful and "easy to read." Argue whether these two aims ever conflict, using examples from books you know.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Centering every poem or using several decorative fonts.
- Losing the poet's indents when pasting poems into the layout.
- Forgetting that the page count must be a multiple of four, then discovering blank pages in the middle.
- Printing the final copy without first folding and reading a test copy.

Make it a game • Impose It. Fold three sheets of scrap paper into a 12-page booklet and number the pages. Unfold them. One player calls a page number; the other must name the page on the same side of the same sheet (it adds up to 13) faster than the timer. Then try it for 16, 20 and 24 pages.

Scripture. "And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." (Habakkuk 2:2, KJV)

The Lord told the prophet to write plainly so the reader could take it in at a glance, which is the whole aim of good layout.

Practice: answers

1. The paper, the form of the type, the spacing (of letters, words and lines), and the position of the printed matter on the page.
2. The bottom (foot) is widest; the inner (gutter) is narrowest.
3. Each folded sheet makes four pages (two on each side).
4. A note, usually at the end of a book, telling how it was made: typeface, paper, printing and binding.
5. Pages 2 and 15.
6. My chapbook includes "Plowing," "Harvest Moon" and "Grandfather's Hands." (No colon after a verb; poem titles in quotation marks.)
7. Sample: Only when the shape is part of the poem's meaning, as in Herbert's "Easter Wings" or "The Altar." Rule: if the poem would lose nothing set flush left, set it flush left.
8. Sample thesis: "Beauty and ease of reading conflict only when beauty is mistaken for ornament; in a well-made book, the beauty lies in the very proportions, spacing and type that make reading easy." Body paragraphs might contrast an over-decorated page with a plain, well-spaced Bible or hymnal, and close with Morris's own remark that early books were beautiful "by force of the mere typography."

5.4 THE CHAPBOOK: BINDING, DEDICATING AND GIVING THE BOOK 📖

OBJECTIVES

- Print, fold, sew or staple, trim and cover a finished chapbook of twelve to twenty poems.
- Write a dedication and a short afterword or preface that serve the reader without explaining the poems away.
- Give a public reading of five or six poems from the chapbook and present copies as gifts.

Warm-up. Read Psalm 150 aloud, slowly. Count how many times the word “praise” appears. Why is this the right last page for the book of Psalms? What should the last page of your chapbook leave in the reader’s hands?

Video slot. Video coming. How to sew a three-hole pamphlet stitch booklet (a library, museum or bookbinding-guild tutorial); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

pamphlet stitch

The simplest binding: a thread passed through three (or five) holes along the fold and tied inside, holding the folded sheets and cover together.

saddle stitch

Binding a folded booklet with staples through the fold, as most magazines are bound. A long-reach stapler makes it possible at home.

signature

A group of sheets folded together. A chapbook is usually a single signature.

creep

The way inner sheets of a folded booklet stick out farther at the fore-edge than outer sheets. Trimming the fore-edge squares the book.

dedication

A short line in the front matter offering the book to a person, or to God, with honor or thanks.

CORE IDEAS

Finishing the course. This year’s faith verse is Paul’s: “I have finished my course.” Many writers have poems; few have a book. The difference is finishing: the last revisions, the last

proof, the last stitch. In this lesson your poems become an object a person can hold, keep on a shelf and pass down. That is worth doing well, and it is worth doing all the way to the end.

The closing poem of the Psalms. The model is Psalm 150, the end of the Psalter. After a hundred and forty-nine psalms of every kind (laments, histories, songs of the king, prayers in sickness and exile), the book ends not with a summary but with a single command repeated: praise Him, where, why, how, and who. Every instrument is called, and then every breathing thing. Notice what the last psalm does not do. It does not explain the earlier psalms or tell the reader what he should have learned. It gathers the whole book into one act. Let that guide your closing poem and your back matter: gather, do not explain.

Dedication and afterword. Your front matter needs a dedication, one line or two: “For my grandfather, who taught me to plow a straight furrow” or simply “To the glory of God.” Many old books carried *Soli Deo gloria*, “to God alone be glory.” If you add a preface or an afterword, keep it under a page. Tell the reader how the book came to be (the years of writing, the place, the people), name its governing image, and thank those who helped. Do not explain what each poem means; a poem that needs its meaning explained in the back has not finished its work in the front. Notes are for facts: a Scripture reference, a place name, a word from your grandfather’s trade.

Printing the final copy. Print on cream text paper, both sides, from the corrected file you saved in 5.3. Print the cover separately on card stock: the title and your name on the front, perhaps a single small ornament or line drawing, and on the back a few lines of a poem or nothing at all. Let the ink dry. Fold each sheet sharply with a bone folder or the back of a spoon, nest the sheets in order inside the cover, and check the page order once more before you bind.

Binding. For a pamphlet stitch, open the nested booklet to its center. Mark three holes on the fold, one at the middle and one about an inch from each end. Pierce them with an awl or a thick needle. Use waxed linen thread or heavy cotton thread about three times the height of the book. Starting inside the fold, pass the needle out through the middle hole, leaving a three-inch tail inside. Go back in through the top hole, run the thread along the inside past the middle, and go out through the bottom hole. Then come back in through the middle hole, on the other side of the long inside stitch from the tail, and tie the two ends around that long stitch with a square knot. Trim the ends to half an inch. If you staple instead, use a long-reach stapler and two or three staples set exactly on the fold. Finally, trim the fore-edge with a sharp knife and a metal ruler to remove the creep, or leave it if the difference is small.

Memory and delivery: the reading. A book of poems is meant to be heard. Choose five or six poems that show the arc of the book, from the opening to the close, and give a short reading for your family, church group or co-op: ten to fifteen minutes. Learn one poem by heart. Say the title, pause, read slowly, pause again at the end. Introduce each poem in one sentence at most. Then give copies away: one to your parents, one to the person in the dedication, one for your portfolio. Herbert wanted his book to help “any dejected poor soul.” Think of whom yours might help or gladden, and give it to him.

Looking back. Herbert worked on his poems for years and never saw them printed, yet his little book has fed readers for nearly four hundred years. You do not know what your chapbook will mean to the grandchild who finds it on a shelf. Make it true, make it well, and finish it.

The model. *Psalm 150 (KJV), the last psalm of the Psalter*

Praise ye the LORD . Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD . Praise ye the LORD .

PICTURE STUDY



Old Woman Reading, Gerrit Dou, about 1631–1632 · Oil on panel · Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Gerrit Dou, a young pupil of Rembrandt in Leiden, painted an old woman reading a large book, long thought to be a Bible and now identified as a lectionary, a book of Scripture readings arranged for the church year. Dou painted the page so finely that you can see the printed lines and a small picture on it. All the light in the painting falls on two things: the old face and the open book.

Look closely

- Find the printed page. What can you make out on it: columns, a picture, large letters?

- Look at her hands. How is she holding the book, and what does that tell you about how she values it?
- Find where the light is brightest. What does the painter want you to see first?

Talk about it

1. Imagine your chapbook in this woman's hands fifty years from now. Write a paragraph about what you hope she would find in it.
2. Write a short poem (eight to twelve lines) titled "Reader," suitable as the last poem or the epigraph of your chapbook.

WRITING PROJECT: THE FINISHED CHAPBOOK AND A READING

Today you finish the book you began in 5.1: printed, bound, dedicated and read aloud.

Make at least three copies: one for your portfolio, one for your parents, and one to give.

You will need

- Your corrected layout file from 5.3
- Cream text paper (24 lb or about 90 gsm) and card stock for covers
- Bone folder or spoon; awl or thick needle; waxed linen or heavy cotton thread; or a long-reach stapler
- Metal ruler and a sharp craft knife (with a parent's help) for trimming
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Write the dedication (one or two lines) and, if you wish, an afterword of no more than one page. Add them to the file and check the page count and contents page again.
2. Print the final pages on both sides and the cover on card stock. Let the ink dry.
3. Fold each sheet sharply, nest them in order inside the cover, and check every page number.
4. Bind with a three-hole pamphlet stitch or two to three staples on the fold. Trim the fore-edge if the creep is noticeable.
5. Choose five or six poems that show the book's arc. Learn one by heart. Rehearse the reading twice.
6. Give a ten-to-fifteen-minute reading for family or friends. Present your copies.
7. In your notebook, write a paragraph on what you would change in a second edition.

Check your work

- The book is complete: cover, half-title, title page, colophon, dedication, contents, poems, notes or afterword.
- Pages fall in order, are bound securely on the fold, and the fore-edge is even.
- The dedication uses the subjunctive or imperative correctly if it offers a wish or blessing ("May it be ...", "Be glorified ...").

- The afterword uses active voice for what I did (“I wrote these poems over four years”) and does not explain the poems’ meanings.
- No spelling or punctuation errors remain on any page; titles are punctuated consistently.
- I read at least one poem from memory.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Psalm 150:6 by hand.
2. Draft three possible dedications: one to a person, one to God, one to a place.
3. List the five or six poems for your reading in order, with a one-sentence introduction for each.

History note. Chapbooks take their name from the chapmen, traveling peddlers who sold cheap little booklets of ballads, tales and almanacs in England and America from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Gerrit Dou’s *Old Woman Reading* (Rijksmuseum, about 1631–1632) was once called “Rembrandt’s mother”; the museum now identifies her book as a lectionary.

 **Style Clinic. Voice and mood (Level 3).** Psalm 150 is almost all imperative mood: “Praise him.” A dedication or closing blessing may use the imperative (“Remember the field”) or the subjunctive of wish (“May this book be a lamp”; “God be thanked”). In your afterword, prefer the active voice when you tell what you did: not “These poems were written over four years and were arranged by a farm year,” but “I wrote these poems over four years and arranged them by the farm year.” Use passive voice only when the doer does not matter (“The book was sewn by hand”).

For families. The trimming knife is sharp; supervise or trim for the student. Waxed linen thread is sold at craft stores; heavy button thread rubbed on a candle works too. A reading after Sunday dinner, at a co-op or for grandparents makes the work real; keep it short and let the student introduce each poem in one sentence. Keep one copy in the senior portfolio. This unit has no contest entry, but if the student wishes to submit poems later, check each contest’s rules on prior publication, since a widely distributed chapbook may count as published.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this afterword paragraph: “In the poem ‘Plowing,’ the furrow is meant to symbolize the straight path of righteousness, and the crows are supposed to represent temptations. ‘Harvest Moon’ is about how God provides.”

1. Find the problem: it explains the poems’ meanings, which the poems should do on their own.
2. Keep what the reader cannot know: the facts behind the poems (where, when, who).
3. Change to active voice and to the story of the making.

Answer: Revised: “I wrote these poems over four years on my family’s farm in Ohio, most of them in a notebook I kept in the truck. My grandfather taught me to plow, and the book follows his year. Thanks to my mother, who read every draft, and to Mrs. Hale, who taught me the sonnet.”

Example 2. A student’s dedication reads: “This book is dedicated to my grandfather and also to God and to everyone who has ever helped me write poetry.” Sharpen it.

1. A dedication is short and particular; “everyone” belongs in the acknowledgment.
2. Choose the first claim: if God is honored, put Him first or use a separate line.
3. Use a concrete detail to honor the person.

Answer: *Soli Deo gloria.*

For my grandfather, who plowed straight.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where does the word “chapbook” come from?
2. **EASY** How many holes does a simple pamphlet stitch use?
3. **EASY** What is creep, and how is it fixed?
4. **EASY** What does *Soli Deo gloria* mean?
5. **MEDIUM** Name three things Psalm 150 tells the reader about praise.
6. **MEDIUM** Change to active voice: “The cover was designed and the pages were sewn by me.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a closing blessing for the last page of a chapbook, using the subjunctive of wish.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, ACT-style argument): “A book is not finished until someone else reads it.” Agree or disagree, with reasons and an example.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Explaining the poems in the afterword instead of letting them speak.

- Binding before checking the page order one last time.
- Stapling off the fold, so the book will not open flat.
- Reading too fast at the public reading and skipping the pause after each title.

Make it a game · Last Lines. Each player reads only the last line of a poem from his chapbook, or of a psalm, aloud. The others guess whether it is the last poem of a book or a poem from the middle, and why. Score a point for each good reason.

Scripture. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:” (2 Timothy 4:7, KJV)

Paul’s words are this year’s faith thread, and a finished, bound book is a small picture of a course finished well.

Practice: answers

1. From the chapmen, traveling peddlers who sold cheap booklets.
2. Three (sometimes five for a tall book).
3. Inner sheets stick out past outer ones at the fore-edge; trim the fore-edge with a ruler and knife.
4. “To God alone be glory.”
5. Where (in his sanctuary, in the firmament), why (for his mighty acts and excellent greatness), how (with trumpet, harp, timbrel, cymbals), and who (every thing that hath breath).
6. I designed the cover and sewed the pages.
7. Sample: May the One who sends the rain on the furrow bless the hand that holds this book.
8. Sample thesis: “A book is finished by its maker, but it is fulfilled by its reader: Herbert completed *The Temple* on his deathbed, yet it did its work only when Ferrar printed it for ‘any dejected poor soul.’” Body paragraphs distinguish making from giving, use Herbert and the Psalms, and answer the objection that a private journal can be complete.

UNIT 5 REVIEW

The student answers in writing. Short answers are scored for accuracy; writing tasks are scored with the unit checklists. Items 10 and 11 may be done on a separate sheet; allow 25 minutes for item 11.

1. (3 pts) Name the three parts of Herbert's *The Temple* in order and say what the governing image is.
2. (2 pts) Who saw *The Temple* into print, and in what year was it published?
3. (4 pts) Emerson quoted only the middle five stanzas of Herbert's "Man." How do the omitted first and last stanzas change the poem's meaning?
4. (4 pts) How does the book of Psalms open and close, and how is it divided?
5. (4 pts) Give two jobs of an opening poem and two of a closing poem in a chapbook.
6. (4 pts) Name Morris's four things a printer must consider.
7. (2 pts) Rank the four margins of a traditional page from narrowest to widest.
8. (2 pts) In a 20-page booklet, which page shares a side of a sheet with page 3? With page 10?
9. (4 pts) Correct: "My chapbook contains: Plowing, Harvest Moon, and Grandfather's Hands, it was written by me over four years."
10. (4 pts) Write a dedication and a three-sentence afterword for your chapbook that tells how it was made without explaining any poem.
11. (7 pts) Timed essay (25 minutes): "A collection of poems is more than the sum of its poems." Defend or qualify this claim with reference to *The Temple*, the Psalms and your own chapbook.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A HAND-BOUND CHAPBOOK

Place one finished copy of your chapbook (twelve to twenty poems, 16–28 pages, bound by hand) in your senior portfolio, together with your "Note on the Order" from 5.2 and a paragraph on what you would change in a second edition.

- **Poems and selection:** Twelve to twenty finished poems, each earning its place; concrete images, strong verbs and a consistent voice.
- **Order:** A governing image; an opening that teaches the reader how to read and a close that gathers the book; purposeful neighbors and pacing.
- **Layout and craft:** Mirrored margins, one readable typeface, kept indentation, sound page breaks, complete front and back matter, correct page order and a secure binding.
- **Mechanics:** No spelling or punctuation errors; titles punctuated consistently; parallel contents and section titles; active voice in the afterword.

Answer key

1. "The Church-porch," "The Church," "The Church Militant"; the governing image is a church building (and the Church itself).

2. Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding; 1633, at Cambridge, after Herbert's death.
3. They address God and end in prayer that He dwell in man, His palace, so the poem's wonder at man becomes praise of the Creator rather than of the creature.
4. It opens with Psalm 1, the two ways (a gate for reading the rest), and closes with Psalm 150, pure praise; it is divided into five books, each of the first four ending in a doxology.
5. Opening: teach the reader how to read the book (voice, governing image, seriousness); invite the reader in, usually short and concrete. Closing: give rest or an answer; gather the book, often echoing the opening.
6. The paper; the form of the type; the spacing of letters, words and lines; the position of the printed matter on the page.
7. Inner (gutter), top (head), outer (fore-edge), bottom (foot).
8. Page 18 ($3 + 18 = 21$); page 11 ($10 + 11 = 21$).
9. My chapbook contains "Plowing," "Harvest Moon" and "Grandfather's Hands." I wrote it over four years. (No colon after the verb; poem titles in quotation marks; comma splice fixed; active voice.)
10. Sample: "*Soli Deo gloria*. For my grandfather, who plowed straight." Afterword: "I wrote these poems over four years on my family's farm. The book follows my grandfather's year from plowing to snow. My thanks to my mother, who read every draft."
11. Sample thesis: "A well-ordered collection is more than its poems because placement adds meaning: the opening teaches the reader how to read, neighbors answer one another, and the close gathers the whole, as when Herbert ends a book of spiritual conflict at the Lord's table and the Psalter ends in praise." Score on thesis, use of both examples, an honest account of the student's own ordering, and clear, correct prose.

WRITING FOR A CAREER

Rhetoric was always meant for work in the world. In this unit you put the last of the progymnasmata, the proposal of a law, to work in a real proposal modeled on Nehemiah's request to King Artaxerxes. You learn to explain a process and write tested instructions from Michael Faraday's lectures on a candle. You learn to write web pages people can actually use, with Strunk's rule "Omit needless words" as your guide. Then, taking Booker T. Washington's sweeping test at Hampton as your model, you assemble a professional portfolio that lets your work speak for you.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written a business letter, a résumé and a cover letter in earlier high-school lessons, or will draft them during lesson 6.4.
- Has finished, or nearly finished, the senior thesis and at least one creative piece from Units 4–5 to use as portfolio samples.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can write a proposal with a need statement, measurable objectives, a plan, a timeline and an honest, justified budget.
- ☐ I can write numbered instructions in the imperative mood, test them on a real user, and revise them.
- ☐ I can write a web page in inverted-pyramid order, with front-loaded headings, descriptive links and alt text, and cut needless words.
- ☐ I can choose, arrange and introduce five to eight work samples in a professional portfolio for a specific reader.
- ☐ I can use parallelism, active voice and correct usage in professional writing.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Michael Faraday, The Chemical History of a Candle (Project Gutenberg #14474)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/14474>): Six lectures for young people; a model of clear scientific explanation.
- **William Strunk Jr., The Elements of Style, 1918 edition (Project Gutenberg #37134)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/37134>): Strunk's original rule book, short enough to read in an evening.
- **Booker T. Washington, Up from Slavery (Project Gutenberg #2376)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2376>): Chapters II–III tell of his road to Hampton and the sweeping test.
- **Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (Project Gutenberg #20203)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20203>): Includes his account of raising money for the Pennsylvania Hospital with a matching grant.

- **PlainLanguage.gov guidelines** (<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/>): Free U.S. government guidance on plain writing for the public; useful for lesson 6.3.

6.1 PROPOSALS AND GRANTS: NEHEMIAH'S REQUEST ★

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of a proposal and connect them to the classical exercise of proposing a law (just, advantageous, possible).
- Analyze Nehemiah's request to King Artaxerxes as a model of a short, specific, well-prepared proposal.
- Draft a two-page proposal for a real project, with a need statement, objectives, plan, timeline and budget.

Warm-up. Imagine you have ninety seconds with someone who could fund one project you care about. Write down what you would ask for, how much it costs, and why the person should say yes. Then cross out every sentence that is about you rather than about the project or the people it will serve. What is left?

Video slot. Video coming. How to write a grant proposal (a library, community foundation or university writing-center overview); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

proposal

A document that asks a reader with authority or money to approve a plan, and shows that the plan is needed, sound and possible.

grant

Money given by a foundation, church, business or government body for a stated purpose. It is not repaid, but the giver expects a report on how it was used.

request for proposals (RFP)

The funder's own guidelines: what it will pay for, how much, the deadline, the format and the questions every applicant must answer.

need statement

The section that shows, with evidence, the problem the project will solve. It is about the people served, not about the applicant.

budget justification

A short explanation of each line of the budget: what it buys, how the amount was figured, and why the project needs it.

CORE IDEAS

The last exercise, put to work. The progymnasmata ended with the *proposal of a law*. Aphthonius told the student to argue that a proposed law was lawful, just, advantageous and possible. Aristotle called this kind of speaking *deliberative*: it looks to the future and asks

what we should do. A proposal or grant application is the same exercise in working clothes. You ask a person, a board or a foundation to do something, usually to spend money, and you show that the thing is right, useful and possible. Every proposal, from a church youth-trip request to a research grant, answers four questions: What is the need? What will you do about it? Can you really do it? Why should this reader pay for it?

Nehemiah's proposal. About 445 B.C., Nehemiah was cupbearer to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, in the palace at Shushan. He heard that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and its gates burned, and he mourned and prayed for months. When the king finally asked, "For what dost thou make request?", Nehemiah prayed silently and then answered in a few sentences. He named the project (build the city), asked for leave to go, set a time for his return, requested letters of safe conduct to the governors, and asked for a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, for timber for the gates, the wall and his own house. That is a need, a plan, a timeline and a budget, all in one breath. He had done his homework long before the king asked.

The parts of a proposal. Funders use different headings, but most proposals contain these sections:

1. *Summary*: one paragraph that says who you are, what you will do, for whom, at what cost and by when.
2. *Need*: the problem, shown with facts.
3. *Objectives*: what will be different when you are done, stated so it can be checked.
4. *Plan*: the steps, who does them and how.
5. *Timeline*: dates for each stage.
6. *Budget and justification*: every cost, added correctly and explained.
7. *Qualifications*: why you can be trusted to finish.
8. *Evaluation*: how you and the funder will know it worked.

Read the funder first. Nehemiah began, "If it please the king." He framed his request in terms of what the king would approve. Before you write a word, read the funder's guidelines twice. What does this foundation exist to do? How much does it usually give? What questions must you answer, in what order, in how many words? Many proposals are turned down unread because they missed the deadline, ran over the page limit or asked for something the funder never pays for. Use the funder's own headings, answer every question it asks, and show plainly how your project serves its stated purpose.

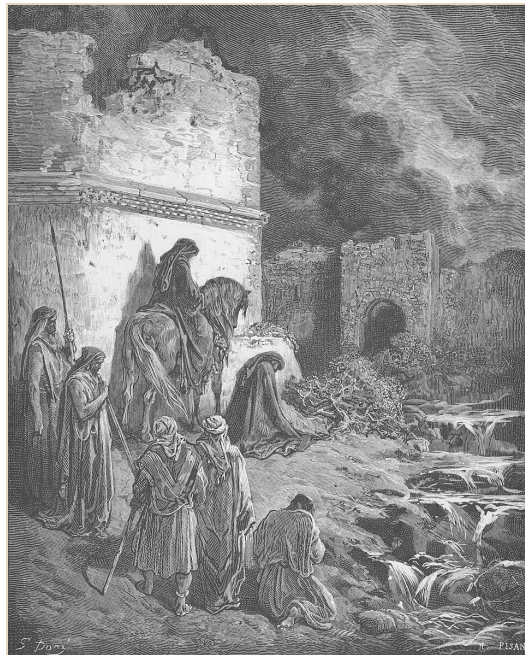
Evidence, numbers and honesty. A need statement persuades by facts, not by adjectives. "Our library's only computer is nine years old and is booked solid from 3 to 6 p.m. every weekday" beats "Our community desperately needs technology." Objectives should be measurable: "Tutor twelve students twice a week for ten weeks," not "Help kids learn." The budget must add up, and each line must be honest. Our Lord asked, "Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost?" Inflating a number or a claim breaks trust with the funder and breaks the command to "speak every man truth with his neighbour" (Ephesians 4:25). Funders talk to one another; a reputation for honest reports is worth more than any one grant.

Style for a busy reader. The person reading your proposal may have forty more on the desk. Put the request in the first paragraph. Use the headings the funder asks for. Keep paragraphs short and verbs active. Write “We will train six volunteers,” not “It is hoped that volunteers may be trained.” Avoid both groveling and boasting; write as one sensible adult to another. Nehemiah did not flatter the king or overstate his case. He asked clearly, he asked specifically, and he gave the credit to God: “the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.”

The model. *Nehemiah 2:4-8, King James Version (1611)*

Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers’ sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

PICTURE STUDY



Nehemiah Views the Ruins of Jerusalem's Walls, Gustave Doré, 1866 · Wood engraving (from *La Grande Bible de Tours*) · Published in the Tours Bible (Paris and Tours, 1866); prints in many library and museum collections

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

After the king granted his request, Nehemiah went to Jerusalem. Before he told anyone his plan, he rode out by night with a few men and looked at the broken walls and burned gates for himself (Nehemiah 2:11-16). Only then did he stand before the rulers and say, "Come, and let us build up the wall" (2:17). Doré shows the night survey: the quiet fact-finding that comes before every good proposal.

Look closely

- Find Nehemiah. How does Doré make him stand out from the men around him?
- Look at the stones and the gate. What do they tell you about how big the job will be?
- Where is the light coming from? What does it show and what does it hide?

Talk about it

1. Write the need statement Nehemiah might have drafted that night: three sentences of plain fact about what he saw.
2. Why might Nehemiah have kept his plan secret until he had seen the walls himself? What does that teach a proposal writer?

WRITING PROJECT: A TWO-PAGE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Choose a real, modest project that someone in your life could actually approve or fund: a garden for your church, a reading program at the library, a used-equipment drive for a 4-H club, a summer business, or a piece of your senior thesis research that needs books or travel.

Write the proposal to one real reader (a pastor, a board, a local foundation, a parent with a budget) and follow that reader's guidelines if there are any.

You will need

- Writing notebook and a word processor
- The funder's guidelines or a short list of questions from your reader
- Real prices (store websites, catalogs or quotes)
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. Do your night survey: gather at least three facts that show the need (counts, dates, costs, a short quotation from someone affected).
2. Write a one-sentence ask: "I request [amount or approval] to [do what] for [whom] by [when]."
3. Draft the need, objectives and plan, each under its own heading. Make every objective measurable.
4. Build a budget table, add it twice, and write one line of justification for each item.
5. Add a timeline, a short qualifications paragraph and a way to report results.
6. Write the summary last and put it first. Keep the whole proposal to two pages.

7. Have an adult who did not help you read it cold and tell you, in one sentence, what you are asking for. If they cannot, revise the summary.

Check your work

- The request, amount and deadline appear in the first paragraph.
- The need is shown with facts, not adjectives.
- Objectives and list items are parallel in grammar (all begin with the same kind of word).
- The budget adds up and every line is explained.
- Verbs are active: “We will build,” not “It will be built.”
- Every claim is true and every number can be checked.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Nehemiah 2:5 by hand. Underline the project, the place and the purpose.
2. List three people or groups in your community who give money or approval for projects, and write what each one cares about.
3. Write five one-sentence asks for five different projects, using the pattern “I request ___ to ___ for ___ by ___.”

History note. Benjamin Franklin may have invented the American matching grant. In his *Autobiography* he tells how, in 1751, he and Dr. Thomas Bond were raising money for the Pennsylvania Hospital. Country members of the Assembly doubted the city could raise its share, so Franklin drafted a bill that gave £2,000 from the public treasury only if private donors first raised £2,000. The condition persuaded both the lawmakers and the donors, and the hospital was built. Two years earlier Franklin had published *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania* (1749), which led to the academy that became the University of Pennsylvania.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism** (Grammar Level 3). Items in a list or series should share the same grammatical form. Weak: “Our objectives are tutoring twelve students, a reading log, and to raise test scores.” Parallel: “Our objectives are to tutor twelve students, to keep a weekly reading log, and to raise each student’s reading level by one grade.” Check every bulleted list in your proposal: if the first item begins with a verb, they all should. Nehemiah’s requests are parallel too: “let letters be given me ... And a letter unto Asaph.”

For families. The proposal of a law (Greek *nomou eisphora*) is the fourteenth and last of Aphthonius’s exercises; this lesson applies it to the most common deliberative writing an adult does. If your student’s proposal is good enough to submit, help them do it, but an adult should review any form that asks for money, tax information or personal data. Many community foundations, Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, 4-H and FFA chapters, and church mission committees accept small proposals from young people. The faith verse for the year is 2 Timothy 4:7, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course”; a proposal

is a promise to finish a course, so encourage your student to propose only what they can complete.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this need statement: “Kids today really need help with reading, and our town is no exception. Reading is so important for their future. We feel strongly that something must be done.”

1. Find the claims with no evidence: “really need,” “so important,” “feel strongly.”
2. Replace them with facts a funder could check: numbers, places, dates, a named source.
3. Keep the focus on the people served, and end by pointing to the plan.

Answer: Sample: “At Grace Church’s after-school program, 14 of the 22 children in grades 2–4 read below grade level, according to the reading checks their teachers gave in September. The program has one volunteer and no books written for beginning readers. Without steady one-on-one practice, these children are likely to fall further behind each year. We propose to recruit six trained volunteers and buy a beginning-reader library so that every child reads aloud to an adult twice a week.”

Example 2. A student’s budget lists “Supplies — \$500.” The funder asks for justification. Take it apart and rebuild it.

1. Ask what the \$500 actually buys. A lump sum hides the cost and invites suspicion.
2. Break it into items with quantities and unit prices from real sources.
3. Check the arithmetic and add one line of purpose for each item.

Answer: Sample: “Leveled readers, 60 books at \$4.50 (publisher catalog): \$270. Reading-log notebooks, 25 at \$2.00: \$50. Shelving unit (hardware store quote): \$129. Volunteer training workbook, 6 at \$8.50: \$51. Total: \$500. The readers give each child books at the right level; the logs let us measure progress for our final report.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What four things did Aphthonius say a proposed law must be shown to be?
2. **EASY** What does RFP stand for, and why should you read it before writing?
3. **EASY** What did Nehemiah do between the king’s question and his answer?
4. **EASY** Name the eight common parts of a proposal.
5. **MEDIUM** Find the timeline and the budget items in Nehemiah 2:4–8.
6. **MEDIUM** Make this objective measurable: “We will help seniors with technology.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a one-paragraph summary for a proposal of your own choosing. It must name who, what, for whom, how much and by when in no more than 90 words.

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed (40 minutes, like the ACT's optional writing test): "Should a town spend its limited money on a new library or on repairing its roads?" Write a deliberative essay that takes one side and shows it is just, useful and possible, and answers the strongest objection.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Burying the request. If the reader must hunt for what you want, the answer is usually no.
- Writing about yourself ("I have always been passionate about ...") instead of the need and the people served.
- Rounding the budget into lump sums or padding it. Every line should be real and explained.
- Ignoring the funder's questions, word limits or deadline.

Make it a game · The Hundred-Bean Board. Family members are the foundation board, each with 100 dried beans. Each player has two minutes to propose a household or church project (with a budget). The board asks one hard question each, then divides its beans among the proposals. Afterward, the winners explain which sentence in each pitch earned the most beans.

Scripture. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" (Luke 14:28, KJV)

A proposal is a counted cost: an honest plan that shows the work can be finished.

Practice: answers

1. Lawful, just, advantageous (useful) and possible.
2. Request for proposals. It tells you what the funder pays for, how much, the deadline, the format and the questions you must answer; ignoring it gets proposals rejected unread.
3. He prayed to the God of heaven (Nehemiah 2:4).
4. Summary, need, objectives, plan, timeline, budget and justification, qualifications, evaluation.
5. Timeline: "I set him a time" for his return. Budget: letters of safe conduct to the governors beyond the river, and timber from the king's forest for the gate beams, the wall and his house.
6. Sample: "Over eight Saturday mornings, two student volunteers will teach at least ten residents of Maple Grove Home to send e-mail and make video calls to family."
7. Sample: "The St. Mark's youth group requests \$640 from the Parish Outreach Fund to build four raised garden beds behind the fellowship hall by May 15. The beds will grow vegetables for the Tuesday food pantry, which now serves 38 families and offers no fresh produce. Six students will build and tend the beds under the guidance of Mr. Alvarez, a master gardener. We will report the pounds of produce given each month through October."
8. Sample outline: Thesis: repair the roads first. Just: every citizen uses the roads, and the town has a duty to keep them safe. Useful: bad roads raise repair costs and slow ambulances and school buses. Possible: the road fund can be matched by a state program this year. Objection:

a library builds minds. Answer: a safe road is the condition for reaching the library; build it next, on sound ground. Conclusion with a call to the council.

6.2 TECHNICAL WRITING: FARADAY’S CANDLE

OBJECTIVES

- Explain how technical writing differs from the essay: it is written to be used, by a reader in the middle of a task.
- Study how Faraday explains a process as a chain of causes, and imitate his method in a short explanation of your own.
- Write a set of numbered instructions in the imperative mood, test them on a real user, and revise.

Warm-up. Without looking anything up, write instructions for tying a shoelace for someone who has never done it. Then hand your page to someone in the family and have them follow it exactly, doing only what the words say. Where did they get stuck?

Video slot. Video coming. Michael Faraday’s Chemical History of a Candle demonstration (the Royal Institution or a science museum); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

technical writing

Writing that helps a reader understand or do something practical: instructions, manuals, procedures, specifications and reports.

procedure

A numbered set of steps that a reader follows in order to complete one task.

audience analysis

Deciding before you write who the reader is, what the reader already knows, and what the reader will do with your words.

usability test

Watching a real reader try to use your document, without your help, and noting where the reader hesitates or goes wrong.

caution and warning

A caution warns of possible damage to equipment or work; a warning warns of possible injury. Both go before the step they concern, never after.

CORE IDEAS

Writing that gets used. Most essays are read in a chair from beginning to end. Technical writing is read at a workbench, beside a machine or in a kitchen, often one step at a time, with the reader’s hands full and attention divided. Its reader does not want to be moved or delighted; the reader wants to get the job done safely and correctly. That changes everything about style. The best technical writing is clear, complete, consistent and short. It is also one

of the most valuable skills you can bring to any trade: engineers, nurses, electricians, programmers, farmers and pastors all write procedures, reports and explanations that others must act on.

Faraday's method. Michael Faraday began as a bookbinder's apprentice with little schooling and became one of the great scientists of the nineteenth century. He was also a devout Christian who loved to explain science to young people. In the winter of 1848 he gave six Christmas lectures at the Royal Institution in London on a single candle; they were later published as *The Chemical History of a Candle* (1861). In the passage below he explains why a burning candle forms a cup of melted wax. Notice how he builds a chain: the heat makes a current of air; the air rises along the sides; it cools the edge; the edge stays solid; the solid edge holds the melted fuel. Each clause is one link. He even tells what happens if a link breaks: a current from one side makes the cup lop-sided, and the wax gutters.

Know your reader and the task. Before writing, answer three questions. Who will read this? (A first-time user, or a trained technician?) What does the reader already know? (Does "torque the bolt" mean anything to this reader?) What will the reader do with it? (Assemble, repair, decide, or simply understand?) Faraday spoke to a hall of young listeners, so he used plain words, showed the real candle, and moved from what they could see to what they could not. Define every technical term the first time you use it, and then use the same term every time. If you call a part "the wick" in step 2, do not call it "the string" in step 5; the reader will think it is a different part.

How to write a procedure. Good instructions follow a few firm rules.

1. Give a clear title that names the task: "Changing a Bicycle Inner Tube."
2. List tools and materials first, so the reader does not stop halfway to hunt for a wrench.
3. Number the steps and put one action in each step.
4. Begin each step with a verb in the imperative mood: "Loosen," "Lift," "Pour."
5. Put conditions and warnings before the action: "If the tire is still hot, wait ten minutes. Then remove the cap."
6. Tell the reader what should happen, so he knows he did it right: "The light turns green."

Layout is part of the writing. A technical reader looks away from the page and must find the place again. Use headings, numbers, white space and labeled diagrams. Put things that can be compared into a table. Keep sentences short, but not so short that the meaning is lost; "Tighten nut" is not as clear as "Tighten the axle nut by hand until it stops." Use exact measurements and names: "a 15 mm wrench," not "a wrench of the right size."

Test it on a real person. You cannot proofread your own instructions by reading them, because you already know how to do the task and your mind fills every gap. Give the page to someone who has never done the task. Watch in silence. Mark every place where the reader pauses, asks a question or makes a mistake. Each mark is a sentence to rewrite. Faraday tested his explanations with demonstrations in front of the audience; you test yours with a user.

Craft is a gift. When God told Moses to build the tabernacle, He gave exact specifications, “according to all that I shew thee, after the pattern” (Exodus 25:9), and He filled Bezalel “with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship” (Exodus 31:3). David later gave Solomon the written pattern of the temple. Careful, exact instructions are not dull; they are a way of loving the neighbor who must use them, and of honoring the God who made an orderly world.

The model. *Michael Faraday, The Chemical History of a Candle (1861), Lecture I, Project Gutenberg #14474*

You see, then, in the first instance, that a beautiful cup is formed. As the air comes to the candle it moves upwards by the force of the current which the heat of the candle produces, and it so cools all the sides of the wax, tallow, or fuel, as to keep the edge much cooler than the part within; the part within melts by the flame that runs down the wick as far as it can go before it is extinguished, but the part on the outside does not melt. If I made a current in one direction, my cup would be lop-sided, and the fluid would consequently run over,—for the same force of gravity which holds worlds together holds this fluid in a horizontal position, and if the cup be not horizontal, of course the fluid will run away in guttering. You see, therefore, that the cup is formed by this beautifully regular ascending current of air playing upon all sides, which keeps the exterior of the candle cool. No fuel would serve for a candle which has not the property of giving this cup, except such fuel as the Irish bogwood, where the material itself is like a sponge, and holds its own fuel.

PICTURE STUDY



A Philosopher Lecturing on the Orrery, Joseph Wright of Derby, about 1766 · Oil on canvas · Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby, England
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

An orrery is a clockwork model of the solar system. Wright painted a lecturer explaining one by candlelight, with a lamp standing in for the sun. Children lean over the rail, a young man takes notes, and every face is lit by the thing being explained. It is a picture of what good technical writing does: it makes a hidden working visible.

Look closely

- Find the man taking notes. What do you think he is writing down?
- Look at the children's faces. Which one seems to understand, and which one seems still puzzled?
- The lamp itself is hidden. Why might Wright hide the light source but show everything it lights?

Talk about it

1. Write the note-taker's page: five short numbered statements that explain what an orrery shows.
2. The lecturer has a real model in front of him. What can a writer use in place of a model? Give three answers.

WRITING PROJECT: INSTRUCTIONS AND AN EXPLANATION, TESTED

Choose a real task you know well and someone else does not: changing a bicycle inner tube, starting a sourdough culture, backing up a phone, sharpening a chisel, setting up a sound system for church, canning tomatoes.

You will write two short pieces: a procedure that tells how, and a one-paragraph explanation in Faraday's manner that tells why it works.

You will need

- Writing notebook and a word processor
- The real tools and materials for your task
- A family member or friend who has never done the task
- A pencil for marking the test

Steps

1. Write an audience note: who the reader is, what the reader knows, and what the reader will do with your page.
2. Do the task yourself slowly and write down every action as you do it.
3. Turn your notes into a procedure: title, materials list, numbered steps, one action each, imperative verbs, warnings before the step.
4. Write a 120–180-word paragraph that explains why the process works, as a chain of causes like Faraday's.
5. Run a usability test. Watch your reader follow the page without help; mark every pause, question and mistake.

6. Revise each marked step, then test once more with a different reader if you can.
7. Add one simple labeled sketch or table where it saves words.

Check your work

- Every step begins with a verb in the imperative mood.
- Each step contains one action.
- Active voice is used unless the doer is unknown or unimportant.
- Every warning or condition comes before the step it applies to.
- Each technical term is defined once and then used the same way every time.
- A real user completed the task with my page, and I revised where the user stumbled.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Faraday's sentence that begins "You see, therefore, that the cup is formed ..." and underline the cause and the effect.
2. Imitate it: "You see, therefore, that [result] is formed by [cause], which [effect]." Write three versions for three different processes (bread rising, ice floating, a kite flying).
3. List ten verbs you would use to begin steps in your project.

History note. Faraday was born in 1791, the son of a blacksmith. Apprenticed to a London bookbinder, he read the science books he bound, attended Humphry Davy's lectures at the Royal Institution, and sent Davy a bound copy of his careful notes. Davy hired him as an assistant in 1813. Faraday went on to discover electromagnetic induction, the principle behind the electric generator. He began the Royal Institution's Christmas Lectures for young people in 1825, and they are still given today. He belonged all his life to a small Christian congregation, the Sandemanians, and served as an elder there.

 **Style Clinic. Voice and mood** (Grammar Level 3). Instructions use the *imperative mood*, with the subject "you" understood: "Remove the wheel." Explanations usually use the *indicative mood*: "The air cools the edge." Prefer the *active voice*, which names who acts: not "The valve should be opened" but "Open the valve." The passive is right when the doer is unknown or does not matter: "The Brooklyn Bridge was opened in 1883." Go through your procedure and circle every passive verb; change each one to active unless you can say why the passive is better.

For families. The model is copied from the Project Gutenberg text of *The Chemical History of a Candle* (1861), edited by William Crookes from Faraday's 1848 lectures. If your student chooses a project with fire, blades, electricity or chemicals, supervise the usability test and check that every warning is correct and placed before the step. Technical writing is a well-paid career in its own right, and nearly every trade rewards the worker who can write a clear procedure or incident report.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this step: “3. The tire should then be taken off, being careful of the tube which can be pinched, and then you will want to check inside for whatever caused the flat, and the tire levers are used for this.”

1. Count the actions: remove the tire, avoid pinching the tube, check for the cause. That is three steps hiding in one.
2. Change passive verbs to imperative ones and begin each step with a verb.
3. Move the caution before the action, and say what tool to use when it is needed.

Answer: “3. Hook two tire levers under the edge of the tire, about four inches apart. Caution: keep the levers outside the inner tube so you do not pinch it. 4. Pry the edge of the tire over the rim and slide one lever around the wheel until the side comes free. 5. Run your fingers slowly around the inside of the tire to find the thorn, glass or wire that caused the flat, and remove it.”

Example 2. A student writes: “Yeast makes bread rise.” Expand it into a short causal explanation in Faraday’s manner.

1. Ask what happens first, then next, then next. Each answer is one link.
2. Name what happens if a link breaks.
3. End with a sentence that gathers the chain: “You see, therefore ...”

Answer: Sample: “When yeast is mixed into warm dough, it feeds on the sugars in the flour and gives off tiny bubbles of gas. The kneaded dough is stretchy, so it traps the bubbles instead of letting them escape, and the loaf swells. If the water is too hot, the yeast dies and no gas is made; if the dough is not kneaded, the gas leaks out and the loaf stays flat. You see, therefore, that the rise comes from living yeast making gas inside a dough strong enough to hold it.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How does the reader of technical writing differ from the reader of an essay?
2. **EASY** What mood should the verbs in a procedure use?
3. **EASY** Where does a warning belong, and why?
4. **EASY** According to Faraday, what keeps the outside edge of the candle from melting?
5. **MEDIUM** What does Faraday say happens if the air current comes from one direction?
6. **MEDIUM** Find the problem and fix it: “1. Fill the kettle. 2. Plug in the kettle. 3. Switch on the boiler. 4. When the heater clicks off, pour.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a five-step procedure for making a pot of coffee or tea for someone who has never used your kitchen. Include a materials list and one caution.

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed (25 minutes): Explain to a curious twelve-year-old how one familiar machine works (a bicycle's gears, a refrigerator, a lock and key). Use a chain of causes, define every technical term, and end with a "You see, therefore" sentence.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Putting two or three actions in one step.
- Using different names for the same part.
- Writing for yourself instead of a first-time user, so that obvious-to-you steps are left out.
- Skipping the usability test because the page "reads fine."

Make it a game · Blind Builder. One player builds a small shape from ten blocks or LEGO bricks behind a screen and writes instructions for it. Another player, who has not seen it, builds from the written instructions only. Compare the two models, find the step that caused each difference, and rewrite it. Then switch roles.

Scripture. "All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." (1 Chronicles 28:19, KJV)

The temple was built from a written pattern; exact, faithful instructions are part of good work done for the Lord.

Practice: answers

1. The technical reader is usually in the middle of a task, often reading one step at a time, and wants to get the job done safely and correctly rather than to be moved or entertained.
2. The imperative mood: "Remove," "Tighten," "Pour."
3. Before the step it concerns, because the reader may already have done the dangerous action before reading a warning placed after it.
4. The rising current of air, drawn up by the candle's heat, cools the sides and keeps the edge cooler than the inside.
5. The cup becomes lop-sided, and the melted fuel runs over and gutters.
6. The same object is called kettle, boiler and heater, which suggests three different things. Fix: "1. Fill the kettle. 2. Plug it in. 3. Switch the kettle on. 4. When the kettle clicks off, pour the water."
7. Sample: Making Tea in the Brown Teapot. You need: the kettle, the brown teapot, two tea bags, a mug. 1. Fill the kettle to the 4-cup line and switch it on. 2. Put two tea bags in the teapot. 3. Caution: the kettle handle is hot when it clicks off; use the black grip only. When the kettle clicks off, pour the water into the teapot. 4. Wait four minutes. 5. Remove the tea bags and pour the tea into the mug.
8. Sample opening: "When you turn a key in a pin-tumbler lock, you are lining up a row of tiny metal pins. Each pin is cut in two, and a spring pushes the pair down into the cylinder, the part that turns. The jagged edge of the right key lifts each pair just far enough that the cut lands exactly at the edge of the cylinder ..." The essay continues link by link and ends: "You see, therefore, that a lock opens only when every pin is lifted to its own height at once."

6.3 WRITING FOR THE WEB: PLAIN, SHORT AND FINDABLE

OBJECTIVES

- Describe how people read on screens (scanning, the inverted pyramid) and why it changes the way we write.
- Apply Strunk’s rule “Omit needless words” to cut a web page by a third without losing meaning.
- Write a short web page with a clear headline, a summary first, useful headings, descriptive links and alt text.

Warm-up. Open any website you use often (a church, a library, a business). Give yourself ten seconds to find one fact on it: hours, an address, a price. Did you read the page or hunt through it? Write down what helped you find the fact and what got in the way.

Video slot. Video coming. Writing for the web: plain language and how people scan web pages (a library, university writing center or government plain-language program); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

scanning

Reading by glancing over headings, first words and links to find what one needs, rather than reading every word in order.

inverted pyramid

A way of arranging news and web writing so that the most important facts come first and details follow in order of importance.

front-loading

Putting the key words at the beginning of a headline, heading, sentence or link, where scanning eyes land.

descriptive link

Link text that tells where it goes (“2026 summer camp schedule”) instead of “click here” or “read more.”

alt text

A short written description of an image, read aloud by screen readers for blind users and shown when the image fails to load.

CORE IDEAS

Readers hunt. People rarely read web pages from top to bottom. They arrive with a question (What time is the service? How much does it cost? How do I apply?) and they hunt for the answer. In 2006 the researcher Jakob Nielsen tracked readers’ eyes and found that

many scanned in a rough F shape: across the top, across a little lower, then down the left edge, reading the first words of lines and stopping only when something matched their question. A web writer's job is to put the answer where the eye already goes. The prophet Habakkuk was told to "write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Web readers are runners.

The inverted pyramid. Nineteenth-century newspaper writers learned to put the most important fact in the first sentence, then the next most important, and so on, so that an editor could cut from the bottom and a reader could stop anywhere and still have the main point. The web rewards the same order. Lead with the answer. Then give what the reader needs to act on it (where, when, how much, how). Put background, history and fine print last. This is the classical canon of *arrangement* serving a hurried reader: what comes first is what matters most.

Omit needless words. In 1918 William Strunk Jr., a professor of English at Cornell University, printed a little rule book for his students called *The Elements of Style*. One of his students, E. B. White, later revised and expanded it, but Strunk's original is short, public domain and still sharp. His thirteenth rule, below, is the first law of web writing. Every extra word on a screen is a word a scanning reader must step over to reach the one she came for. Notice that Strunk does not say "write only short sentences." He says that "every word tell." A long, rich sentence is fine if each word does work.

Shape the page for the eye. Write a headline that says what the page is about, front-loaded with the key word: "Summer Reading Program: Sign Up by June 1," not "Exciting News for Families!" Open with a one- or two-sentence summary. Break the page with headings that could stand alone as a table of contents. Keep paragraphs to one idea and two to four sentences. Use a bulleted or numbered list for anything with steps or items. Use bold sparingly, for the few words a scanner must not miss.

Links and images that work for everyone. A link is a promise about where the reader will go. Write link text that keeps the promise: "Download the 2026 registration form (PDF)," not "click here." Screen-reader users often jump from link to link, hearing only the link text, so "click here" ten times tells them nothing. Every meaningful image needs alt text that says what the picture shows and why it is there: "Volunteers sorting canned food in the church hall." A decorative border needs no description. Writing so that blind and older readers can use a page is simply good manners, and in many cases the law requires it.

Plain language is a courtesy. Use the words your reader uses. Say "fill out" rather than "complete the requisite documentation," and "start" rather than "initiate." Define any term your reader may not know. Write in the active voice and speak to the reader as "you." Government agencies in the United States are now required to write plainly to the public, because muddy writing costs time and money. Plain writing is not childish; it is the hardest kind to do, because the writer does the work so that the reader does not have to.

Truth and grace on a screen. What you post may be copied, saved and searched for years. Headlines written to trick a reader into clicking ("You won't believe what happened next") break trust, and a reader who has been tricked once does not come back. Write nothing on

the web that you would not sign with your full name in front of your pastor and your future employer. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" (Colossians 4:6) applies to posts, reviews and comments as much as to conversation.

The model. *William Strunk Jr., The Elements of Style (1918), Rule 13, Project Gutenberg #37134*

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that he make every word tell.

Many expressions in common use violate this principle:

the question as to whether

whether (the question whether)

there is no doubt but that

no doubt (doubtless)

used for fuel purposes

used for fuel

he is a man who

he

in a hasty manner

hastily

this is a subject which

this subject

His story is a strange one.

His story is strange.

In especial the expression *the fact that* should be revised out of every sentence in which it occurs

PICTURE STUDY



War News from Mexico, Richard Caton Woodville, 1848 · Oil on canvas · Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In 1848, news of the war with Mexico reached small American towns by telegraph and newspaper. Woodville painted a crowd on the porch of a country hotel that doubles as a post office, all straining toward one man reading the latest paper aloud. Each listener wants one thing from the page, and fast. On the step below the porch sit a Black man, probably enslaved, and a little girl in a ragged dress. They are outside the circle of readers, yet the news concerns them too. A page written for many readers should serve all of them.

Look closely

- Find the reader. Where are the other men looking, and what does that tell you about the headline?
- Find the old man cupping his ear. What does he need from the reader?
- Look at the figures on the step below. How does Woodville show that they are outside the group?

Talk about it

1. Write the headline and two-sentence summary that the man is reading, in inverted-pyramid order.
2. Each person on the porch wants something different from the news. Write three headings that would help three of them find their part of the story.

WRITING PROJECT: ONE WEB PAGE, WRITTEN TO BE FOUND

Write or rewrite one page for a real organization you know: your church's nursery or food-pantry page, a family business's "About" or "Hours and Prices" page, a co-op's frequently asked questions, or a page for your senior thesis defense announcing the time and place.

Do not publish anything without permission from the person responsible for the site.

You will need

- Writing notebook and a word processor
- The current page, if one exists, printed or saved
- Answers to the five questions visitors ask most (ask the person who answers the phone)

Steps

1. List the top five questions a visitor brings to this page. Put them in order of importance.
2. Write a front-loaded headline and a one- or two-sentence summary that answers the most important question.
3. Arrange the rest in inverted-pyramid order under three to five headings, each of which makes sense on its own.
4. Write the body, 300–400 words, in short paragraphs, with at least one list.
5. Add three descriptive links and alt text for one image.
6. Cut. Apply Strunk's Rule 13 and remove at least one word in every four from your first draft.
7. Write a meta description (the 150-character summary search engines show) and test the page on a reader: can the reader find the top three answers in thirty seconds?

Check your work

- The headline and first sentence answer the reader's main question.
- Headings are parallel in form and could serve as a table of contents.
- Wordy phrases have been cut to single words ("in order to" to "to").
- No link says "click here" or "read more."
- Every meaningful image has alt text.
- Facts, dates, prices and names have been checked with the organization.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Strunk's first paragraph of Rule 13 by hand.
2. Start a "needless words" page: list ten wordy phrases you catch in your own writing or in mail and advertisements, with the short form beside each, in Strunk's two-column style.
3. Rewrite three vague headlines from advertisements or newsletters so that the key word comes first.

History note. The inverted pyramid is often linked to the telegraph age. Reporters in the American Civil War sent stories over lines that could be cut or rationed, so the most important fact had to come first. Historians debate how quickly the form spread, but by the end of the nineteenth century it was standard in American newspapers. Strunk's little book was first printed privately in 1918 for his Cornell students. E. B. White's revised edition (1959) is under copyright; the 1918 original on Project Gutenberg is free.

 **Style Clinic. Phrases** (Grammar Level 3). Wordy writing often hides in stacks of prepositional phrases and in phrases that stand in for a single word. "At this point in time" means "now." "In order to" means "to." "Due to the fact that" means "because." Strings of "of" phrases are another warning sign: "the results of the survey of the members of the committee" becomes "the committee members' survey results." Find every phrase of three or more words in your page and ask whether one word, or none, would do. Keep the phrases that add real information: "on Tuesday," "behind the fellowship hall."

For families. Strunk's Rule 13 is copied from the 1918 edition on Project Gutenberg; the italics follow his text. The Nielsen eye-tracking study is a well-known 2006 report from the Nielsen Norman Group; your student need not memorize it. The painting includes an elderly Black man and a girl who were probably enslaved; Woodville placed them outside the porch, and you may want to talk with your student about how the artist shows who was and was not part of public life in 1848. If your student publishes the project page, an adult should approve it and confirm that it shares no private information such as a home address or a child's full name.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this opening of a church web page: "Welcome! We are so glad you stopped by our website today. Our church has a long and rich history going back many years, and we are always excited to welcome new families. If you are interested in finding out about our service times, please click here."

1. Find the visitor's real question: when and where are services?
2. Cut the warm-up sentences that say nothing a visitor can use.
3. Lead with the answer, then give the next most useful facts, and make the link descriptive.

Answer: "Sunday Worship: 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Grace Church, 214 Elm Street, Millbrook. Parking is behind the building. A staffed nursery is open during both services, and Sunday school for all ages meets at 10:00.

Link: Directions and parking map." (Shorter than the original, and every line is a fact a visitor can use.)

Example 2. Apply Rule 13 to this sentence: “Due to the fact that there are a limited number of spaces available, it is our recommendation that you register at an early date in order to secure a place for your child.”

1. Replace phrases with words: “due to the fact that” to “because”; “at an early date” to “early”; “in order to” to “to.”
2. Turn the noun “recommendation” back into a verb, and speak to the reader directly.
3. Cut what the reader already knows.

Answer: “Spaces are limited, so register early.” (From 33 words to 6.)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the inverted pyramid?
2. **EASY** Why is “click here” poor link text?
3. **EASY** Give Strunk’s short form for “he is a man who” and “in a hasty manner.”
4. **EASY** What does Strunk say he does not require when he says “omit needless words”?
5. **MEDIUM** Front-load this headline: “Announcing That There Will Be a Change to Our Library Hours Beginning in March.”
6. **MEDIUM** Write alt text for a photo on a farm stand’s page that shows a table of tomatoes, peppers and sweet corn with handwritten price signs.
7. **CHALLENGE** Cut this paragraph by at least half: “It is important to note that all students who are interested in participating in the spring debate tournament will need to make sure that they submit their completed registration forms to the office no later than the date of Friday, March 6. Forms that are received after that date will unfortunately not be able to be accepted.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed (25 minutes; concision is tested on the SAT, ACT and CLT): Write a 150-word web announcement for your senior thesis defense. Include a headline, a summary sentence, when and where, who may attend, and one descriptive link. Then cut it to 100 words.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Opening with a welcome or a history instead of the answer the reader came for.
- Clever or vague headings (“The Journey Begins”) that tell a scanner nothing.
- Long paragraphs that look like a wall on a phone screen.
- Posting without checking facts, dates and permission.

Make it a game • Ten-Second Hunt. One player prints or opens a web page and names a fact to find. The others race to find it. Then the group rewrites the headline or first heading so the next player could find the same fact in half the time. Keep score across three pages; the winner is the best rewrite, not the fastest finder.

Scripture. “And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.” (Habakkuk 2:2, KJV)

Plain writing serves the reader in a hurry; the web is full of readers who run.

Practice: answers

1. An arrangement that puts the most important facts first and the least important last.
2. It does not tell the reader where the link goes, scanners skip it, and screen-reader users who jump from link to link hear nothing useful.
3. “He” and “hastily.”
4. He does not require that all sentences be short or that the writer avoid all detail; he requires that every word tell.
5. Sample: “Library Hours Change March 1: Open Until 8 p.m. Weekdays.”
6. Sample: “Farm stand table with baskets of tomatoes, peppers and sweet corn, each marked with a handwritten price.”
7. Sample: “To enter the spring debate tournament, turn in your registration form at the office by Friday, March 6. We cannot accept late forms.” (From 57 words to 23.)
8. Sample (final): “Senior Thesis Defense: ‘Was Nehemiah a Good Administrator?’
Anna Reyes will defend her senior thesis on Friday, May 8, at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Grace Church, 214 Elm Street. A panel of three readers will question her for forty minutes; guests may ask questions afterward. Family, friends and younger students are welcome; light refreshments follow.
Link: Read the thesis abstract (one page).”

6.4 A PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO: LET THE WORK SPEAK

OBJECTIVES

- Explain why a portfolio of real work persuades an employer or college more than claims about yourself.
- Choose and arrange five to eight pieces that show range and quality, using the classical canon of arrangement.
- Write a headnote for each piece and assemble a finished portfolio with a contents page, résumé and cover letter.

Warm-up. Write two sentences about yourself for an employer. In the first, describe one of your qualities with an adjective (“I am hard-working”). In the second, describe one thing you actually did that shows it (“I kept the books for my father’s lawn business for two summers, with no errors on the year-end tax review”). Which sentence would you believe if you were the employer?

Video slot. Video coming. Booker T. Washington and Hampton Institute (a museum, library or historic-site biography); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

portfolio

A selected, arranged collection of your best finished work, presented to show a reader what you can do.

work sample

One piece in a portfolio: a real document you wrote, such as a report, a proposal, a set of instructions or an essay.

headnote

A short note (three to five sentences) before each sample that tells what it is, whom it was for, what your part was, and what came of it.

curation

The work of choosing what to include and, harder, what to leave out, so that the collection fits its reader.

reference

A person who has supervised or taught you and has agreed to tell an employer or college about your work and character.

CORE IDEAS

The sweeping test. In 1872 a poor young man named Booker T. Washington arrived at Hampton Institute in Virginia after a journey of some five hundred miles, much of it on foot.

He had little money and looked, he admitted, like “a worthless loafer or tramp.” The head teacher did not ask for a list of his qualities. She gave him a broom. What he did with it, told in the passage below, was the only examination that mattered. A portfolio works the same way. Anyone can write “strong communication skills” on a résumé. A portfolio hands the reader the broom and the swept room: the actual proposal, the actual instructions, the actual essay.

Why employers and colleges ask for it. Many jobs that involve writing (and most do) ask for writing samples. Colleges ask for graded papers; scholarship committees ask for essays; editors ask for clips. A good portfolio also helps you. When an interviewer says, “Tell me about a time you solved a problem,” you can open to your proposal and walk through it. “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings.” Diligence is shown, not announced.

Choosing the pieces. This year you have written a senior thesis, a defense, a chapter of fiction, a chapbook of poems, a proposal, a procedure and a web page, and you will soon write a commencement speech. Do not include everything. Choose five to eight pieces that show range (different forms, different readers) and quality (finished, revised, error-free). Then tailor: a student applying to an engineering program leads with the technical writing and the thesis; a student applying to a newspaper leads with the web page and an essay. Keep a larger *master portfolio* of everything good, and pull a short one from it for each reader. Leaving out a good piece is not a loss; it is curation.

Headnotes tell the story. A reader looking at your proposal does not know whether it was a classroom exercise or a real request that brought in \$640. Tell the reader in a headnote: what the piece is, whom it was written for, your part in it, and the result. “Proposal to the St. Mark’s Outreach Fund, March 2027. I researched, wrote and presented this request on behalf of our youth group. Funded in full; the garden gave 212 pounds of produce to the food pantry by October.” Be exact and be honest. If a teacher edited the piece heavily or a classmate co-wrote it, say so. Ephesians 4:25 does not stop applying in a job search.

Arranging the portfolio. Arrangement is the second canon of rhetoric, and it applies to a collection as much as to a speech. Quintilian advised orators to place their strongest arguments first and last and their weaker ones in the middle, an order he traced back to Homer: in the *Iliad*, old Nestor puts his chariots in front, his best foot soldiers behind, and his least reliable men between them. Open with the piece that best matches the reader’s purpose. End with a piece that shows character as well as skill. Put a contents page at the front so the reader can go straight to what interests him.

Finish and format. A portfolio is itself a work sample, so it must look finished. Use one clean font, consistent headings, page numbers and a cover page with your name and contact e-mail. Save it as a single PDF with a sensible file name (“Reyes_Anna_Writing_Portfolio_2027.pdf”), and keep a printed copy in a simple binder for interviews. If you build a portfolio web page, apply everything from lesson 6.3, and keep private information off it: no home address, no birth date, no photographs of younger

siblings. Proofread every page aloud. One typo on a cover page can undo the impression of eight good pieces.

Faithful in that which is least. Washington swept the room three times and dusted it four, though the job only required once. He knew his future hung on it, but his habit of thorough work came from years of being trained to do small jobs well. A portfolio is not a performance put on for one day; it is the record of many ordinary days of careful work. “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much” (Luke 16:10).

The model. *Booker T. Washington, Up from Slavery (1901), Chapter III, Project Gutenberg #2376*

After some hours had passed, the head teacher said to me: “The adjoining recitation-room needs sweeping. Take the broom and sweep it.”

It occurred to me at once that here was my chance. Never did I receive an order with more delight. I knew that I could sweep, for Mrs. Ruffner had thoroughly taught me how to do that when I lived with her.

I swept the recitation-room three times. Then I got a dusting-cloth and dusted it four times. All the woodwork around the walls, every bench, table, and desk, I went over four times with my dusting-cloth. Besides, every piece of furniture had been moved and every closet and corner in the room had been thoroughly cleaned. I had the feeling that in a large measure my future depended upon the impression I made upon the teacher in the cleaning of that room. When I was through, I reported to the head teacher. She was a “Yankee” woman who knew just where to look for dirt. She went into the room and inspected the floor and closets; then she took her handkerchief and rubbed it on the woodwork about the walls, and over the table and benches. When she was unable to find one bit of dirt on the floor, or a particle of dust on any of the furniture, she quietly remarked, “I guess you will do to enter this institution.”

I was one of the happiest souls on Earth. The sweeping of that room was my college examination, and never did any youth pass an examination for entrance into Harvard or Yale that gave him more genuine satisfaction.

PICTURE STUDY



The Syndics of the Drapers' Guild (De Staalmeesters), Rembrandt van Rijn, 1662 · Oil on canvas ·
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The *staalmeesters*, or sampling officials, were chosen each year by the Amsterdam clothmakers' guild to inspect samples of dyed cloth and judge whether the quality was good enough to sell. Rembrandt painted five of them at their table, with their servant behind, as if someone has just entered the room and they have all looked up at once. They are the kind of readers your portfolio will meet: experienced, fair and hard to fool, judging the work itself.

Look closely

- Find the open book on the table. What might be written in it?
- Find the man who is half-rising from his chair. What might he be about to do or say?
- Who is the one man without a hat? How does Rembrandt show that he has a different role?

Talk about it

1. Imagine you have just handed these five men your portfolio. Write the comment each might make, one sentence apiece.
2. The syndics judged cloth by samples, not by the weaver's description. Write a short paragraph comparing their work to an employer reading your portfolio.

WRITING PROJECT: THE PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

Assemble a writing portfolio for one real reader: a college, a scholarship committee, an employer or an apprenticeship. You will keep and update it after graduation.

Your Unit 8 ten-year portfolio will gather everything; this one is short, chosen and aimed.

You will need

- Your finished writing from Grades 9–12, especially the senior thesis and Units 4–6
- A word processor that saves to PDF
- Your résumé and a cover letter (from earlier high-school lessons, updated)
- A simple binder or folder for the printed copy

Steps

1. Name your reader and write one sentence about what that reader most needs to see.
2. Gather every finished piece into a master folder. Then choose five to eight for this reader.
3. Arrange them: strongest and most relevant first, a strong piece of character last, the rest between.
4. Write a headnote of three to five sentences for each piece: what, for whom, your role, the result.
5. Update your résumé and write a cover letter that points to two pieces by name.
6. Build the document: cover page, contents page, cover letter, résumé, samples with headnotes, a list of two or three references (with their permission).
7. Proofread every page aloud, save one PDF, print one copy, and ask an adult outside your family to review it as the reader would.

Check your work

- Every piece is finished, revised and free of errors.
- Each headnote states the piece, the reader, my role and the result, honestly.
- Résumé bullets and headnotes keep a consistent tense and parallel form.
- Commonly confused words (affect and effect, principal and principle, complement and compliment) are used correctly.
- Fonts, headings and page numbers are consistent throughout.
- No private information appears, and every reference has agreed to be listed.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Washington's sentence "The sweeping of that room was my college examination ..." to the end of the passage.
2. Make a two-column list: every finished piece you have written in high school, and beside each, one reader who would want to see it.
3. Write three headnotes for three pieces, each in five sentences or fewer.

History note. Booker T. Washington (about 1856–1915) was born into slavery in Virginia. After emancipation he worked in West Virginia salt furnaces and coal mines, and as a houseboy for Mrs. Viola Ruffner, a demanding employer who taught him to do every task thoroughly. He walked and begged rides much of the way to Hampton, worked as a

janitor to pay his board, and graduated in 1875. In 1881 he became the first head of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, where students built many of the school's buildings with bricks they made themselves. *Up from Slavery* (1901) became one of the best-known American autobiographies.

 **Style Clinic. Usage** (Grammar Level 3). Professional readers notice small usage slips. Keep tense consistent: résumé bullets for past jobs use the past tense (“Trained six volunteers”), and bullets for current work use the present (“Train six volunteers each semester”); do not mix them in one list. Watch the commonly confused pairs: *affect* (verb, to influence) and *effect* (noun, a result); *principal* (chief, or the head of a school) and *principle* (a rule or truth); *complement* (to complete) and *compliment* (to praise); *its* (possessive) and *it's* (it is). Search your portfolio for each pair before you print.

For families. The model is copied from the Project Gutenberg text of *Up from Slavery*; the “Yankee” head teacher was Miss Mary F. Mackie, whom Washington names later in the book. This lesson pulls together the career writing of Grades 9–12 (letters, résumés, reports, the college essay) with this unit’s proposal, procedure and web page. Help your student find an adult outside the family (an employer, pastor or mentor) to review the finished portfolio, and keep both the PDF and the printed copy somewhere safe; your student will add to it in Unit 8 and after graduation.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this headnote: “This is a really good proposal I wrote. I worked super hard on it and I think it shows my skills. My teacher said it was one of the best she had seen.”

1. Find what the reader needs and does not get: what the proposal was for, to whom, your role, the result.
2. Replace claims about yourself (“really good,” “super hard”) with facts.
3. Keep a teacher’s praise only if it is specific and can be checked; otherwise let the result speak.

Answer: “Proposal to the St. Mark’s Parish Outreach Fund (two pages, March 2027). I gathered the need data, built the budget and presented the request to the committee on behalf of our youth group. The committee funded the full \$640. Our four raised beds gave 212 pounds of vegetables to the Tuesday food pantry between June and October, and my final report is included after the proposal.”

Example 2. A student applying for an apprenticeship with an electrical contractor has these pieces: senior thesis on Faraday, short story, chapbook of poems, procedure for wiring a three-way switch, web page for a family farm, proposal for a church garden. Choose and arrange five.

1. Name the reader's need: clear, accurate technical work and evidence of reliability.
2. Put the most relevant piece first and a strong piece of character last.
3. Leave out work that does not serve this reader, even if it is good.

Answer: 1. Procedure for wiring a three-way switch (most relevant; shows accuracy and safety). 2. Senior thesis on Faraday, excerpt with abstract (sustained research on the reader's field). 3. Proposal for the church garden (planning, budgeting, follow-through). 4. Web page for the family farm (clear writing for customers). 5. The proposal's final report, or a reference letter, to close on reliability. The story and chapbook stay in the master portfolio for another reader.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the difference between a master portfolio and a portfolio for one reader?
2. **EASY** Name the four things a headnote should tell.
3. **EASY** How many times did Washington sweep the room, and how many times did he dust it?
4. **EASY** How did the head teacher check his work?
5. **MEDIUM** What is the "Homeric" order of arrangement, and how does it apply to a portfolio?
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the usage and tense in these résumé bullets: "Trained new volunteers, effecting a 20% rise in attendance; Organize the principle fundraising event each spring; Wrote the church newsletter."
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a cover-letter paragraph that points the reader to two specific portfolio pieces and tells why each matters to this reader.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed (40 minutes, like the ACT's optional writing test): "Some say that what a person has done matters more than what credentials he holds. Others say that diplomas and certificates are the fairest way to judge. Which view is wiser?" Take a position, use one historical example, and answer the other side.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Including everything instead of choosing the best pieces for one reader.
- Leaving out headnotes, so the reader cannot tell what each piece was for or what came of it.
- Claiming more credit than you earned for group or heavily edited work.
- Posting a portfolio online with a home address, phone number or other private details.

Make it a game · The Sampling Table. Like Rembrandt's syndics, the family sits as a panel. The student lays out eight finished pieces face down. The panel turns over one at a time and has thirty seconds to read the headnote and first paragraph, then votes "in" or "master folder only." Afterward the student defends or concedes each decision in one sentence.

Scripture. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." (Proverbs 22:29, KJV)

A portfolio is the evidence of diligence, and diligent work opens doors that claims cannot.

Practice: answers

1. A master portfolio holds all your good finished work; a portfolio for one reader is a short selection chosen and arranged for that reader's purpose.
2. What the piece is, whom it was written for, your part in it, and the result.
3. He swept it three times and dusted it four times.
4. She inspected the floor and closets and rubbed her handkerchief on the woodwork, the table and the benches, looking for dust.
5. Strongest material first and last, weaker in the middle (from Nestor's battle line in the *Iliad*, as Quintilian describes). In a portfolio, open with the most relevant piece and close with a strong piece that shows character.
6. All past, for a finished role: "Trained new volunteers, raising attendance by 20 percent. Organized the principal fundraising event each spring. Wrote the church newsletter." (Or put all three in the present tense for a current role.) "Principle" becomes "principal" (chief), and the stiff "effecting a rise" becomes "raising."
7. Sample: "Because your firm writes service manuals, I have placed my procedure for replacing a well-pump pressure switch first. I tested it on three readers who had never done the job, and each one finished it without help. My senior thesis on Michael Faraday follows; it shows that I can research a technical subject for months and explain it plainly to a general reader."
8. Sample outline: Thesis: credentials open the door, but work done keeps one in the room. Example: Washington at Hampton had no credentials; the sweeping test judged his work directly, and he went on to found Tuskegee. Other side: credentials protect the public in fields like medicine, where one cannot test a surgeon with a broom. Answer: credentials are themselves meant to certify work; when they stop doing so, they lose their worth. Conclusion: seek both, but never let a paper stand in place of diligence.

UNIT 6 REVIEW

Answer in writing. Short-answer items may be answered in a sentence. Writing tasks are scored with the checklists from the unit, for clarity, accuracy and honesty as well as mechanics. Allow about 75 minutes.

1. (4 pts) Name the four things Aphthonius said a proposed law must be shown to be, and tell how they apply to a grant proposal.
2. (3 pts) List the timeline and the budget items in Nehemiah's request (Nehemiah 2:4-8).
3. (3 pts) Rewrite as a measurable objective: "We want to improve our church library."
4. (4 pts) Give four rules for writing a procedure.
5. (3 pts) Rewrite in the imperative mood and active voice: "The filter should be removed and it should be rinsed under warm water by the user."
6. (4 pts) In your own words, explain Faraday's chain of causes for the candle's cup.
7. (3 pts) What is the inverted pyramid, and why does it suit web readers?
8. (3 pts) Apply Strunk's Rule 13: "Due to the fact that the weather was of a rainy nature, the picnic was held in an indoor location."
9. (3 pts) Rewrite this link and add alt text: "For the volunteer form, click here." (Image: two teenagers stacking cans in a food pantry.)
10. (3 pts) What does Washington's sweeping test teach about a portfolio?
11. (4 pts) Write a headnote (three to five sentences) for one piece you would put in your portfolio.
12. (4 pts) Fix the parallelism and usage: "Our goals are recruiting volunteers, to raise \$500, and a better effect on the principle of the school."

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A PROFESSIONAL WRITING PORTFOLIO

Submit the finished portfolio from lesson 6.4: cover page, contents page, cover letter, résumé, five to eight work samples (including at least one of the proposal, procedure or web page from this unit) each with a headnote, and a list of references. Save one PDF and print one copy; it becomes the core of your Unit 8 ten-year portfolio.

- **Selection and arrangement:** Five to eight finished pieces chosen for a named reader, with the most relevant first and a strong piece last.
- **Headnotes:** Each sample has an honest headnote that names the piece, its reader, the student's role and the result.
- **Professional writing:** The proposal, procedure or web page meets its lesson checklist: clear request and budget, tested steps, or scannable, plain web copy.
- **Finish and mechanics:** Consistent format, no private information, parallel lists, active voice, consistent tense and correct usage throughout.

Answer key

1. Lawful, just, advantageous and possible. A proposal must show that the project is permitted and fits the funder's rules, is right, will do real good, and can actually be done with the time and money requested.
2. Timeline: he set the king a time for his return. Budget: letters to the governors beyond the river for safe passage; a letter to Asaph for timber for the gates, the wall and his house.
3. Sample: "By September 1, two volunteers will catalog all 1,200 books, add 150 new titles for children, and keep the library open every Sunday from 9 to 12."
4. Any four: list tools and materials first; number the steps; one action per step; begin each step with an imperative verb; put warnings and conditions before the step; tell what should happen; use the same term for the same part.
5. "Remove the filter and rinse it under warm water."
6. The flame's heat makes air rise along the sides of the candle; the rising air cools the outer edge so it stays solid; the inside melts, and the solid edge holds the melted fuel like a cup. If the air comes from one side, the cup is lop-sided and the wax gutters.
7. It puts the most important information first and details after. Web readers scan for one answer and often stop early, so the answer must come first.
8. "Because it rained, the picnic was held indoors." (Or: "Because it rained, we held the picnic indoors.")
9. Link: "Download the volunteer form (PDF)." Alt text: "Two teenagers stacking canned goods on food-pantry shelves."
10. Real work shown to a judge persuades more than claims about yourself; thorough work in small tasks is the best evidence of what you can do.
11. Sample: "Procedure: Changing a Bicycle Inner Tube (one page, February 2027). Written for first-time riders at our church's bike-repair clinic. I wrote the steps, drew the diagram, and tested the page on four readers, revising after each. The clinic now hands out the sheet to every new rider."
12. Sample: "Our goals are to recruit ten volunteers, to raise \$500, and to win the principal's support for the program." (Parallel infinitives; "principal" is the person; the vague "effect" is replaced with a clear goal.)

PERSONAL NARRATIVE: THE COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

The last speech of school is a beginning: in the medieval universities a new master “commenced” to teach. In this creative-writing unit you study the commencement address as ceremonial (epideictic) rhetoric through Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s 1978 Harvard address, “A World Split Apart,” then draft your own five-to-seven-minute speech on Henry Drummond’s pattern of proving one truth from Scripture and your own life. You cut and mark a speaking script under Nehemiah 8:8’s rule (read distinctly, give the sense, cause them to understand), rehearse in five stages, and finally give the speech to a live audience, following the pattern of Paul’s farewell at Miletus. The speech is a personal narrative about events, people, work and God’s providence, ending with thanks, a charge and a blessing.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written and defended the senior thesis (Units 1–3) and knows the six parts of the classical oration.
- Can draft a multi-page essay independently and revise it for parallelism, modifiers, punctuation and pronoun usage (Grammar Level 3).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain what a commencement address is for and place it among Aristotle’s three kinds of speech.
- ☐ I can outline Solzhenitsyn’s Harvard address and Paul’s farewell at Miletus and name the marks of a great address.
- ☐ I can draft a 700–900-word speech in six parts that proves one truth with a true story from my own life.
- ☐ I can mark a speaking script for pauses and stress and rehearse it to time.
- ☐ I can give my speech to a live audience with clear voice, steady eyes and decorum, and debrief afterward.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Henry Drummond, *The Greatest Thing in the World and Other Addresses* (Project Gutenberg #16739)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/16739>): The 7.2 model; the whole address is short enough to read aloud in one sitting.
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): Nehemiah 8 and Acts 20, the models for 7.3 and 7.4.
- **Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, Book 11, chapter 3, on delivery (LacusCurtius, Loeb translation of 1920–22)** (https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Quintilian/Institutio_Oratoria/11C*.html): The classical treatment of voice and gesture, including Demosthenes’ answer (section 6). For the student; a parent may wish to preview.

- **William Bradford, History of Plimoth Plantation (Project Gutenberg #24950)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/24950>): Book 1, chapter 7 tells of John Robinson's farewell at Leiden and Delfshaven, the scene of the 7.4 picture study.

7.1 GREAT COMMENCEMENT ADDRESSES: SOLZHENITSYN AT HARVARD (1978) 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Explain what a commencement address is for and place it among Aristotle’s three kinds of speech.
- Trace the arrangement and the one hard truth of Solzhenitsyn’s 1978 Harvard address, “A World Split Apart.”
- Begin a commencement notebook: an audience, an occasion and a list of true stories from your own school years.

Warm-up. Think of the best speech you have heard in person: a sermon, a toast, a eulogy, a graduation. Write down the one sentence you still remember. Why did that sentence last when the rest faded?

Video slot. Video coming. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s 1978 Harvard commencement address (a documentary clip or lecture about it from a university or library); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

commencement

A graduation ceremony. In the medieval universities a new master “commenced” (began) the right to teach, so the end of study was named for a beginning.

valedictory

A farewell speech (Latin *vale*, “farewell,” and *dicere*, “to say”), often given by a graduating student.

epideictic rhetoric

Aristotle’s ceremonial kind of speech, which praises or blames and concerns the present occasion; the other two kinds are deliberative (the future) and judicial (the past).

exhortation

The part of a speech that urges the hearers to act: the “charge” of a commencement address.

ethos

The speaker’s character as the audience perceives it; the trust a hearer gives because of who the speaker is and how he has lived.

CORE IDEAS

A speech named for a beginning. In the universities of the Middle Ages, a student who finished the course was admitted to the guild of masters and “commenced” to teach. The ceremony took its name from that start, and we still call graduation *commencement*. The two student speeches traditional in American schools carry the same old Latin: the *salutatory* greets the guests, and the *valedictory* says farewell. At Harvard a graduating student still delivers an oration in Latin. Your speech this unit belongs to that long line. It looks back on a course that is finished and forward to a course that is beginning, and Paul’s words to Timothy fit both halves: “I have finished my course.”

The ceremonial kind. Aristotle divided speeches into three kinds. Deliberative speech urges a council about the future; judicial speech accuses or defends a past deed; epideictic speech praises or blames in the present, at a ceremony. A commencement address is epideictic, which makes it a grown-up cousin of the encomium you wrote in Grades 7 and 8. It praises what deserves praise (the work done, the teachers and parents who made it possible, the God who sustained it) and then adds an *exhortation*: here is what to love, here is what to do next. A weak commencement speech stops at praise and becomes flattery. A great one uses the solemn hour to say something true that the hearers will need for the rest of their lives.

The speaker and the hour. On June 8, 1978, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn rose to address Harvard’s graduating class. He had served eight years in the Soviet labor camps and three more in exile for a few critical remarks about Stalin in a private letter. He had written *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and *The Gulag Archipelago*, received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1970, and been expelled from his country in 1974. He was living quietly in Vermont. The audience expected, many of them, a grateful exile’s praise of the free West. He spoke in Russian through an interpreter, under a gray sky, and he gave them something else.

One hard truth, kindly arranged. Solzhenitsyn began with Harvard’s own motto, *Veritas*, and warned that truth is seldom sweet. He said plainly that he came as a friend, not an adversary. Then he laid out his single claim in ordered steps: the world is split into many cultures, not two; the West has suffered a “decline in courage” among its leaders; comfort and the pursuit of things have not made men freer in spirit; a life ruled only by the letter of the law, with no higher standard, leaves men weak; and the root of it all is a view of man that has forgotten God and the soul. He also said, just as plainly, that his own country’s system was no answer. He ended by saying that mankind has only one way left to go: “upward.”

Why it is studied. The speech was criticized hard in the weeks that followed, and it is still read today. It is read because it does what the occasion asks and more. It had *ethos*: the hearers knew what the speaker had suffered for telling the truth. It had one thesis, not a dozen. It had arrangement: a courteous opening, a clear proposition, proofs in order, an answer to the obvious objection, and a closing charge that pointed the hearers higher. And it was spoken in love, though not in flattery. Paul told the Ephesians to speak “the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15), and Colossians 4:6 asks that our speech be seasoned with salt. Salt stings a little; that is what keeps food from spoiling.

What you will carry from it. You are not a Nobel laureate, and your audience is not Harvard. Your audience is your family, your church or co-op, your teachers and a few classmates. But the marks of a great address are the same at any size: *one truth*, proved from the speaker's *own life*, spoken to *this audience* in *this hour*, ending with a *charge*. Your speech will be a personal narrative: a true story of events, people, work and God's providence in your school years, shaped to carry one truth. It will not be a list of your feelings or a speech about yourself. The story is the vehicle; the truth is the cargo.

The unit ahead. In this lesson you study the form and begin collecting stories. In 7.2 you draft a speech of five to seven minutes (about 700-900 words). In 7.3 you work on delivery, the canon that Demosthenes is said to have ranked first, second and third. In 7.4 you give the speech to a real audience. Begin today with a commencement notebook, and keep it with you all unit.

The model. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *"A World Split Apart," Harvard commencement address, June 8, 1978. In copyright; summarized for this course, with two short phrases quoted under fair use.*

A summary of the arrangement, not the speaker's words.

Opening (exordium). The speaker greets the graduates and recalls Harvard's motto, *Veritas*. Truth, he warns, is seldom pleasant; he hopes to speak it as a friend, not an adversary.

Proposition. The world is not divided into two halves only, but into several worlds and cultures. The West wrongly assumes that all others will grow to be like it.

Proofs. He names, one after another, the weaknesses he sees: a "decline in courage" among the leading classes; a comfort and pursuit of goods that leave the spirit unsatisfied; a society that relies on the letter of the law and seldom asks what is right beyond it; a freedom that has lost its sense of duty; a press that moves in fashions and rushes to judgment.

Answering the objection. He does not hold up his own homeland as a better model. Its system, he says, is far worse and is no way out.

The root cause. Behind it all he places a view of man, born at the end of the Middle Ages, that put man at the center and forgot God and the soul. The East has been crushed by force; the West has been weakened by forgetting.

Closing charge (peroration). He calls for a new height of vision, in which the life of the spirit is not trampled by material life. There is, he concludes, no way left for anyone but "upward."

PICTURE STUDY



The Sermon on the Mount, Carl Heinrich Bloch, 1877 · Oil on copper · Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle, Hillerød, Denmark
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The Danish painter Carl Bloch made twenty-three scenes from the life of Christ for the chapel of Frederiksborg Castle. This one shows the greatest address ever given to a crowd. Matthew tells us that Jesus went up into a mountain, “and when he was set,” he taught (Matthew 5:1). When he finished, “the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:28–29). Bloch paints not only the speaker but the listeners, each one hearing in his own way.

Look closely

- Count the different kinds of listeners: old and young, men and women, children. How does Bloch set them apart?
- Where is the light brightest? Where does your eye go first, and where next?
- Find two listeners whose faces or postures show different responses to the same words.

Talk about it

1. Matthew says Jesus taught “as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” What is the difference between borrowed authority and authority of one’s own? How did Solzhenitsyn have authority at Harvard?
2. Choose one listener in the painting and write a paragraph from his or her point of view: what did that person hear, and what did he or she take home?

WRITING PROJECT: THE COMMENCEMENT NOTEBOOK

Before you can draft, you need an audience, an occasion and a store of true stories. Today you gather them. Use a fresh section of your writing notebook; you will draw on it for the rest of the unit.

If your family or co-op holds a graduation, this is the speech you may give there. If not, plan a real occasion now (a family dinner, a church gathering, a homeschool group) so that 7.4 has an audience.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible
- Your portfolio and old school papers from earlier grades
- Optional: a printed copy of a public-domain commencement or farewell address to compare (see the unit kits)

Steps

1. Write the occasion: where, when, how long you may speak (aim for five to seven minutes), and who will be in the room. List the audience by groups: classmates, parents, teachers, grandparents, guests.
2. Outline Solzhenitsyn's address from the summary in six lines: opening, proposition, proofs, answer to objection, root cause, charge.
3. Memory list: write fifteen true moments from your school years. Use these heads: a *person* who taught you, a *piece of work* that was hard, a *failure* you came back from, a *providence* you did not see coming, a *book* that changed your mind.
4. Star the three moments you could tell in two minutes with a beginning, a middle and an end.
5. For each starred moment, write one sentence: "This story shows that ____." That sentence is a candidate truth.
6. Choose the truth you most need to tell this audience, and write it at the top of a new page. Under it, copy 2 Timothy 4:7.

Check your work

- My audience and occasion are written down with a time limit.
- My Solzhenitsyn outline has all six parts in order.
- My memory list has fifteen items, at least one under each head.
- Each candidate truth is a complete sentence with one main clause, not a fragment or a topic.
- My chosen truth is something I can show with a true story, not a claim about myself.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Matthew 7:28–29 and underline the phrase that names the difference between two kinds of teachers.
2. Write five commencement clichés you have heard (“follow your dreams,” “the future is ours”). Beside each, write the truer, sharper sentence you could say instead.
3. List three people in your school years who deserve thanks by name, and one thing each of them actually did.

History note. Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) was arrested in 1945 while serving as an artillery officer, for criticizing Stalin in letters to a friend. After eight years in the camps and a period of exile, he became famous in 1962 with *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. *The Gulag Archipelago* was published abroad in 1973; he was stripped of citizenship and expelled in February 1974. He lived in Cavendish, Vermont, from 1976 and returned to Russia in 1994. The Harvard address was one of very few public speeches he gave in America.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism** (Grammar Level 3, usage and style). Ceremonial speech leans on balanced structures because the ear needs them. Look at two sentences in this lesson’s summary: “a friend, not an adversary”; “The East has been crushed by force; the West has been weakened by forgetting.” Parallel items must match in grammar: noun with noun, phrase with phrase, clause with clause. Faulty: “We learned to read Homer, writing essays, and how to argue.” Fixed: “We learned to read Homer, to write essays and to argue.” In your notebook, turn three of your candidate truths into balanced sentences, then check that each half has the same structure.

For families. The full text of the Harvard address is under copyright, so this lesson summarizes it. A parent who wants to read it can find it in collections of Solzhenitsyn’s essays and on several university sites. The speech criticizes the West sharply, but it is not partisan, and its concerns (courage, duty, the soul, God) are perennial. Please help your student fix the real occasion for the speech now: a home graduation, a co-op ceremony, a church fellowship or a family dinner with invited guests. The speech in 7.4 needs a live audience of at least five or six people.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student outlines a commencement address she heard: “1. Thanks everyone. 2. Funny story about the science fair. 3. Quote from Dr. Seuss. 4. Funny story about the field trip. 5. Follow your dreams. 6. Thanks again.” Using Solzhenitsyn’s arrangement, diagnose the outline.

1. Look for the proposition: there is none. “Follow your dreams” is a slogan, and it comes at the end with nothing proving it.
2. Look at the proofs: two stories, but neither is tied to a claim. They entertain; they do not demonstrate.
3. Look for the charge: “follow your dreams” urges no particular action and costs the hearer nothing.

Answer: The speech has an opening and a closing but no middle. Revision: choose one of the two stories, ask what it actually showed (for example, “The science fair taught us that the experiment that fails teaches more than the one that works”), state that truth early, tell the story as proof, and close with a charge that follows from it: “When your next experiment fails, write down what it taught you before you throw it out.”

Example 2. Revise this opening so it is truthful and fitted to the occasion: “Webster’s dictionary defines ‘commencement’ as a beginning. Today is the first day of the rest of our lives, and the sky’s the limit!”

1. Cut the dictionary opening; every audience has heard it.
2. Keep the true idea underneath it (an ending that is also a beginning) but give it a source and a picture.
3. Replace the slogan with something concrete from this class and this room.

Answer: Sample: “Eight hundred years ago, a student who finished the course at Paris or Oxford did not ‘graduate.’ He ‘commenced’: he began to teach. Look around this room. Every person in it taught one of us something. Today we are supposed to start passing it on.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Why is graduation called “commencement”?
2. **EASY** Name Aristotle’s three kinds of speech and the time each concerns.
3. **EASY** What motto did Solzhenitsyn begin with, and what did he say about it?
4. **MEDIUM** Where did Solzhenitsyn answer the obvious objection to his speech, and what was it?
5. **MEDIUM** List the five marks of a great commencement address from this lesson.

6. **MEDIUM** Fix the parallelism: “A good speaker is honest, with courage, and knows his audience.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a one-sentence proposition for a commencement speech that is true, specific, and could be proved by a story from your own school years.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT/SAT style). Prompt: “A speaker at a celebration owes his audience encouragement, not criticism.” Take a position, and support it with at least two examples from history, literature or Scripture.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Treating the commencement speech as a speech about yourself. The speaker’s life is the evidence, not the subject.
- Collecting ten small truths instead of choosing one. Solzhenitsyn had several proofs but one claim.
- Confusing truth with harshness. The model opened as a friend and ended by pointing upward.

Make it a game • Cliché Court. One player reads a graduation cliché aloud (“Reach for the stars,” “This isn’t goodbye”). The next player has thirty seconds to give a truer, more specific sentence on the same idea. The family votes whether the new sentence is “acquitted” (better than the cliché) or “convicted” (just another cliché).

Scripture. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:2, KJV)

Solzhenitsyn’s charge to rise above the fashions of the age echoes Paul’s; a true commencement speech calls hearers to be transformed, not merely congratulated.

Practice: answers

1. In the medieval universities, finishing the course meant a new master “commenced” (began) the right to teach; the ceremony is named for that beginning.
2. Deliberative (the future), judicial (the past), epideictic or ceremonial (the present).
3. Harvard’s motto, *Veritas* (truth); he warned that truth is seldom pleasant or sweet.
4. After his proofs he answered the objection that he must be praising his own country instead; he said its system was far worse and no way out.
5. One truth; proved from the speaker’s own life; spoken to this audience; in this hour; ending with a charge.
6. A good speaker is honest, brave and attentive to his audience. (Or: A good speaker tells the truth, shows courage and knows his audience.)
7. Sample: “The subjects I dreaded most, Latin and algebra, turned out to be the ones that taught me how to work.”
8. Sample thesis: “A speaker at a celebration owes his audience encouragement, but true encouragement sometimes requires criticism, as Solzhenitsyn’s Harvard address and Paul’s farewell to the Ephesian elders both show.” A strong answer defines encouragement, uses

Solzhenitsyn (truth spoken as a friend) and Acts 20 or Nathan before David as proofs, answers the objection that criticism spoils a happy day, and concludes.

7.2 DRAFTING THE COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

OBJECTIVES

- Arrange a commencement speech in six parts, from greeting to blessing, and budget its words.
- Imitate Henry Drummond’s method of proving a general truth with the speaker’s own experience.
- Draft a complete speech of 700–900 words written for the ear.

Warm-up. Read aloud the first sentence of any essay you wrote this year. Then say the same idea to someone across the room as if you were talking. What changed: the length, the words, the order?

Video slot. Video coming. Henry Drummond’s address “The Greatest Thing in the World” read aloud (an audiobook reading or a lecture on Drummond and D. L. Moody); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

arrangement (dispositio)

The second canon of rhetoric: putting the parts of a speech in the most effective order.

proposition

The one truth the speech exists to say, stated in a single sentence.

narration

The part of a speech that tells what happened; here, the true story from your school years that proves the proposition.

peroration

The closing of a speech, which gathers the argument, stirs the hearers and gives the final charge.

writing for the ear

Composing words to be heard once at speaking pace: shorter sentences, clear signposts, concrete nouns, deliberate repetition.

CORE IDEAS

From notebook to draft. In 7.1 you chose an audience, an occasion and a truth, and you collected true stories. Now you arrange them. The classical oration had six parts (exordium, narration, division, proof, refutation, peroration), and you used them for your thesis defense earlier this year. A commencement speech is shorter and ceremonial, so the parts change a little, but the logic is the same: win a hearing, tell what happened, say what it means, prove it, and send the hearers out.

Six parts for a commencement. (1) *Greeting*: honor the occasion and the people in the room, briefly. (2) *Narration*: tell one true story from your school years, with a person, a place and a turn. (3) *Proposition*: say plainly what the story showed, in one sentence. (4) *Proof*: widen it with a second witness: Scripture, history, a book you read, a teacher's saying. (5) *Charge*: tell your classmates (and yourself) what to do because it is true. (6) *Thanks and blessing*: thank by name the people who made the course possible, and end by commending everyone to God. You may put the proposition before the story if it reads better; Drummond does that.

Budget your words. Most people speak a prepared text at about 130 words a minute. A seven-minute speech is about 900 words; five minutes is about 650. Budget before you draft: greeting 75, narration 300, proposition 40, proof 175, charge 125, thanks and blessing 125. The narration gets the most room, because the story is what people will remember on the drive home. If your story runs long, cut details that do not serve the turn; never cut the thanks.

Writing for the ear. A reader can look back; a listener cannot. So a speech must be built differently from an essay. Use sentences short enough to say in one breath, and save the long sentence for the moment you want to build. Put the main clause early. Repeat key words on purpose (Drummond repeats "love" and "transitory"). Use signposts ("That was the first thing I learned. The second was harder."). Prefer concrete nouns: not "a difficult academic experience," but "the night before the Latin exam, with the kitchen clock at two." Read every paragraph aloud as you draft; if you stumble, the audience will too.

Honor, not inside jokes. A commencement audience includes grandparents who have never met your friends. Every story must be understandable to a stranger. Humor is welcome when it is kind and everyone can share it; it is unwelcome when it embarrasses a person or needs a private explanation. Speak about events, people, work and God's providence. Do not label yourself or the class, and do not turn the speech into a confession of feelings. Gratitude, named and specific, is the surest way to keep a personal speech from becoming a self-centered one.

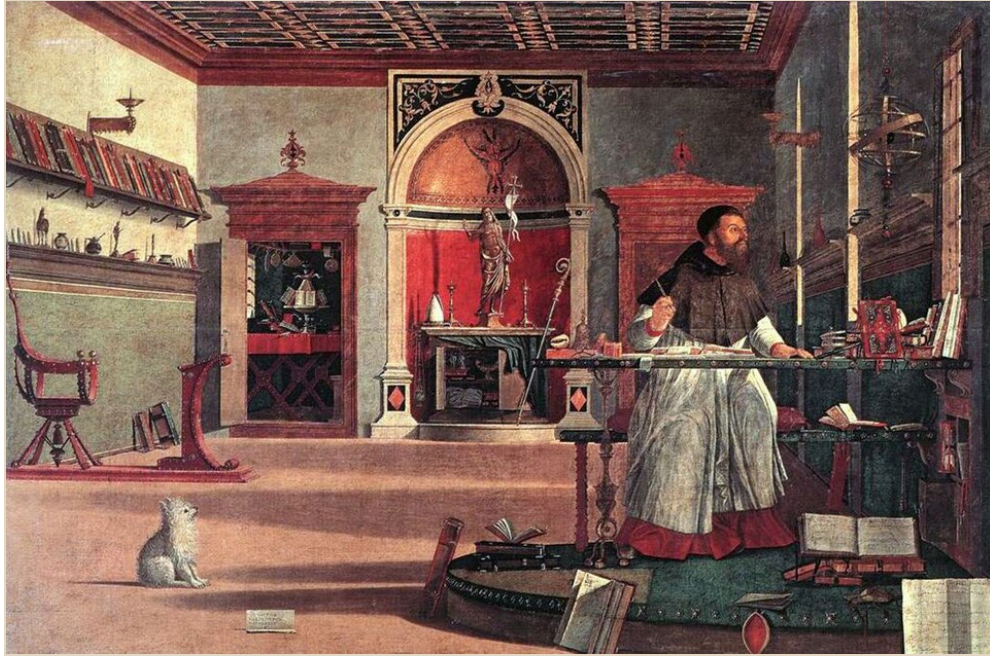
Draft fast, then shape. Write the narration first, while the memory is warm. Then write the proposition, testing whether the story truly proves it. Then the proof, the charge, the thanks, and last of all the greeting, because you cannot introduce a speech you have not yet written. Expect the first draft to run long. In 7.3 you will cut and mark it for delivery.

The model. Henry Drummond, "*The Greatest Thing in the World*," in *The Greatest Thing in the World and Other Addresses*, Project Gutenberg #16739

You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love. As memory scans the past, above and beyond all the transitory pleasures of life, there leap forward those supreme hours when you have been enabled to do unnoticed kindnesses to those round about you, things too trifling to speak about, but which you feel have entered into your eternal life. I have seen almost all the beautiful things God has made; I have enjoyed almost

every pleasure that He has planned for man; and yet as I look back I see standing out above all the life that has gone four or five short experiences, when the love of God reflected itself in some poor imitation, some small act of love of mine, and these seem to be the things which alone of all one's life abide. Everything else in all our lives is transitory. Every other good is visionary. But the acts of love which no man knows about, or can ever know about--they never fail.

PICTURE STUDY



Saint Augustine in His Study, Vittore Carpaccio, 1502 · Tempera on canvas · Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Carpaccio painted this scene for a brotherhood hall in Venice. An old legend said that Augustine was writing a letter to his friend Jerome when the room filled with light and he learned that Jerome had died. Carpaccio paints the moment the pen stops: the scholar looks up from his draft toward the window. Around him is everything a writer of that age needed: books open on shelves and benches, music lying on the floor, instruments for studying the heavens, and an altar in the alcove behind.

Look closely

- Find Augustine's pen. Is he writing, or has he stopped? What tells you?
- Find the small white dog. Where is it looking, and why might Carpaccio have put it there?
- List five objects in the study. Which tell you that this writer reads widely, and which tell you he prays?

Talk about it

1. Augustine was writing a letter when news came that changed what it meant. Write about a moment in your school years when something interrupted your work and changed its meaning.
2. Carpaccio fills the room with orderly tools. Describe the place where you will draft your speech, and arrange it so that it helps you work.

WRITING PROJECT: THE FULL DRAFT

Draft your complete commencement speech: 700–900 words, six parts, one truth, one main story. Type it double-spaced so you have room to mark it in 7.3.

You will need

- Commencement notebook from 7.1
- Writing notebook and a computer or clean paper
- A timer
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. Copy the Drummond passage by hand. Underline every word that speaks to the listener (“you,” “your”) and circle every place he turns to his own life (“I have seen”).
2. Imitate it: write one paragraph that begins “You will find as you look back ...” and moves, as Drummond does, from the hearer’s memory to your own experience to a general truth.
3. Write your word budget at the top of the page for all six parts.
4. Draft the narration first: one true story, with a person, a place, a problem and a turn. Then write the proposition in one sentence and check that the story proves it.
5. Draft the proof (one Scripture or historical witness), the charge and the thanks. Write the greeting last.
6. Read the whole speech aloud with a timer. Write the time at the top. Mark every sentence you tripped on.

Check your work

- The speech has all six parts, and the proposition is one clear sentence.
- The narration is a true story about events, people or work, understandable to a stranger.
- Every participial phrase points to the right noun; there are no dangling modifiers.
- Most sentences can be spoken in one breath; long sentences are used on purpose.
- The thanks name real people and what they actually did.
- Scripture is quoted exactly from the King James Version, with the reference.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Drummond passage from “I have seen almost all” to “some small act of love of mine.”
2. List ten concrete nouns from your school years (a kitchen table, a red pen, a borrowed microscope) that could appear in your narration.
3. Write three possible last sentences for your speech. Star the one that would be easiest to remember.

History note. Drummond taught natural science at the Free Church College in Glasgow and worked beside D. L. Moody in his British campaigns of the 1870s. The preface to Project Gutenberg #16739 records that Moody first heard “The Greatest Thing in the World” in 1884 and asked the principals of his schools to have it read before the students every year. A speech written for one evening became a commencement text for generations.

 **Style Clinic. Dangling modifiers** (Grammar Level 3, modifiers). Narration invites the participial opener, and the opener must modify the subject that follows. Dangling: “Walking into the co-op on the first day, the smell of floor wax was everywhere.” (The smell was not walking.) Fixed: “Walking into the co-op on the first day, I smelled floor wax everywhere.” Or turn the phrase into a clause: “When I walked into the co-op on the first day, the whole building smelled of floor wax.” Check every sentence in your narration that begins with an *-ing* or *-ed* phrase.

For families. Drummond’s address is public domain and free (see the unit kits). He also wrote on science and religion; only this address is used here. Your student will likely ask you for help remembering stories from earlier years. Old photographs, report cards, and the student’s portfolio from Grades 3–11 are a rich source. Please read the draft once for one thing only: is there anything a guest would not understand, or anything that would embarrass someone present? Leave other corrections to 7.3.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's narration: "Junior year was really hard. I had a lot of challenges and I learned so much about myself and grew as a person. It was a journey." Revise it into a narration that could prove a proposition.

1. Find the story: there is none. "Challenges," "journey" and "grew as a person" are labels, not events.
2. Ask: what actually happened, where, with whom? The student remembers that her chemistry lab failed three times in February and her father stayed up to help.
3. Tell it with a person, a place, a problem and a turn, and end on what it showed.

Answer: Sample: "In February of junior year my titration failed three nights running. On the third night my father, who had not opened a chemistry book in twenty-five years, sat down at the kitchen table, read the chapter with me, and found my mistake: I had been reading the burette from the top. He did not know chemistry. He knew how to keep going. That is what I most want to say tonight: faithfulness learns what cleverness misses."

Example 2. Turn this essay sentence into speech: "Notwithstanding the considerable difficulties attendant upon the study of classical languages, the cultivation of disciplined habits which such study necessitates constitutes, in my estimation, its principal benefit."

1. Find the main idea: Latin is hard, but the habits it builds are its chief benefit.
2. Put the main clause early and break the thought into breaths.
3. Use concrete words and a repeated word the ear can hold.

Answer: Sample: "Latin is hard. Everyone in this room who took it knows that. But the hard part was the point. Latin did not just teach us Latin. It taught us to sit still, to look things up, and to finish."

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the six parts of a commencement speech in this lesson.
2. **EASY** At about 130 words a minute, how many words is a six-minute speech?
3. **EASY** Which part of a commencement speech gets the most words, and why?
4. **MEDIUM** In the Drummond passage, find the sentence where he turns from the hearer to his own life.
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: "Having finished the last exam, the summer seemed endless."
6. **MEDIUM** Why should the greeting be written last?
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a two-sentence charge that follows from this proposition: "Faithfulness learns what cleverness misses."

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, ACT/CLT style). Prompt: "Some say a speech should be written exactly like an essay; others say speaking requires a different kind of writing." Write an essay taking a position, using at least two examples.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing a list of memories instead of one story with a turn.
- Stating a proposition the story does not actually prove.
- Leaving the thanks vague ("everyone who helped me") instead of naming people and deeds.
- Drafting at essay length and essay density, then discovering the speech runs twelve minutes.

Make it a game · One Breath. Each player reads a sentence from his or her draft aloud in a single breath. If the reader runs out of air before the period, the family helps split the sentence into two. The player with the most one-breath sentences in a row wins.

Scripture. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (1 Corinthians 13:13, KJV)

Drummond built his whole address on this verse; your speech, too, should rest on one truth that you can prove.

Practice: answers

1. Greeting, narration, proposition, proof, charge, thanks and blessing.
2. About 780 words.
3. The narration, because the story is what the audience remembers and it carries the proof.
4. "I have seen almost all the beautiful things God has made; I have enjoyed almost every pleasure that He has planned for man; and yet as I look back ..."
5. Having finished the last exam, I thought the summer seemed endless. (Or: When I had finished the last exam, the summer seemed endless.)
6. Because you cannot introduce a speech you have not yet written; the greeting should point toward the story and truth you actually chose.
7. Sample: "So when you are stuck next year, in a dorm room or a workshop or an office, do not wait to feel clever. Sit down at the table, open the book again, and keep going."
8. Sample thesis: "A speech must be written differently from an essay, because a listener cannot reread; the best speeches, like Drummond's and Lincoln's, use shorter sentences, deliberate repetition and direct address to the hearer." A strong answer compares reading and listening, gives examples from the Drummond passage, and answers the objection that writing for the ear means writing down to the audience.

7.3 DELIVERY: READING DISTINCTLY AND GIVING THE SENSE



OBJECTIVES

- Name the three duties of a public reader from Nehemiah 8:8 and the parts of delivery: voice, body and eyes.
- Cut the draft to time and mark a speaking script for pauses, stress and breath.
- Rehearse the speech at least five times, recording at least once, and revise from what you hear.

Warm-up. Say the sentence “I never said he took the money” seven times, stressing a different word each time. How many different meanings can one sentence carry?

Video slot. Video coming. Public speaking for students: voice, pausing and eye contact (a lesson from a university speech department, a library, or a classical school); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

delivery (actio, pronuntiatio)

The fifth canon of rhetoric: the management of voice and body in speaking.

memory (memoria)

The fourth canon: holding the speech in mind so the speaker can look at the hearers instead of the page.

pause

A planned silence that lets a point land, marks a turn, or gives the speaker breath.

emphasis (stress)

Extra weight on a word, by volume, pitch or slowing, that tells the hearer which word carries the meaning.

speaking script

A copy of the speech in large type, marked with pauses, stresses and breaths, made for the lectern, not for reading silently.

CORE IDEAS

The canon that comes last and counts first. Cicero and Quintilian both tell the story that Demosthenes, the greatest orator of Athens, was asked what mattered most in speaking. He answered, “Delivery.” What second? “Delivery.” What third? “Delivery.” He exaggerated to make a point, but the point stands. A well-arranged speech mumbled at the floor is lost; a

plain speech spoken clearly to the faces in the room is heard. Delivery is not decoration. It is the last step in getting the truth from your mind into another's.

Ezra's pulpit. When the exiles returned to Jerusalem, Ezra the scribe stood on a "pulpit of wood" before all the people and read the law of God from morning until midday. Nehemiah 8:8 names what the readers did: they "read in the book in the law of God *distinctly*, and *gave the sense*, and *caused them to understand* the reading." That verse is a whole course in delivery. *Distinctly*: every word clear and audible. *Gave the sense*: phrasing and stress that show the meaning. *Caused them to understand*: the speaker takes responsibility for whether the hearers actually receive it. Notice, too, the platform made "for the purpose": Ezra arranged to be seen and heard.

Cut to time first. Before you rehearse, read the 7.2 draft aloud with a timer. If it runs over seven minutes, cut it now, not on the night. Cut in this order: extra details in the narration that do not serve the turn; a second proof when one is enough; any sentence that repeats the one before it without adding force. Do not cut the thanks or the charge. Most first drafts lose fifteen to twenty-five percent and become better for it.

Mark the script. Print the speech in large type (16 to 18 point), double-spaced, with wide margins and page numbers, and never break a sentence across two pages. Then mark it in pencil. A single slash (/) is a short pause; a double slash (//) is a full stop for a point to land. Underline the one word in each sentence that carries the meaning. Write "breathe" before long sentences and "look up" before the proposition and the charge. Bold or box the first few words of each part so you can find your place with one glance. A marked script lets you speak *to* people, glancing down only to pick up the next phrase.

Voice. Most nervous speakers go too fast. Aim for about 130 words a minute, slower in the narration's key moment and slower still in the charge. Speak to the back row; if there is a microphone, keep it a hand's width from your mouth and let it do the work. Vary pitch so the ear does not grow tired, and drop your pitch at the end of statements so they sound settled, not uncertain. Use the pause: silence after a strong sentence feels long to you and right to the audience.

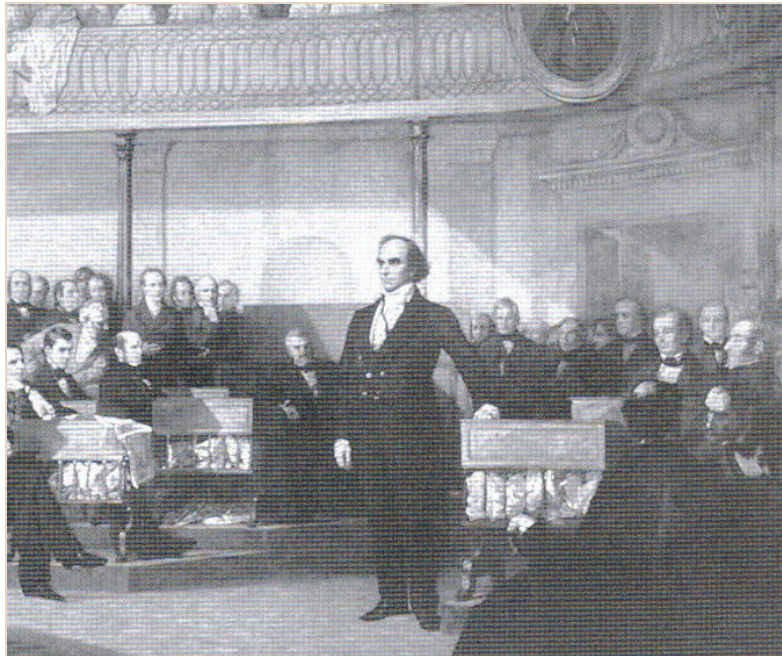
Body and eyes. Stand with weight on both feet, hands resting on the lectern or at your sides. Use a gesture only when the words call for one, and let it be large enough to see. Divide the room into three sections and give each a full sentence of eye contact in turn; look at real faces, especially kind ones. Know your first two sentences and your last two by heart, so that you open and close looking at the people. Hamlet's maxim holds: suit the action to the word, and the word to the action.

Rehearse in five stages. (1) Read it through aloud, seated, for sense. (2) Stand and read it from the marked script with a timer. (3) Record it on audio, listen once, and fix three things. (4) Deliver it to one person and ask two questions only: "What was the one truth?" and "Where did you lose me?" (5) Give a full dress rehearsal in the room where you will speak, or one like it. Nerves are not a sign that something is wrong; they are energy that preparation turns into attention. Pray before you rise. Then remember that you are not performing for judges. You are carrying something true to people who love you.

The model. *Nehemiah 8:4-8, King James Version*

And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishaël, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

PICTURE STUDY



Webster's Reply to Hayne, George Peter Alexander Healy, about 1843-1851 · Oil on canvas · Faneuil Hall, Boston

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In January 1830, Senator Daniel Webster of Massachusetts answered Senator Robert Hayne of South Carolina in a debate over whether a state could set aside a federal law. Webster spoke for two days, and his reply ended with the line generations of schoolchildren memorized: "Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!" Years later, George P. A. Healy painted the scene on an enormous canvas, crowding the Senate chamber with portraits of those who heard it. The picture hangs in Faneuil Hall in Boston, a hall famous for public speaking since before the Revolution.

Look closely

- Find Webster. How does Healy use light, position and posture to show who is speaking?
- Look at the listeners. Find two whose postures differ. What does each posture say about how the speech is being received?
- What is Webster doing with his hands and eyes? Is he reading or speaking to the room?

Talk about it

1. Healy paints a speech without any words. Write a paragraph explaining how the painting shows delivery: voice, body and eyes.
2. Webster's closing line was memorized for a century. Write the closing line of your own speech, then explain how you will deliver it: speed, pause, volume, where you will look.

WRITING PROJECT: THE MARKED SCRIPT AND FIVE REHEARSALS

Turn your 7.2 draft into a speaking script and rehearse it until you can look at the audience for most of every sentence.

You will need

- Your 7.2 draft
- A printer or clean paper; a pencil
- A timer and an audio recorder (a phone is fine)
- A listener for rehearsal 4

Steps

1. Read Nehemiah 8:4-8 aloud twice: once quickly and flatly, once distinctly, giving the sense. Write which three things you changed.
2. Time the draft aloud and cut it to between five and seven minutes. Keep the thanks and the charge.
3. Print the speaking script in 16- to 18-point type, double-spaced, with page numbers and no sentence broken across pages.
4. Mark it: / for short pauses, // for full stops, an underline on the key word of each sentence, "breathe" and "look up" where needed.
5. Memorize your first two and last two sentences.
6. Rehearse in five stages: seated read-through, standing with timer, recorded, to one listener (ask the two questions), full dress rehearsal.
7. After each rehearsal, write one thing to keep and one thing to fix.

Check your work

- The speech runs between five and seven minutes at a natural pace.
- Commas and periods in the script match the pauses I actually make; no comma splices or run-ons hide where a breath should go.

- Every sentence has one underlined key word, and I can say why that word carries the meaning.
- I can say my first two and last two sentences while looking at the room.
- My listener could state my one truth after hearing the speech once.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Nehemiah 8:8 and label its three duties of a reader: distinctly, gave the sense, caused them to understand.
2. After your recorded rehearsal, list every filler word you hear (“um,” “so,” “like”) and the place it fell. What was happening just before each one?
3. Write your closing paragraph again with pause marks and underlines, as it will look on the lectern.

History note. The Demosthenes story is reported by Cicero (*Brutus* and *On the Orator*) and by Quintilian (*Institutes of Oratory*, Book 11, chapter 3), whose long chapter on delivery covers voice, gesture, posture and even how to hold the toga. Quintilian also gives the old advice to rehearse aloud, not only silently. Webster’s Reply to Hayne was delivered on January 26 and 27, 1830.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuation for the speaking voice** (Grammar Level 3, punctuation mastery). A script’s punctuation is a score for the voice, so errors become stumbles. A *comma splice* (“We started in September, we finished in May.”) leaves the speaker unsure whether to pause or stop; use a period or a semicolon: “We started in September; we finished in May.” A comma between a subject and its verb (“The teachers who stayed late every Thursday, deserve our thanks.”) makes the voice break where the meaning does not; remove it. Dashes and colons mark strong pauses: “We learned one thing above all: finish what you start.” Read your script aloud, and wherever you pause, check that the punctuation agrees.

For families. Be the rehearsal-4 listener if you can, and ask only the two questions: “What was the one truth?” and “Where did you lose me?” Resist the urge to rewrite. Most students need encouragement to slow down and to pause; a gentle hand signal during rehearsal helps. If your student is anxious, a full dress rehearsal in the actual room, at the actual lectern, does more than any advice. The Healy painting includes many portraits of real people of the 1830s; the debate concerned the Union and states’ rights, and the lesson uses it only as a picture of delivery.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Mark this sentence from a student's charge for delivery: "So when the work is hard next year and no one is watching, remember the kitchen table, open the book again, and finish what you started."

1. Find the turns: the condition ("when ... watching") and the three commands.
2. Place pauses: a short pause after "So," a short pause after "watching," short pauses between the commands, and a full stop at the end.
3. Choose stresses: "hard," "watching," "kitchen table," "again," "finish." Mark "look up" before the final command.

Answer: So / when the work is hard next year / and no one is watching, / remember the kitchen table, / open the book again, / [look up] and finish what you started. //

Example 2. A student's draft runs 9 minutes 40 seconds (about 1,250 words). Plan the cuts to reach about 7 minutes.

1. Target: 7 minutes $\times$ 130 words $\approx$ 900 words, so about 350 words must go.
2. Narration (520 words): cut the two-paragraph backstory about how the family chose homeschooling (–180).
3. Proof (310 words): keep the Scripture witness, cut the second historical example (–120).
4. Greeting (130 words): cut the list of every person present; thank by group and save names for the thanks (–50).

Answer: Total cut: about 350 words, bringing the speech to about 900 words and 7 minutes. The thanks and charge stay whole; the story is sharper because its turn now comes sooner.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three duties of a public reader in Nehemiah 8:8.
2. **EASY** According to the story told by Cicero and Quintilian, what did Demosthenes rank first, second and third in oratory?
3. **EASY** What do a single slash and a double slash mean in a marked script?
4. **MEDIUM** Which parts of a speech should you know by heart, and why?
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the comma splice for a script: "My grandmother taught me to read, she never finished high school herself."
6. **MEDIUM** Name three things to cut first when a speech is too long, and two things never to cut.
7. **CHALLENGE** Explain how Healy's painting shows Nehemiah 8's "caused them to understand" without any words.

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, SAT/CLT style). Prompt: “Is how something is said as important as what is said?” Take a position and support it with examples from history, literature or Scripture.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Rehearsing silently. Only rehearsal aloud trains the voice and reveals long sentences.
- Speeding up when nervous, especially through the charge, which needs the slowest pace of all.
- Reading to the page instead of speaking to faces.
- Cutting the thanks to make time instead of trimming the narration.

Make it a game · Seven Stresses. Write a seven-word sentence from your speech on a card. Players take turns reading it, each stressing a different word, and the others say what new meaning the stress created. Then the speaker chooses which stress the sentence should carry on the night.

Scripture. “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Colossians 4:6, KJV)

Delivery is part of grace in speech: a word spoken clearly and kindly is a gift to the hearer.

Practice: answers

1. To read distinctly, to give the sense, and to cause the hearers to understand.
2. Delivery.
3. A single slash is a short pause; a double slash is a full stop for a point to land.
4. The first two and last two sentences, so you can open and close looking at the audience, where first and last impressions are made.
5. My grandmother taught me to read. She never finished high school herself. (Or with a semicolon, or: My grandmother, who never finished high school herself, taught me to read.)
6. Cut first: extra narration details that do not serve the turn, a second proof, sentences that repeat without adding force. Never cut: the thanks and the charge.
7. Sample: Healy sets Webster on his feet before a chamber of seated hearers and turns the chamber’s attention toward him; the listeners’ faces and postures show the speech being received, not only spoken. Understanding is painted in the audience, not in the speaker.
8. Sample thesis: “What is said matters most, but how it is said decides whether it is heard; Ezra’s readers, Demosthenes and Webster all show that truth must be delivered distinctly to do its work.” A strong answer distinguishes content and delivery, gives two or three specific examples, answers the objection that polished delivery can make lies persuasive, and concludes that delivery serves truth rather than replacing it.

7.4 GIVE IT: THE COMMENCEMENT SPEECH BEFORE AN AUDIENCE 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Trace the parts of Paul’s farewell at Miletus (Acts 20) and compare them to your own speech.
- Make final revisions, prepare the occasion, and give the commencement speech to a live audience.
- Reflect on the speech afterward and prepare a clean copy for the portfolio.

Warm-up. Imagine the last five minutes before you rise to speak. Write down, in order, everything you will do in those five minutes: where you will sit, what you will hold, what you will pray, where you will look first.

Video slot. Video coming. A historic farewell or graduation address (for example, a reading of Paul’s farewell at Miletus, or a documentary on famous commencement speeches from a university or library); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

farewell address

A speech given at a parting, which looks back on shared work, gives a last charge and commends the hearers to God or to their duty.

commendation

Entrusting someone to the care of another: “I commend you to God” (Acts 20:32).

decorum

Fitness: speech and conduct suited to the occasion, the audience and the speaker.

debrief

A short review after the event: what went well, what to keep, what to change next time.

CORE IDEAS

The pattern of a farewell. Paul’s speech to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus (Acts 20:17–38) is the Bible’s great farewell address, and it has every part your speech has. He greets them with shared memory: “Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you” (20:18). He narrates his work among them. He states a truth about his course and his hope of finishing it “with joy” (20:24). He gives a charge: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock” (20:28). He commends them to God. He quotes a saying of the Lord Jesus. Then he kneels and prays with them all. The speech worked: they wept, they embraced him, and they walked him to the ship.

Personal, not self-centered. Notice what Paul does with his own life. He speaks of his labor, his tears and the work of his own hands, but every memory points beyond himself: to the gospel he served, to the elders who must now carry on, to “the word of his grace, which is able to build you up.” That is the balance your speech must keep. Your story is the evidence; the truth, the people you thank and the God who sustained you are the subject. If a guest leaves knowing more about the people who taught you than about your accomplishments, you have struck the balance well.

Final revision. Read the speech once more against the five marks from 7.1: one truth, from your own life, to this audience, in this hour, with a charge. Check decorum. Is anything unkind, private, or puzzling to a stranger? Is every name spelled and pronounced correctly? Is Scripture quoted exactly? Then stop revising. A speech changed the night before is a speech you have not rehearsed. Print two clean marked copies: one for the lectern, one for a parent to hold in case a page goes missing.

Prepare the room. Most of what goes wrong at a speech is logistics. Know who introduces you and what they will say. Know where you will sit and how you will reach the lectern. Test the microphone, if there is one, and the light on the lectern. Put water within reach. Number your pages, and do not staple them, so you can slide each page aside without a rustle. Wear clothes you have already stood up and moved in. Ask someone to record the speech for your portfolio, and someone else to time it.

The five minutes before. Breathe slowly, in for four counts and out for six; the long exhale settles the body. Pray, briefly and honestly: for clear speech, for the hearers, and that the truth would be served. Look at your first sentence once and then put the script down. When you are introduced, walk to the lectern without hurry, set your pages down, look up, find a friendly face, and wait one full second before your first word. That second tells the room you are ready and gives them time to become ready too.

While you speak. Speak to the back row and look at faces. If you lose your place, pause, look down, find the boxed words that begin the section, and continue; the audience will take the pause as thought. If people laugh, wait for the laugh to finish. If your voice shakes at the thanks, let it; a moment of feeling at the right place is part of decorum, not a failure of it. Slow down for the charge. After your last sentence, hold still and look at the audience for a moment, then say “Thank you” and sit down. Do not apologize for anything.

Afterward. Within a day, write a short debrief: what went well, what you would change, and which sentence people mentioned to you afterward (that sentence is usually the truth of your speech, and it is worth noticing whether it was the one you intended). Then copy the final text cleanly, with a title, the date and the occasion, for the portfolio. Paul said he wanted to “finish my course with joy.” A speech well given at a commencement is a small finished course, and a fitting end to twelve years of learning to write and to speak.

The model. *Acts 20:32-38, King James Version*

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are

sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

PICTURE STUDY



Embarkation of the Pilgrims, Robert Walter Weir, 1843 · Oil on canvas · Rotunda, United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In July 1620 the Pilgrims who had lived for years in Leiden, Holland, boarded the ship *Speedwell* at Delfshaven to begin the voyage that would bring them to Plymouth. William Bradford wrote in *Of Plymouth Plantation* that before they left, their pastor, John Robinson, preached a farewell sermon on Ezra 8:21, and that at the parting they knelt while he prayed for them with tears. Robert Weir painted the scene on the deck for the Capitol Rotunda: a whole congregation praying at a commencement of its own, with a rainbow in the sky.

Look closely

- Find the open Bible. Who holds it, and where do the other figures look?
- Find the rainbow. What promise in Genesis 9 does a rainbow recall, and why might Weir include it at a departure?
- Find the children. How does Weir show that this parting concerns more than one generation?

Talk about it

1. Paul at Miletus and Robinson at Delfshaven both ended a farewell with prayer. Write a paragraph on why a parting is a fitting time to pray, and how your speech's blessing does the same work.
2. Write the scene of your own speech as Weir might paint it: where you stand, who listens, where the light falls, and one small object that tells the story.

WRITING PROJECT: GIVE THE SPEECH

This is the lesson the whole unit has been building to. Give your commencement speech to a live audience of at least five or six people, then debrief and prepare the portfolio copy.

If your school or co-op holds a formal graduation, give the speech there. If not, host one: a family dinner or church fellowship with invited guests, a short program, and your speech as its center.

You will need

- Two printed, marked, numbered copies of the speech (unstapled)
- A recording device and a volunteer to operate it
- A timer or watch for a second volunteer
- Water; the clothes you will wear, already tried on

Steps

1. Outline Paul's farewell (Acts 20:17-38) in six parts and set your own outline beside it. Note one thing Paul does that your speech could borrow.
2. Make the final decorum check: names, pronunciations, Scripture, anything unkind or private. Then stop revising.
3. Prepare the room: introduction, seating, lectern, microphone, light, water, recorder.
4. In the five minutes before, breathe, pray, read your first sentence once, and put the script down.
5. Give the speech. Wait one second before beginning; slow down for the charge; hold still after the last sentence; say "Thank you."
6. Within a day, write a debrief of 150-250 words: what went well, what you would change, and the sentence people remembered.
7. Copy the final text cleanly, with title, date and occasion, for the portfolio.

Check your work

- I gave the speech to a live audience within the time limit.
- My thanks named real people and what they did, and every name was pronounced correctly.
- Pronouns in the speech are in the right case and agree with their antecedents ("my parents and me," "each of us ... his or her").

- My debrief names one strength, one change, and the sentence the audience remembered.
- The portfolio copy is clean, titled and dated, with Scripture quoted exactly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 20:32 and 20:35 and circle the commendation and the saying of Jesus.
2. Write the introduction you would like someone to give for you: three sentences, no more than forty words.
3. After the speech, write three sentences of thanks to the person who helped you most with it, and give them the note.

History note. Bradford's account of the Leiden farewell is in Book 1, chapter 7 of *Of Plymouth Plantation*. Weir's painting, completed in 1843, is one of eight large history paintings in the Capitol Rotunda; Weir taught drawing at West Point for more than forty years. The *Speedwell* proved leaky and was left behind in England, and the Pilgrims crossed on the *Mayflower* alone.

 **Style Clinic. Pronouns** (Grammar Level 3, pronouns). Thanks and charges are full of pronouns, and errors show at a podium. Case: "My parents taught my sister and *me*" (object), but "My sister and *I* were taught" (subject); test by removing the other person. "Between you and *me*," never "between you and I." Agreement: "Each of us must finish *his or her* course," or recast in the plural: "All of us must finish *our* course." Shifts: decide whether the charge speaks to "you" (the classmates) or "we" (all of us together), and hold to it within a paragraph. Clear reference: in "Mr. Hale told my father he would help," who is "he"? Name the person.

For families. Please help your student find a real occasion and a real audience; the experience of standing before people who love them and speaking well is the point of the lesson. Arrange for a recording, which becomes part of the portfolio and, often, a family treasure. Afterward, tell your student specifically what was good ("When you thanked Grandpa for the woodshop, the whole room went quiet") before mentioning anything to improve. The Weir painting is in the Capitol Rotunda; Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation* is in the public domain if your student wants to read the farewell scene.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Outline Paul's farewell at Miletus (Acts 20:17–38) using the six parts of a commencement speech from 7.2.

1. Greeting and shared memory: "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia" (20:18).
2. Narration: his labor among them "with many tears" and his journey to Jerusalem (20:19–23). Proposition: he counts not his life dear, so that he may finish his course with joy (20:24).
3. Proof and charge: he has declared "all the counsel of God" (20:27); "Take heed therefore unto yourselves" (20:28), with a warning of wolves to come (20:29–31).
4. Thanks and blessing: "I commend you to God" (20:32), the saying of Jesus (20:35), and prayer (20:36).

Answer: Every part is present, in nearly the order of a commencement speech, and the speech closes not with applause but with prayer. A student can borrow Paul's opening move (shared memory: "You know ...") and his ending (commendation and a short prayer or blessing).

Example 2. Revise this closing for decorum and pronoun usage: "So thanks to everyone who helped Jake and I, especially Mr. Ruiz, even though he almost failed me in chemistry, LOL. Anyway, that's it, I guess. Sorry it ran long."

1. Fix the case: "helped Jake and me" (object of "helped").
2. Cut the joke that embarrasses a teacher in public, and the text-message slang.
3. Replace the trailing apology with a real ending: a specific thanks and a blessing.

Answer: Sample: "So I thank everyone who helped Jake and me through these years, and especially Mr. Ruiz, who would not accept a lab report until it was right. He taught us that a thing worth doing is worth finishing. Classmates, may God keep you, and may each of us finish the course He has set before us."

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where did Paul give his farewell to the Ephesian elders, and how did it end?
2. **EASY** What saying of the Lord Jesus does Paul quote in Acts 20:35?
3. **EASY** What does "I commend you to God" mean?
4. **MEDIUM** Choose the correct pronoun: "The award was given to my brother and (I / me)."
5. **MEDIUM** Name four things to check in the room before a speech.
6. **MEDIUM** What should you do if you lose your place while speaking?
7. **CHALLENGE** Explain how Paul keeps a personal speech from being self-centered. Give two details from Acts 20.

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT/SAT style). Prompt: “Endings matter more than beginnings.” Agree or disagree, with examples from history, literature, Scripture or your own experience.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Revising the speech the night before instead of rehearsing the version you have.
- Apologizing at the podium (“Sorry, I’m nervous,” “Sorry it ran long”). Begin and end with confidence.
- Rushing away after the last sentence. Hold still, look up, say “Thank you,” then sit.
- Skipping the debrief, which is where most of the learning happens.

Make it a game · The Remembered Sentence. The day after the speech, ask three people who heard it, separately, “What sentence do you remember?” Write down their answers. If any of them names your proposition or your charge, you win. If they name something else, study that sentence: it may teach you what your speech was really about.

Scripture. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:” (2 Timothy 4:7, KJV)

This year’s faith verse is Paul’s own farewell; a commencement speech honors a course finished and the faith kept through it.

Practice: answers

1. At Miletus; he knelt and prayed with them all, and they wept and accompanied him to the ship (Acts 20:36–38).
2. “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
3. I entrust you to God’s care.
4. Me (object of the preposition “to”).
5. Any four of: who introduces you, where you sit, the path to the lectern, the microphone, the light, water, the recorder, the timer.
6. Pause, look down, find the boxed opening words of the section, and continue calmly; the audience will take the pause as thought.
7. Sample: Paul speaks of his own labor and tears, but each memory points to others: he worked with his hands to support the weak (20:34–35), and he commends the elders to “the word of his grace” rather than to himself (20:32).
8. Sample thesis: “Endings matter more than beginnings because they reveal whether a beginning was kept: Paul’s ‘I have finished my course’ and Washington’s laying down of his command are remembered because they ended well what began with promise.” A strong answer gives two or three specific examples, answers the objection that nothing can end well that began badly, and concludes with a clear restatement.

UNIT 7 REVIEW

Answer in writing. Short answers may be a sentence or two; written items are scored for content and for the Level 3 skills reviewed in the unit's Style Clinics. The speech itself (7.4) is scored separately with the portfolio rubric.

1. (3 pts) Why is a graduation called a "commencement"? What do "valedictory" and "salutatory" mean?
2. (3 pts) Name Aristotle's three kinds of speech. To which does a commencement address belong, and what two things does it usually do?
3. (4 pts) Give three facts about the occasion of Solzhenitsyn's Harvard address and summarize its one main claim in a sentence.
4. (5 pts) List the five marks of a great commencement address.
5. (4 pts) Name the six parts of a commencement speech from 7.2 and tell which part gets the most words.
6. (3 pts) How does Drummond use his own life in "The Greatest Thing in the World"?
7. (3 pts) Name the three duties of a public reader in Nehemiah 8:8 and explain one of them.
8. (2 pts) Fix the dangling modifier: "Standing at the lectern, the lights seemed blinding."
9. (3 pts) Fix the comma splice and the pronoun error: "Mrs. Lane taught my brother and I to write, she never gave up on us."
10. (2 pts) Make the series parallel: "We came here to learn, for friendship, and so that we would grow in faith."
11. (4 pts) Outline Paul's farewell at Miletus (Acts 20:17-38) in four to six parts.
12. (4 pts) Write a two-sentence charge for a commencement speech whose proposition is "Work done faithfully when no one is watching is the work that lasts."

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

Place in the portfolio a clean, titled copy of the commencement speech as given, with the date, occasion and audience noted; the marked speaking script; the recording (or a note of where it is kept); and the 150-250-word debrief from 7.4.

- **One truth, proved:** The speech states one clear proposition and proves it with a true story from the speaker's own school years and one further witness (Scripture, history or literature).
- **Arrangement and decorum:** All six parts are present in a fitting order; thanks name real people and deeds; nothing is unkind, private or puzzling to a guest; the speech ends with a charge and a blessing.
- **Delivery:** The speech was given to a live audience within five to seven minutes, at a clear pace, with pauses, eye contact and memorized opening and closing sentences.
- **Style and mechanics:** Sentences are written for the ear; parallelism, modifiers, punctuation and pronouns are correct; Scripture is quoted exactly from the King James Version.

Answer key

1. In medieval universities a new master “commenced” (began) to teach; a valedictory says farewell, and a salutatory greets.
2. Deliberative, judicial, epideictic; a commencement address is epideictic (ceremonial) and both praises and exhorts (charges).
3. Any three of: June 8, 1978; Harvard commencement; spoken in Russian through an interpreter; given by an exile expelled in 1974; Nobel laureate (1970). Claim (sample): The West, having forgotten God and the soul, has lost its courage and spiritual strength, and the remedy is to rise to a higher vision rather than to copy either East or West.
4. One truth; proved from the speaker’s own life; spoken to this audience; in this hour; ending with a charge.
5. Greeting, narration, proposition, proof, charge, thanks and blessing; the narration gets the most words.
6. He states a general truth from Scripture and then seals it with his own experience (“I have seen almost all the beautiful things God has made ...”), inviting each hearer to test it on his own memory.
7. Read distinctly, give the sense, cause them to understand. Sample: “Give the sense” means phrasing and stressing so that the meaning is clear.
8. Standing at the lectern, I found the lights blinding. (Or: When I stood at the lectern, the lights seemed blinding.)
9. Mrs. Lane taught my brother and me to write. She never gave up on us. (A semicolon is also correct.)
10. We came here to learn, to make friends and to grow in faith.
11. Sample: shared memory (20:18); narration of his labor (20:19–23); proposition: finishing his course with joy (20:24); charge: take heed (20:28–31); commendation to God and the saying of Jesus (20:32–35); prayer (20:36).
12. Sample: “So next year, when the professor is not checking and the boss has gone home, do the job as if He were watching, because He is. The work no one sees is the work that will still be standing.”

REVIEW: THE TEN-YEAR PORTFOLIO AND A LETTER TO A YOUNGER STUDENT

The series ends where every classical education ends: with a look back and a handing on. You will gather the writing of your school years and walk the ladder of the fourteen exercises once more, with Roger Ascham's account of double translation as the model (8.1); choose one piece from an earlier year, frame it, and deliver it aloud on a family speech day, following Paul's farewell at Miletus (8.2); rewrite a childhood piece as the writer you are now and give your weightiest high-school piece its last revision, by Pope's rule that "the sound must seem an echo to the sense" (8.3); and, in the quarter-path lesson, write a letter of counsel to a real younger student after the pattern of Cicero's letter to his son, bind it at the front of your ten-year portfolio, and present the portfolio in an oral examination (8.4).

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has finished the senior thesis (Units 1–3) and most of the creative and career work of Units 4–7, in any state of revision.
- Has gathered, or can gather, writing from earlier school years; if early work is missing, the student may begin with the earliest piece available.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name the fourteen exercises of the progymnasmata in order and show how each prepared the next.
- ☐ I can frame an earlier piece and deliver it aloud with good memory, pace and eye contact.
- ☐ I can revise by ear, cut filler, and place every modifier beside the word it describes.
- ☐ I can write a letter of true, specific and gracious counsel to a younger student.
- ☐ I can present and defend a ten-year portfolio in an oral examination with truth and courtesy.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster* (Project Gutenberg #1844)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1844>): Free; the source of the 8.1 model. Original spelling; read Book I aloud.
- **Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* (Project Gutenberg #7409)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7409>): Free; the 8.3 model. Part II is the best short lesson in revision by ear ever written in verse.
- **Cicero, *De Officiis*, translated by Walter Miller (Project Gutenberg #47001)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/47001>): Free; the 8.4 model, a whole book written as a letter to a student son.

- **ACT Writing test information (ACT)** (<https://www.act.org>): Official site; check the current format of the optional essay and its scoring before registering.
- **Classic Learning Test (CLT)** (<https://www.cltxam.com>): Official site; check the current format of the optional essay and sample prompts.

8.1 THE TEN-YEAR LADDER: REVIEWING THE EXERCISES

OBJECTIVES

- Name the progymnasmata in order and show how each exercise prepared the next, from the Grade 3 fable to the Grade 12 thesis.
- Gather and inventory the writing of your school years, and choose one piece from each stage of the ladder.
- Read Ascham's account of double translation and use it to explain, in your own words, how imitation built your style.

Warm-up. From memory, write the fourteen exercises of the progymnasmata in order on one page, leaving a line under each. Under as many as you can, write the title or subject of a piece you wrote for that exercise, and the grade. Then check your list against your notebooks. Which rungs did you forget, and which ones do you remember best?

Video slot. Video coming. The progymnasmata and the Tudor grammar school (a lecture on Renaissance education, Roger Ascham or Shakespeare's schooling). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

progymnasmata

The Greek “preliminary exercises” in composition, set down by Theon, Hermogenes and Aphthonius: fable, narrative, chreia, maxim, refutation, confirmation, commonplace, encomium, invective, comparison, impersonation, description, thesis and law.

double translation

Roger Ascham's method: translate a model from Latin into English, set the model aside, translate your English back into Latin, then compare your version with the original.

imitation

Learning style by copying, outlining and rewriting a model, then comparing your work with it (Latin *imitatio*). It is the thread that ran through all ten years of this course.

retrospective

A look back over a long body of work, in order, to see its shape and its growth.

copia

Latin for “abundance”: a ready store of words, forms and ways of saying a thing, which Erasmus taught schoolboys to build by practice.

CORE IDEAS

A ladder, not a list. When you were eight or nine years old, you retold a fable of Aesop. This year you wrote and defended a senior thesis. Between the two stand ten years and fourteen exercises, and they were not a random list. Each rung of the progymnasmata held

up the next. The fable taught you to tell a short story with a point; the narrative taught you to tell any story clearly; the chreia and maxim taught you to expand a saying; refutation and confirmation taught you to test a story; and so up the ladder to the thesis, which asks a general question and answers it. This lesson walks the whole ladder once more, from the top, looking down.

The four stages. In the early grades (3–4) you learned to tell: fable and narrative, with complete sentences and strong verbs. In the middle grades (5–6) you learned to expand and test: chreia, maxim, refutation and confirmation. In Grades 7–8 you learned to praise, blame, compare, describe and argue: commonplace, encomium, invective, comparison, impersonation, description, thesis and law. In high school (9–12) you used the whole ladder at once in the full essay, the speech, the research paper and, this year, the senior thesis. Your thesis contained every earlier exercise in small: a narrative of the question’s history, a refutation of a weak view, a confirmation of your own, a comparison, perhaps a description, and a peroration that praised what was worth praising.

The thread of imitation. Running beside the ladder was one habit: read, copy, imitate, then invent. You copied Proverbs in a notebook, rewrote Franklin’s *Spectator* exercise more than once, and imitated Bunyan, Dickens, Tennyson and Lincoln. The model for this lesson is the method in its oldest English form. Roger Ascham, who tutored the young Princess Elizabeth, describes in *The Scholemaster* (1570) how a boy should learn Latin from Cicero’s letters: translate the letter into English, put the Latin away, translate the English back into Latin, and lay the two side by side. Franklin’s method, two centuries later, was the same discipline without the Latin.

Reading Ascham’s spelling. Ascham wrote before English spelling was fixed, and printers often used *u* for *v* and *v* for *u*. Read “vnto” as *unto*, “ouer” as *over*, “haue” as *have*, “perfitlie” as *perfectly*, “ientlie” as *gently*, and “Tullie” as *Tully*, the old English name for Marcus Tullius Cicero. Read the passage aloud slowly; it becomes plain within a few lines. Notice what Ascham cares about besides method: the master is to praise what is done well and not to “froune, or chide” at honest mistakes, because a child takes “more profit of two fautes, ientlie warned of, than of foure thinges, rightly hitt.” Keep that sentence in mind; you will need it when you write to a younger student in Lesson 8.4.

Inventory first. Before you judge anything, gather everything: notebooks, printed essays, contest entries, poems, speeches, the thesis. Many students did not begin this series in Grade 3, and many notebooks have been lost to moves and floods and younger siblings. That is no matter. Gather what you have from any school year, and where a year is missing, write down what you remember writing. Then make an inventory table: title, grade, exercise or form, length, and where it went (a contest, a family reading, a drawer).

One piece from each stage. From the inventory, choose one piece from each of the four stages: an early telling, a middle expansion or test, a piece of praise, comparison or description from Grades 7–8, and a high-school essay or speech. If you are missing a stage, choose the earliest piece you have. Read the four in order, aloud if you can. You are looking for three things: what you could do then that you can still do, what you could not do then

that you can do now, and one habit (good or bad) that has followed you the whole way. Write those down; they become the spine of your portfolio preface and your letter.

Numbering the days. Looking back is not nostalgia, and it is not boasting. Moses prayed, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." To number ten years of work is to see how much was given: teachers, books, parents who read your drafts, and the slow, unseen growth that God gives to faithful practice. Paul could say at the end, "I have finished my course." You have finished a smaller one, and the right response is gratitude and a clear look at what comes next.

The model. *Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster (1570), Book I, Project Gutenberg #1844 (original spelling)*

First, let him teach the childe, cherefullie and plainlie, the cause, and matter of the letter: then, let him construe it into Englishe, so oft, as the childe may // The order easilie carie awaie the vnderstanding of it: // of teaching. Lastlie, parse it ouer perfitlie. This done thus, let the childe, by and by, both construe and parse it ouer againe: so, that it may appeare, that the childe douteth in nothing, that his master taught him before. After this, the childe must take a paper booke, and sitting in some place, where no man shall prompe him, by him self, let him translate into Englishe his former lesson. Then shewing it to his master, let the master take from him his latin booke, and // Two pa- pausing an houre, at the least, than let the childe // per bokes. translate his owne Englishe into latin againe, in an other paper booke. When the childe bringeth it, turned into latin, the master must compare it with *Tullies* booke, and laie them both together: and where the childe doth well, either in chosing, or true placing of *Tullies* wordes, let the master // Children praise him, and saie here ye do well. For I // learne by assure you, there is no such whetstone, to // prayse. sharpen a good witte and encourage a will to learninge, as is praise. But if the childe misse, either in forgetting a worde, or in chaunging a good with a worse, or misordering the sentence, I would not haue the master, either froune, or chide with him, if the childe haue done his diligence, and vsed no trewandship

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therein. For I know by good experience, that a childe shall lenthene // take more profit of two fautes, ientlie warned of, in teaching. // then of foure thinges, rightly hitt

PICTURE STUDY



The Voyage of Life: Youth, Thomas Cole, 1842 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Thomas Cole painted *The Voyage of Life* as four pictures: Childhood, Youth, Manhood and Old Age. In the second, the youth has taken the tiller of his own boat. His guardian angel stands on the shore and lets him go. Ahead, in the sky, rises a shining castle of his hopes; but the river, which he cannot yet see, bends away toward rapids. Cole meant the series as a Christian allegory of the soul's journey, and in the last picture the angel returns.

Look closely

- Find the angel. Where is she standing, and what is she doing with her hand?
- Follow the river past the castle. Where does it actually go?
- Look at the boat's prow and its carved figure. What does it hold, and what might it mean that the youth now steers alone?

Talk about it

1. You are at the same point as Cole's youth: the tiller is passing to you. Write a paragraph comparing what you see ahead with what the river may really do, and name one thing from your ten years of schooling you will take into the boat.
2. Cole tells a whole life in four pictures. Choose four pieces of your own writing that tell the story of your schooling in four stages, and write one sentence for each "picture."

WRITING PROJECT: THE TEN-YEAR INVENTORY

This week you gather the writing of your school years, arrange it on the ladder of the exercises, and choose one piece from each stage. The inventory and your notes feed directly

into the portfolio and letter in Lesson 8.4.

You will need

- Every notebook, folder and file of writing you can find from Grades 3–12
- A binder with four tabbed sections and one blank inventory page
- Your writing notebook
- The model passage from Ascham

Steps

1. Gather everything into one place. Do not sort or judge yet.
2. Make an inventory table with columns for title, grade, exercise or form, length, and where it went (contest, reading, drawer). List every piece you can find, and list from memory any you know you wrote but cannot find.
3. Sort the pieces into four stages: telling (Grades 3–4), expanding and testing (5–6), praising, comparing and describing (7–8), and the full essay, speech and thesis (9–12).
4. Choose one piece from each stage and read the four aloud, in order, in one sitting.
5. Write a one-page “ladder memo” with three short sections: what I could do then and still can; what I could not do then and can now; one habit that has followed me the whole way.
6. Do one round of double translation in Ascham’s spirit: take one paragraph of your earliest piece, write its sense as short notes, put it away for a day, rewrite it from the notes as you would write now, and lay the two side by side.

Check your work

- My inventory lists every piece I could find, with grade and exercise.
- I chose one piece from each stage (or the earliest piece I have for a missing stage).
- My ladder memo names specific skills, not general feelings (“I learned to open with a narrative,” not “I got better”).
- In my memo, every “let” or “should” instruction to myself is in the correct mood, and every conditional contrary to fact uses “were.”
- Items in each list are parallel in form.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the second paragraph of the Ascham passage in his spelling. Under it, write it again in modern spelling, changing nothing else. What did you have to change?
2. Draw the ladder of fourteen exercises from the bottom up, and beside each rung write the grade you climbed it and the title of one piece.
3. Copy Psalm 90:12 and list three things you have been given in ten years of writing that you did not earn.

History note. Roger Ascham (1515–1568) was a Cambridge scholar and tutor in Greek and Latin to the young Princess Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth I. *The Scholemaster* was

published by his widow in 1570, two years after his death. The “Epistles of Cicero ... chosen out by Sturmius” were a school selection made by Johann Sturm of Strasbourg, a famous schoolmaster whom Ascham admired. Thomas Cole (1801–1848) painted the first set of *The Voyage of Life* in 1840 (now in Utica, New York) and a second set in 1842, which hangs in the National Gallery of Art.

 **Style Clinic. Mood.** Ascham writes almost entirely in commands: “let him teach,” “let the childe ... translate,” “let the master praise him.” This is the *imperative* mood, softened by *let*, the way a book of instructions speaks. He also uses the *subjunctive*: “if the childe *haue* done his diligence,” where modern English would say “has.” Today the subjunctive survives in conditions contrary to fact (“If I *were* starting over, I would keep a better notebook”) and in demands (“I ask that every draft *be* dated”). In your ladder memo, write two imperative sentences to your future self and one contrary-to-fact sentence about your past, and check the verb in each.

For families. Many students will not have all ten years of work; some joined the series late or kept nothing from the early grades. Let them gather what they have from any school and any year, and accept memory where paper is missing. The inventory is not a test of record-keeping. Ascham’s spelling is untouched from the Project Gutenberg text; read it aloud together the first time. His counsel against frowning at honest mistakes is worth discussing as a family before your student writes to a younger child in Lesson 8.4.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student puts his Grade 4 fable beside his senior thesis and writes in his memo: “I got a lot better at writing.” Rewrite the observation so that it names specific growth.

1. Look at the fable: it has a clear beginning, middle and end, and a moral in the last line, but every sentence begins with “Then” or “The.”
2. Look at the thesis: its sentences open in many ways, and its argument has a refutation section.
3. Name what is the same (a clear point at the end) and what is new (varied openers, the ability to answer an objection).

Answer: “My Grade 4 fable already knew where it was going: the moral came in the last line, and my thesis still ends with its point plainly stated. What is new is range. In the fable every sentence began with ‘Then’ or ‘The’; in the thesis I open with clauses, phrases and questions, and I can state an objection fairly and answer it, which I could not do at nine.”

Example 2. Do a round of double translation on this sentence from a Grade 5 chreia: “Diogenes was a man who was very poor and he lived in a tub and one day Alexander came to see him and asked him what he wanted.”

1. Notes: Diogenes, poor, tub. Alexander visits. Asks what he wants.
2. Rewrite from the notes as a senior: use one main clause and subordinate the rest.
3. Compare: the old sentence strings four clauses with “and”; the new one chooses which fact matters most.

Answer: “When Alexander, master of the known world, stood over the beggar philosopher in his tub and asked what he wished, Diogenes had an answer ready.” The comparison shows the main growth from Grade 5: subordination instead of a chain of “and.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the fourteen exercises of the progymnasmata in order.
2. **EASY** Who was Roger Ascham, and what book is the model from?
3. **EASY** In the model, who is “Tullie”?
4. **MEDIUM** List the steps of Ascham’s double translation in order.
5. **MEDIUM** What three kinds of mistakes does Ascham name, and how should the master treat them?
6. **MEDIUM** Name the exercise each part of a senior thesis practices: (a) the history of the question, (b) answering a weak opposing view, (c) proving your own claim.
7. **CHALLENGE** Rewrite in modern spelling and identify the mood of the main verb: “let the master take from him his latin booke.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Ascham says praise is a “whetstone.” Explain the metaphor and say whether it fits your own experience, in three or four sentences.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Judging old pieces before gathering them all; memory flatters some pieces and forgets others.
- Mocking your own early work. A nine-year-old’s fable is not a bad thesis; it is a good fable. Judge each piece by the exercise it was.
- Writing vague memos (“I improved a lot”) instead of naming specific skills gained and kept.
- Doing the double-translation round while looking at the original; the method only works from notes alone.

Make it a game · Name the Rung. A parent reads a sentence or two from any piece in the inventory without saying which. The student names the exercise, the grade, and one thing the piece does that the exercise required. Then the student reads a sentence and

the parent guesses. One point for the exercise, one for the grade, one for the requirement.

Scripture. “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” (Psalm 90:12, KJV)

To number your years of writing honestly is the first step to applying what they taught you.

Practice: answers

1. Fable, narrative, chreia, maxim, refutation, confirmation, commonplace, encomium, invective, comparison, impersonation, description, thesis, law.
2. An English scholar of the 1500s who tutored Princess Elizabeth; the model is from *The Scholemaster* (1570).
3. Marcus Tullius Cicero, the Roman orator; the boy compares his Latin with Cicero's.
4. The master explains the letter; construes it into English and parses it; the child construes and parses it again; the child translates it into English alone in a paper book; the Latin is taken away; after at least an hour the child translates his English back into Latin; the master compares it with Cicero and praises what is done well.
5. Forgetting a word, changing a good word for a worse, and misordering the sentence. If the child has been diligent, the master should not frown or chide but warn gently.
6. (a) Narrative; (b) refutation; (c) confirmation.
7. “Let the master take his Latin book from him.” Imperative mood (with *let*): a command or instruction.
8. Sample: A whetstone does not make the blade; it sharpens what is already there. Ascham means that honest praise for a thing done well makes a student eager to do it again and to do it better. In my own writing, the comment I remember best is a teacher's note that one sentence in my Grade 7 description was “exactly right,” and I spent the next year trying to write another like it. Praise has to be true, though, or it dulls the edge instead.

8.2 SPEECH DAY: DELIVERING ONE PIECE FROM THE DECADE

OBJECTIVES

- Read Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders as a delivered review of years of work, and name how it is arranged for listeners.
- Choose one piece from your ten-year inventory and prepare it for delivery with a short spoken introduction of your own.
- Deliver the piece from memory or near-memory before a small audience, using the canons of memory and delivery.

Warm-up. Stand up and say, in exactly sixty seconds and without notes, what you wrote in the year you were ten. Have someone time you. Then sit down and write the three things you wish you had said and the one thing you should have left out.

Video slot. Video coming. How to read aloud and recite a prepared piece well (an elocution or public-reading tutorial). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

speech day

An old school custom: at the end of the year, students deliver prepared pieces aloud before parents and guests, so that the year's learning is heard, not only filed.

valediction

A farewell address (Latin *vale*, "farewell," and *dicere*, "to say"). Paul's words at Miletus are one of the great valedictions.

frame

A short spoken introduction and close that set a piece in its setting: when you wrote it, what exercise it was, and why you chose it.

memory

The fourth canon of rhetoric: holding a speech in mind so you can deliver it to faces, not to a page.

delivery

The fifth canon: voice, pace, pause, posture, gesture and eye contact, used to serve the words.

CORE IDEAS

Writing is meant to be heard. For most of history, a piece of writing was finished only when it was read aloud. The schoolboys who learned the progymnasmata declaimed their exercises; the Psalms were sung; Paul's letters were read to whole churches. You delivered a commencement address in Unit 7, which was new work written for one occasion. This lesson

is different. You will choose an *old* piece, something you wrote in some earlier year, and give it a second life by speaking it well, with a short frame of your own around it.

Paul at Miletus. The model is the opening of Paul's farewell to the elders of Ephesus. He has spent about three years with them, and he expects never to see them again. Notice how he arranges the speech for listeners. He begins with what they already know: "Ye know, from the first day." He reviews his work in a few plain, parallel clauses: serving, keeping back nothing, teaching publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews and Greeks. Then he turns from the past to the future: "And now, behold." And he ends the turn on one firm sentence that states the purpose of everything: "so that I might finish my course with joy." Past, present, purpose: that is the shape of a good valediction, and it is the shape of the frame you will write.

Choosing the piece. Look over the four pieces you chose from the four stages in Lesson 8.1 and choose one to deliver. It should take four to seven minutes aloud. A short fable from Grade 3 or 4 delivered beautifully can be the best choice of all, especially if younger children will be listening; an encomium or a description from Grade 7 or 8 often reads aloud well; a section of your thesis may work if it stands on its own. Do not choose the commencement address again. Choose the piece that will most help the listeners, not the piece that most shows off.

The frame. Write a spoken introduction of about 150 words and a close of about 50. The introduction answers three questions in Paul's order: *what they know* (when and why you wrote it, and which exercise it was), *what it was* (one honest sentence about what you were trying to do), and *why now* (why this piece is worth hearing again). The close should be one or two sentences that name what the piece taught you, without apology and without boasting. Do not revise the old piece heavily for this lesson; light corrections of plain errors are fine, but let your younger self be heard. Real revision comes in Lesson 8.3.

Memory. Quintilian advised learning a speech in parts, by its divisions, rather than as one long string. Mark your piece into its natural sections, the heads of the exercise if it has them. Learn the first and last sentences of each section exactly; learn the middle in substance. Walk the room while you practice, and give each section a place in the room, an old trick of the ancient orators. Speak it through once a day for four days. If you cannot memorize it all, memorize the frame and the first and last paragraphs, and read the rest with your eyes up at every period.

Delivery. Stand still with your weight on both feet. Speak to the farthest listener. Slow down by a third from your conversational pace, and pause fully at every paragraph break, longer than feels natural. Let your voice drop at the end of statements. If your piece has dialogue, as a fable or narrative may, change your voice only slightly for each speaker; a hint is better than a performance. Look at faces, one at a time, for a whole sentence each.

Grace in the hearing. Paul says he "kept back nothing that was profitable." Speech day is not a recital of your achievements; it is a gift to listeners. Choose the piece, frame it, and deliver it so that the youngest person in the room is helped. That is what it means for speech

to be “always with grace, seasoned with salt.” A word fitly spoken, Solomon says, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver: the setting serves the fruit.

The model. *Acts 20:17-24 (KJV): Paul’s farewell to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus*

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

PICTURE STUDY



A Father Reading the Bible to His Family, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, 1755 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Greuze made his name at the Paris Salon of 1755 with this picture of a country father reading Scripture aloud to his household. The listeners are of many ages, and they do not all listen in the same way. The reader holds them by his voice alone. Nothing in the room is grand; the reading is the event.

Look closely

- Count the listeners and guess the age of each. Who is listening hardest, and how can you tell?
- Find the youngest figure in the picture. Is he or she attending to the reading? What else is in reach?
- Look at the reader's posture and hands. Is he performing, or simply reading well?

Talk about it

1. Picture your own speech-day audience as Greuze might paint it. Write a paragraph describing each listener and what each one needs from your piece.
2. Young listeners drift. Write three specific things you will do in your delivery to keep the youngest person in the room with you.

WRITING PROJECT: SPEECH DAY: ONE PIECE, FRAMED AND DELIVERED

Choose one piece from your ten years, write a short spoken frame for it, prepare it for memory and delivery, and give it before a small audience of family, friends, or a co-op class. If you can, invite at least one younger child.

You will need

- Your four stage pieces from Lesson 8.1
- Writing notebook and index cards
- A timer and, if possible, a phone or recorder for one practice run
- An audience of three or more

Steps

1. Choose one piece that takes four to seven minutes aloud. Correct plain errors only; do not rewrite it.
2. Write a frame: an introduction of about 150 words in Paul's order (what you know, what it was, why now) and a close of about 50 words.
3. Mark the piece into sections. On one index card, write only the first and last sentence of each section.
4. Practice once a day for four days, walking the room and giving each section a place. Record one run and listen to it once for pace and pauses.
5. Deliver the frame and the piece before your audience. Afterward, ask the youngest listener to tell you what the piece was about.
6. Write a short delivery report: what you did well, what slipped, and what the youngest listener remembered.

Check your work

- My frame answers what the piece was, when I wrote it, and why it is worth hearing now.

- The frame’s review of my work uses parallel phrases or clauses, as Paul’s does.
- My piece runs four to seven minutes, and I paused fully at every paragraph break.
- I looked up at every period, even where I read from the page.
- My delivery report names specific moments, not general impressions.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 20:24 and underline the purpose clause that begins “so that.”
2. List the four parallel things Paul says he did among the Ephesians (vv. 19–21), each beginning with an -ing word or “how.”
3. Write your frame’s first sentence three ways and star the one you would most like to hear spoken.

History note. Miletus was a port about thirty miles south of Ephesus on the coast of what is now Turkey. Paul had spent about three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31) and, hurrying to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, called the elders to meet him at the coast. Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805) showed *A Father Reading the Bible to His Family* at the Salon of 1755, his first, and it made him famous; the philosopher Denis Diderot praised his work warmly in his reviews of the Salon.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism for the ear.** Listeners cannot reread, so spoken prose leans on parallel forms to help them follow. Paul lists his work in matched phrases: “Serving the Lord ... And how I kept back nothing ... Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks.” Inside the list, smaller pairs balance: “publicly, and from house to house”; “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” In your frame, put any series in the same grammatical form. Not “I wrote it in Grade 6, it was a refutation, and to test a story” but “I wrote it in Grade 6, as a refutation, to test a story.” Read the frame aloud: a broken parallel almost always makes the voice stumble.

For families. Keep speech day simple and warm: a living room, grandparents on the phone, a co-op class, or a church fellowship hall. If younger siblings or co-op children can attend, the senior learns more about delivery from one restless six-year-old than from any rubric. The model is printed from the King James text. Greuze’s painting is a modest, domestic scene and suitable for all ages.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student writes this frame for her Grade 4 fable: “Um, so this is a fable I wrote a long time ago. It’s not very good, but my mom said I should read it. It’s about a fox.” Rewrite it as a proper introduction in Paul’s order.

1. What they know: name the grade, the exercise and the model.
2. What it was: one honest sentence about what she was trying to do, with no apology.
3. Why now: why the piece is worth hearing, especially for the youngest listeners.

Answer: “When I was nine, my first assignment in composition was to retell a fable of Aesop in my own words. I chose ‘The Fox and the Crow,’ and I tried to make the crow’s foolishness funny without making the fox a hero. I have written longer things since, but every one of them began with what this fable taught me: tell the story plainly, and let the point come at the end. Here it is, as I wrote it then.”

Example 2. A student practicing a section of his Grade 8 description reads it at full speed, and his recording lasts 2 minutes 40 seconds for 600 words. What should he change?

1. Compute the rate: 600 words in 160 seconds is about 225 words a minute, far too fast for listeners.
2. A good delivery rate for a prepared piece is roughly 130–150 words a minute.
3. Slow by a third, pause at every paragraph break, and let the voice drop at periods.

Answer: He should aim for about 4 to 4½ minutes for the same 600 words: slow down, mark pauses with a slash at each paragraph and long sentence break, and practice until the timer confirms the new pace.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where did Paul give the speech in the model, and to whom?
2. **EASY** What are the fourth and fifth canons of rhetoric?
3. **EASY** What is a valediction?
4. **MEDIUM** Which words in the model mark Paul’s turn from the past to the future?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the three parts of the frame’s introduction, following Paul’s order.
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the parallelism: “In Grade 7 I learned praising a hero, to compare two men, and description.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Explain Quintilian’s advice for memorizing a speech and how you would apply it to a six-paragraph piece.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a two-sentence close for a frame around a Grade 6 refutation of a fable, naming what the piece taught you without apology or boast.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Apologizing for the old piece in the introduction; it tells listeners not to bother listening.
- Rewriting the old piece so heavily that it is no longer the old piece; save revision for Lesson 8.3.
- Speaking too fast and skipping the pauses at paragraph breaks.
- Choosing the piece that shows off most rather than the one that will help the listeners most.

Make it a game · Past, Present, Purpose. Each player draws a slip naming an ordinary task (painting a fence, raising a calf, learning the piano) and must give a thirty-second farewell speech about it in Paul's order: "You know ...," "And now ...," "so that ..."
Listeners award a point for each part clearly heard and a bonus point for a parallel list.

Scripture. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." (Proverbs 25:11, KJV)

A frame should set off the piece it holds, as silver sets off gold, and the speaker should deliver it fitly.

Practice: answers

1. At Miletus, to the elders of the church at Ephesus.
2. Memory and delivery.
3. A farewell address.
4. "And now, behold" (v. 22).
5. What they know (when and why the piece was written, and which exercise), what it was (what you were trying to do), and why now (why it is worth hearing again).
6. "In Grade 7 I learned to praise a hero, to compare two men, and to describe a scene."
7. Learn the speech in parts by its divisions, not as one long string. Sample: I would mark the six paragraphs, learn the first and last sentence of each exactly, learn the middles in substance, and give each paragraph a place in the room as I practice.
8. Sample: "I was eleven when I first argued that a story could be wrong, and I was far too sure of myself. But that refutation taught me the habit my senior thesis depended on: to test a claim before I trust it."

8.3 THE LAST REVISION: REWRITING A CHILDHOOD PIECE AS A SENIOR

OBJECTIVES

- Read Pope’s lines on sound and sense and use them as a standard for revising prose by ear.
- Rewrite one piece from your early grades as the writer you are now, keeping its exercise and its story, and write a revision memo comparing the two.
- Give one high-school piece a final revision pass for the ten-year portfolio, including a check of modifiers.

Warm-up. Open your earliest surviving piece and read the first paragraph aloud. Without changing a single word yet, put a light pencil mark wherever your voice stumbled, wherever you were bored, and wherever you smiled. Those three marks are the beginning of revision.

Video slot. Video coming. Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, “sound must seem an echo to the sense” (a reading and explanation). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

revision

Literally “seeing again”: rethinking a piece’s argument, order and wording, not only correcting its errors (which is proofreading).

heroic couplet

Two rhymed lines of iambic pentameter, closed and balanced, as in Pope: “True ease in writing comes from art, not chance, / As those move easiest who have learned to dance.”

expletive

In Pope’s sense, a filler word that adds sound but no meaning (“do join,” “there is,” “it is ... that”). Cutting expletives is the first step in tightening prose.

Alexandrine

A line of verse with twelve syllables (six iambic feet). Pope mocks a “needless” one and then writes a fitting one to show swift motion.

misplaced modifier

A word, phrase or clause set so far from the word it describes that it seems to describe the wrong thing.

CORE IDEAS

The last revision. You have revised hundreds of drafts in ten years: fables, chreias, essays, poems, a thesis. This lesson asks for two final kinds of revision. The first is unusual: you will take a piece from your early grades and rewrite it as the writer you are now, keeping the same exercise and the same story. The second is ordinary but serious: you will give one high-school piece its last revision before it goes into the ten-year portfolio. The first shows you how far you have come; the second makes sure the portfolio shows it too.

Pope on sound and sense. Alexander Pope was about twenty-one when he wrote *An Essay on Criticism*, a long poem in heroic couplets on how to write and how to judge writing. In the lines just before the model, he mocks poets who judge only by smoothness, who let “ten low words oft creep in one dull line” and fill gaps with filler. Then, in the model, he gives the standard: “True ease in writing comes from art, not chance.” Ease is the result of practice, as graceful walking comes to those who have learned to dance. And “the sound must seem an echo to the sense.” Watch him prove it. When he writes of the gentle west wind, the line is soft. When he writes of Ajax heaving a rock, the line is clogged with consonants and slow. When swift Camilla runs, the line runs on into twelve syllables and skims.

Pope’s standard for prose. You are not writing couplets, but the rule holds. Revise by ear. Read every paragraph aloud. Where the sense is quick (an action, a turn, a surprise), the sentences should be short and the verbs strong. Where the sense is weighty (a hard argument, a grave fact), let the sentence slow down with a subordinate clause or a pause. Where the sense is plain, the sound should be plain. A sentence that sounds impressive but says little is Pope’s “unmeaning thing they call a thought.” Cut it.

Rewriting the child’s piece. Choose one piece from Grades 3–6: a fable, a narrative, a chreia, a maxim, a refutation or a confirmation. Copy it first, exactly, mistakes and all; it is a historical document now. Then rewrite it as the exercise it was, at full senior strength. Keep the plot or the saying; keep the heads of the exercise. Change everything else that ought to change: sentence variety, verbs, transitions, the precision of each word. Expect the new version to be longer but not twice as long; a senior’s fable is still a fable. Then write a revision memo of a page, naming at least five specific changes and the skill behind each.

What not to change. Some things in a child’s piece are better than a senior would do. A nine-year-old often writes with a directness and a delight that older writers lose. If your Grade 4 fable has one sentence that is simply right, keep it word for word in the new version and say so in your memo. Ascham’s master praised what the child did well before he corrected anything; do the same for your younger self.

The final pass on a portfolio piece. Choose the high-school piece that will carry the most weight in your portfolio, perhaps a chapter of the thesis or your best essay. Revise in three passes. First, the whole: is the claim clear, and does every section serve it? Second, the paragraph: does each one open with its point and end where it should? Third, the sentence: read aloud for sound and sense, cut expletives (“there is,” “it is important to note that”), fix

every misplaced or dangling modifier, and check every quotation against its source. Then proofread on paper, not on a screen.

Revision under the clock. On a timed essay such as the optional ACT essay or the CLT essay, there is no time to rewrite a whole piece, but there is time for Pope's ear. Save the last three to five minutes. Reread your introduction and conclusion first, since graders read those most carefully; strike any filler phrase; and fix the one sentence that sounds wrong. The habit you build in leisurely revision is the habit that works under the clock.

The model. *Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism (1711), Part II, Project Gutenberg #7409*

Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow;
And praise the easy vigor of a line,
Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows,
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar,
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labors, and the words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.

PICTURE STUDY



Erasmus Writing, Hans Holbein the Younger, 1523 · Oil on panel · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Holbein painted the great Dutch scholar Erasmus in profile, at work. Erasmus wrote *De Copia*, a textbook on abundance of style that English grammar schools used for generations, and he famously showed one Latin sentence rewritten in scores of different ways. Here there is no grand setting: only the face, the hands and the pen. Holbein makes the act of writing itself the subject.

Look closely

- Look at the line of the profile from forehead to chin. What does it tell you about the writer's attention?
- Find the hands. Which one writes, and what is the other doing?
- Notice what Holbein leaves out. Why might he show so little of the room?

Talk about it

1. Write a description of yourself at work on this lesson's revision, in Holbein's manner: only face, hands and page, in one paragraph.
2. Erasmus taught students to say one thing many ways. Take one sentence from your childhood piece and write it five different ways; choose the best and explain why.

WRITING PROJECT: TWO REVISIONS: THE CHILD'S PIECE AND THE PORTFOLIO PIECE

First, rewrite one early piece as a senior and compare the two. Second, give your weightiest high-school piece its final revision for the portfolio.

You will need

- One piece from Grades 3–6 and one high-school piece, chosen from your Lesson 8.1 inventory
- Writing notebook and two colors of pen
- The original sources for any quotations in the high-school piece

Steps

1. Copy the early piece exactly, mistakes and all, and date the copy.
2. Mark with one color what is already good, and keep it. Mark with the other what a senior would change.
3. Rewrite the early piece as the same exercise, at full strength, keeping its story or saying and its heads.
4. Write a one-page revision memo naming at least five specific changes and the skill behind each, plus one thing you kept and why.
5. Revise the high-school piece in three passes: the whole, the paragraph, the sentence. Read every paragraph aloud for sound and sense.
6. Check every quotation against its source and proofread the final copy on paper.

Check your work

- My rewritten early piece is still the same exercise with the same story or saying.
- My memo names specific changes (“I combined three ‘and’ clauses into one complex sentence”), not general ones.
- I kept at least one thing my younger self did well, and said so.
- Every modifier in both pieces sits next to the word it describes, and no introductory phrase dangles.
- I cut filler expletives (“there is,” “it is ... that”) wherever they added sound but not sense.
- Every quotation matches its source exactly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Pope’s eight lines from “Soft is the strain” to the end. Beside each pair, write the motion its sound imitates.
2. Write one prose sentence about a slow thing and one about a fast thing, making the sound echo the sense in each.
3. List ten filler phrases you have used in your own writing over the years, and a cure for each.

History note. Alexander Pope (1688–1744) published *An Essay on Criticism* in 1711; he had written it about two years earlier. Sir John Denham and Edmund Waller were seventeenth-century English poets whom Pope’s age admired for strength and smoothness. Zephyr is the west wind; Ajax is the strongest Greek warrior after Achilles in Homer; Camilla is the swift warrior maiden of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Book 7. The Project Gutenberg text has no comma after “dance”; it is copied as printed there. Desiderius

Erasmus (about 1466–1536) published *De Copia* in 1512; it was written for St. Paul’s School in London. Holbein’s profile portrait of him is in the Louvre.

 **Style Clinic. Modifiers.** A modifier must sit next to the word it describes. A *misplaced* modifier attaches to the wrong word: “I found my Grade 4 fable cleaning out the closet” (the fable was not cleaning). Move it: “Cleaning out the closet, I found my Grade 4 fable.” A *dangling* modifier has no word in the sentence to attach to: “Rereading it after eight years, the ending seemed rushed.” (Who reread it?) Supply the doer: “Rereading it after eight years, I thought the ending rushed.” Watch also for *only* and *almost*: “I only revised the ending” and “I revised only the ending” mean different things. Pope himself keeps his modifiers close: “The *hoarse, rough* verse,” “*swift* Camilla.”

For families. Rewriting a childhood piece is often the most enjoyable assignment of the year. Let your student read both versions aloud to the family, and resist laughing at the younger one; Ascham’s counsel in Lesson 8.1 applies to the student’s view of his own past as well. If your student has no work from Grades 3–6, use the earliest piece available, or have him write a short fable from memory “as I would have at nine” and then rewrite it. The Pope lines are copied exactly from the Project Gutenberg text.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A Grade 4 fable begins: “Once there was a crow and she had a peice of cheese and she was in a tree. A fox came and he wanted the cheese so he said you are very pretty.” Rewrite the opening as a senior, keeping the fable.

1. Keep the story and the characters; the exercise is still a fable.
2. Break the chain of “and” clauses: choose the main action and subordinate the rest.
3. Fix spelling and punctuation; add quotation marks for the fox’s speech.
4. Let sound echo sense: the crow is pleased and still; the fox is quick and smooth.

Answer: “A crow sat high in a tree with a piece of cheese in her beak, very pleased with herself. Below, a fox stopped, looked up, and smiled. ‘What a handsome bird,’ he said. ‘Such feathers! Surely a voice to match them?’” Memo note: four “and” clauses became one main clause with a participial phrase; the fox now speaks in short, quick sentences that sound like flattery.

Example 2. Revise this sentence from a senior thesis for filler and modifiers: “There are many scholars who argue, having studied the evidence, that it is important to note that Lincoln only read a few books deeply.”

1. Cut the expletives: “There are many scholars who” and “it is important to note that.”
2. Fix the dangling participial phrase by attaching it to the scholars.
3. Move “only” to the word it limits: “a few books.”

Answer: “Having studied the evidence, many scholars argue that Lincoln read only a few books, but read them deeply.” Fourteen fewer words, and every modifier now sits by its word.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Complete Pope’s couplet: “True ease in writing comes from art, not chance, ...”
2. **EASY** What is the difference between revision and proofreading?
3. **EASY** What does Pope mean by “The sound must seem an echo to the sense”?
4. **MEDIUM** In the line about Ajax, how does Pope make the sound slow?
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: “After ten years of writing, the portfolio was finally ready.”
6. **MEDIUM** Cut the expletives: “It is a fact that there were many students who did not finish the course.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Pope’s last line has twelve syllables. Why might he have made it longer than the rest?
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed-essay revision: you have four minutes left on a CLT or ACT essay. List, in order, what you would do.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Rewriting the early piece into a different exercise (turning a fable into an essay) instead of a better version of the same one.
- Correcting only spelling and punctuation; that is proofreading, not revision.
- Throwing out everything the younger self did, including what was good.
- Revising on screen only; reading aloud and proofreading on paper catch what the eye skips.

Make it a game · Echo the Sense. One player names a motion or sound (a wave breaking, a mouse running, a door creaking shut, a bell tolling). The other has thirty seconds to say one sentence whose sound imitates it. The listener scores 1 to 3 for how well sound echoes sense. Switch roles; first to ten wins.

Scripture. “Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.” (Proverbs 25:4, KJV)

Revision is refining: what is cut away lets the true metal of the piece come out.

Practice: answers

1. “As those move easiest who have learned to dance.”
2. Revision rethinks the argument, order and wording; proofreading corrects surface errors of spelling, punctuation and typing.
3. The way a line sounds should imitate or support what it means: soft for gentle things, rough for violent things, slow for heavy labor, quick for speed.
4. He crowds stressed monosyllables and hard consonant clusters together (“rock’s vast weight,” “line too labors,” “words move slow”), so the voice must slow down to say them.
5. “After ten years of writing, I finally had my portfolio ready.”
6. “Many students did not finish the course.”
7. It is an Alexandrine, and Pope uses its extra length to imitate Camilla’s speed: the line seems to run on past where the reader expects it to stop, as she skims over the corn and the sea. Earlier in the poem he mocked a “needless Alexandrine”; this one is needed, because the sound echoes the sense.
8. Sample: (1) Reread the introduction and make sure the thesis is one clear sentence. (2) Reread the conclusion and make sure it answers the prompt. (3) Strike any filler phrase I notice on the way. (4) Fix the single worst sentence, usually a run-on or a dangling modifier. (5) Check that the last sentence is complete.

8.4 THE TEN-YEAR PORTFOLIO AND A LETTER TO A YOUNGER STUDENT ★

OBJECTIVES

- Read the opening of Cicero’s *De Officiis* as a letter of counsel from an older writer to a younger student, and name its moves.
- Write a letter of 800–1,200 words to a real younger student who is just beginning to write, giving true, specific and gracious counsel from your ten years.
- Assemble the ten-year portfolio and present it in an oral examination of 20–30 minutes.

Warm-up. Think of one real child you know who is between seven and ten years old and is just learning to write. In five minutes, list everything you wish someone had told you at that age about writing. Then cross out everything on the list that a child that age could not use yet.

Video slot. Video coming. Cicero’s *De Officiis*, letters to his son Marcus (a lecture on Cicero’s moral philosophy). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

epistle

A formal letter meant to teach as well as to greet; Paul’s letters to Timothy and Cicero’s *De Officiis* are both epistles of counsel.

De Officiis

Latin for “On Duties”: Cicero’s last philosophical work (44 B.C.), written as a long letter to his son Marcus, then a student in Athens.

ethos

The character of the speaker as it appears in the words. A letter of counsel persuades only if the writer seems honest, humble and experienced.

portfolio

A chosen, arranged collection of finished work, with a preface, that shows what a writer can do. It is a selection, not an archive.

oral examination

A spoken examination in which a student presents work and answers questions about it before examiners, as at the end of a classical education.

CORE IDEAS

Turning around. For ten years you have been the younger student. Older writers, living and dead, wrote to you: Aesop, Solomon, Franklin, Ascham, Lincoln, Paul. Now you will turn

around on the ladder and write to someone below you. Every classical education ends this way, because the purpose of learning is not only to have it but to hand it on. Paul, near the end of his life, wrote to young Timothy: “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.” Your letter will do the same for one real child who is just starting out.

Cicero to his son. The model is the opening of *De Officiis*, which Cicero wrote in 44 B.C. as a letter to his son Marcus, then about twenty and studying philosophy in Athens under Cratippus. Watch his moves. He begins with where Marcus is: a year in Athens under a fine teacher. He gives one concrete piece of advice from his own practice: combine Greek and Latin, in philosophy and in speaking. He encourages the young man to keep learning “as long as you are not dissatisfied with the progress you are making.” He leaves the conclusions to Marcus’s “own judgment.” And he guards against boasting: there are many who know more philosophy than he, but in speaking with “propriety, clearness, elegance” he has some claim, “for I have spent my life in that profession.” Where you are, what I did, keep going, judge for yourself, and why you may trust me: that is the shape of a letter of counsel.

Choosing your reader. Write to a real person: a younger brother or sister, a cousin, a child in your co-op or church who is about to begin Grade 3, or a child you will never meet who will take this course next year. A real reader keeps you honest and keeps you plain. A nine-year-old cannot use “cultivate your voice”; she can use “read your fable aloud before you call it finished.” If your reader is very young, write so that a parent can read the letter aloud now and the child can reread it at fourteen.

What to say. Use your ladder memo and your revision memo. Give no more than five pieces of counsel, each tied to a true story from your own years: the fable you rushed, the refutation you were too proud of, the description that finally came right on the fourth draft, the morning you learned that a good outline saves an hour. Name the exercises the child will meet, briefly, so that the road ahead is not a fog. Tell one thing you did wrong. Ascham warned that a child takes more profit from two faults gently warned of than from four things done right; let your faults be the gentle warnings. And tell the child why it is worth it, in plain words, without promising that it will be easy.

The ten-year portfolio. The letter goes at the front of your ten-year portfolio, after the title page and table of contents. Then come four sections, one for each stage, each holding the original piece you chose in Lesson 8.1 exactly as you wrote it. After the early section, place your senior rewrite of the childhood piece with its revision memo (Lesson 8.3). The high-school section holds your strongest work of Grades 9–12: a section of the senior thesis, a few poems from your chapbook or a chapter of your novella, your commencement address, and the piece you revised in 8.3. End with the ladder memo and a one-page list of everything in your inventory. The whole should be something you could hand to a college, an employer or your own children.

The oral examination. Present the portfolio in 20–30 minutes before a small panel: parents, a pastor, a tutor, a family friend who writes for a living. Open with a three-minute statement: what the portfolio contains, how it is arranged, and what it shows. Read aloud the

opening of your letter. Then answer questions. Your examiners may ask you to explain an exercise, defend a choice, compare two pieces, or tell what you would do differently. Answer truthfully and calmly; grant what is fair; quote your own work exactly. Peter's counsel holds: be ready to give an answer "with meekness and fear."

Finishing the course. Paul's words are this year's faith thread: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." He wrote them to Timothy, a younger man, in a letter. The finishing and the handing on belong together. Write your letter as one who has finished a course and is glad to tell the next runner where the road turns.

The model. *Cicero, De Officiis (44 B.C.), Book I, sections 1-2, translated by Walter Miller (1913), Project Gutenberg #47001*

My dear son Marcus, you have now been studying a full year under Cratippus, and that too in Athens, and you should be fully equipped with the practical precepts and the principles of philosophy; so much at least one might expect from the pre-eminence not only of your teacher but also of the city; the former is able to enrich you with learning, the latter to supply you with models. Nevertheless, just as I for my own improvement have always combined Greek and Latin studies--and I have done this not only in the study of philosophy but also in the practice of oratory--so I recommend that you should do the same, so that you may have equal command of both languages. And it is in this very direction that I have, if I mistake not, rendered a great service to our countrymen, so that not only those who are unacquainted with Greek literature but even the cultured consider that they have gained much both in oratorical power and in mental training.

#Greek Philosophy and Cicero's own.#

2 You will, therefore, learn from the foremost of present-day philosophers, and you will go on learning as long as you wish; and your wish ought to continue as long as you are not dissatisfied with the progress you are making. For all that, if you will read my philosophical books, you will be helped; my philosophy is not very different from that of the Peripatetics (for both they and I claim to be followers of Socrates and Plato). As to the conclusions you may reach, I leave that to your own judgment (for I would put no hindrance in your way), but by reading my philosophical writings you will be sure to render your mastery of the Latin language more complete. But I would by no means have you think that this is said boastfully. For there are many to whom I yield precedence in knowledge of philosophy; but if I lay claim to the orator's peculiar ability to speak with propriety, clearness, elegance, I think my claim is in a measure justified, for I have spent my life in that profession

PICTURE STUDY



The Young Schoolmistress, Jean-Siméon Chardin, about 1735-1736 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Chardin painted a girl not much older than a child herself teaching a little one to read. She points to a letter in a primer; the small child looks and tries. There is no classroom, no great teacher, only an older student handing on what she has just learned. Chardin, who loved quiet scenes of ordinary work, makes the moment as serious and as tender as any history painting.

Look closely

- Find the pointer. Exactly where is it aimed, and why does that matter?
- Compare the two faces. What is each one feeling about the lesson?
- Look at the table between them. How does Chardin show that the older girl must lean toward the younger to teach her?

Talk about it

1. Your letter is a pointer like the schoolmistress's. Write one paragraph describing the single "letter on the page" you most want your younger reader to see.
2. The schoolmistress is barely older than her pupil. Write a few sentences on why an older student, not only a grown teacher, can help a beginner.

WRITING PROJECT: THE TEN-YEAR PORTFOLIO, THE LETTER, AND THE ORAL EXAMINATION

Write a letter of counsel to a real younger student, bind it at the front of your ten-year portfolio, and present the portfolio in an oral examination.

Give the letter itself to its reader, or to the reader's parents, after the examination.

You will need

- Your inventory, ladder memo and four stage pieces (Lesson 8.1)
- Your rewritten childhood piece and revision memo (Lesson 8.3)
- Your strongest high-school pieces (thesis section, poems or novella chapter, commencement address)
- A binder or bound folder with dividers; good paper for the letter
- A panel of two or three examiners

Steps

1. Choose your reader: one real child who is beginning or about to begin to write. Write the child's name at the top of a blank page.
2. Plan the letter in Cicero's order: where you are; what I did; keep going; judge for yourself; why you may trust me. Choose no more than five pieces of counsel, each tied to a true story from your years.
3. Draft the letter (800–1,200 words) in the second person, with a salutation and a closing. Include one thing you did wrong and one thing a teacher did right for you.
4. Revise the letter by ear, as in Lesson 8.3, and read it aloud to someone near your reader's age, or to a parent, to test whether it is plain enough.
5. Assemble the portfolio: title page, contents, the letter, the four stage sections with originals, the rewritten piece and memo, the high-school section, the ladder memo, and the full inventory.
6. Prepare a three-minute opening statement and practice answering five likely questions.
7. Hold the oral examination (20–30 minutes). Afterward, write a short note of thanks to each examiner.

Check your work

- My letter is addressed to one real reader and is plain enough for that reader (or the reader's parent) to use.
- Each piece of counsel is tied to a true, specific story from my own writing years.
- I name at least one fault of my own, gently and without self-pity.
- The salutation, closing, direct address and any parenthetical asides are punctuated correctly.
- My portfolio is complete, in order, and every original piece appears as I first wrote it.
- In the examination I answered truthfully, quoted my work exactly, and granted what was fair.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the first sentence of the Cicero model and mark each semicolon. What does each one separate?
2. List Cicero's five moves (where you are, what I did, keep going, judge for yourself, why you may trust me) and write one sentence of your own letter for each.
3. Copy 2 Timothy 4:7 on the inside cover of your portfolio.

History note. Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.) wrote *De Officiis* in the autumn of 44 B.C., in the months after the death of Julius Caesar, and was put to death the next year in the proscriptions of Mark Antony and Octavian. His son Marcus later served as consul in 30 B.C. Cratippus was a Peripatetic, a follower of Aristotle, teaching in Athens. Walter Miller's translation (1913) prints Cicero's parenthetical remarks with double hyphens, kept here as in the Project Gutenberg text. Jean-Siméon Chardin (1699–1779) painted several versions of this subject; the one in the National Gallery, London, is usually dated about 1735–1736.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuating a letter.** Set off a name in *direct address* with commas wherever it falls: “My dear son Marcus, you have now been studying ...”; “Keep your old notebooks, Anna, even the messy ones.” A friendly letter's salutation takes a comma (“Dear Anna,”), a business letter's a colon (“Dear Mrs. Hale:”). The complimentary close takes a comma, and only its first word is capitalized (“Your friend and fellow student,”). For an aside, choose by weight: commas for a light one, parentheses for a quiet one (“for I would put no hindrance in your way”), and dashes for a strong interruption (Miller's “-- and I have done this not only in the study of philosophy--”). In typed work, make a dash with an em dash, not two hyphens, and do not lean on dashes in every paragraph.

For families. This is the last quarter-path lesson of the series. Make the oral examination an occasion: invite people your student respects, set a table, and close with a meal or a prayer of thanksgiving. Help your student choose a real reader for the letter, and make sure the letter is actually delivered; a younger child who receives it often keeps it for years. Cicero's letter is a classical, pre-Christian work; discuss with your student where its counsel agrees with Scripture (diligence, humility, continued learning) and where a Christian would say more (2 Timothy 3:14–17). The Chardin picture is a quiet domestic scene suitable for all ages.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student drafts this paragraph of counsel: “Writing is really important and you should always try your best and never give up because if you work hard you can do anything.” Revise it into specific counsel tied to a true story.

1. The draft is general and gives the child nothing to do. Find a true story behind “never give up.”
2. Name the exercise, the age and the fault, briefly.
3. End with one action the child can take.

Answer: “When I was ten, I wrote a refutation of ‘The Boy Who Cried Wolf’ and turned it in after one draft, sure it was brilliant. My mother read it and asked me one question: ‘Where is your proof?’ I had none. It took me three more drafts to find any, and the fourth one was the first thing I ever wrote that I was proud of. So here is my counsel: when you finish a draft, ask yourself the hardest question someone could ask about it, and answer it before anyone else has to.”

Example 2. An examiner asks: “Your Grade 5 chreia is full of errors. Why did you put the original in the portfolio instead of a corrected copy?” Write a truthful, courteous answer.

1. Grant what is fair: the piece does have errors.
2. Give the reason: the portfolio is meant to show growth, and the corrected version would hide it.
3. Point to evidence in the portfolio: the rewrite and the memo.

Answer: “You are right that it has errors; I count eleven on the first page. I kept it as I wrote it because the portfolio is meant to show the whole road, and a corrected copy would hide where I began. If you turn to the next tab, you will see the same chreia rewritten this spring, with a memo listing what changed and why.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** To whom did Cicero address *De Officiis*, and where was he?
2. **EASY** What does Cicero recommend that Marcus combine in his studies?
3. **EASY** Punctuate: “Remember Sam that every writer starts with a fable.”
4. **MEDIUM** Name Cicero’s five moves as a letter of counsel.
5. **MEDIUM** How does Cicero guard against seeming to boast? Quote the sentence.
6. **MEDIUM** Write the salutation and complimentary close of a friendly letter to a younger cousin named Ruth.
7. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (CLT/ACT style, 30 minutes): “Is it better to learn from a teacher only a little older than yourself, or from a master far ahead of you?” Write a plan: thesis, two reasons, one concession.

8. **CHALLENGE** Write the opening paragraph of a letter to a real child beginning Grade 3, following Cicero's first move ("where you are").

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing a letter about yourself instead of to your reader; every story should end in something the child can use.
- Giving general advice ("work hard," "believe in yourself") instead of specific counsel tied to true stories.
- Writing over the reader's head with words and ideas a beginner cannot use yet.
- Polishing the early pieces in the portfolio; the originals must appear as they were written, so the growth is visible.

Make it a game · Advice in Ten Words. Each player has one minute to write the best piece of writing advice they can in exactly ten words, for a child of eight. Read them aloud anonymously; the youngest person in the room chooses the one most useful to them, and its author explains the true story behind it.

Scripture. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:" (2 Timothy 4:7, KJV)

Paul wrote these words in a letter to a younger man; you finish your course well by handing on what you were given.

Practice: answers

1. To his son Marcus, who was studying in Athens under Cratippus.
2. Greek and Latin, both in philosophy and in the practice of oratory.
3. "Remember, Sam, that every writer starts with a fable."
4. Where you are (a year in Athens); what I did (combined Greek and Latin); keep going (learn as long as you are making progress); judge for yourself (I leave the conclusions to you); why you may trust me (I have spent my life in this profession, though many know more philosophy).
5. He says, "But I would by no means have you think that this is said boastfully," and admits that many know more philosophy than he, claiming only the orator's ability, which he has practiced all his life.
6. Sample: "Dear Ruth," ... "Your cousin and fellow student, [name]"
7. Sample: Thesis: A beginner needs both, but learns most at first from someone a little older, who remembers the difficulty. Reason 1: the near teacher knows which step is hardest, because he climbed it lately (Chardin's schoolmistress). Reason 2: the near teacher shows the beginner that the goal is reachable. Concession: only a master knows where the road finally goes, as Cicero did for Marcus; but the master's counsel is best heard once the first steps are taken.
8. Sample: "Dear Josiah, You are about to start your very first year of composition, and I am a little jealous. In a few weeks you will read a fable of Aesop and tell it back in your own words,

which is exactly where I began ten years ago at our same kitchen table. You will have a good teacher in your mother and good models in your books; that is a great deal to begin with.”

UNIT 8 REVIEW

This test reviews the unit and the whole ten-year course. Answers may be written or, for items 8 and 9, given aloud to a parent. Item 11 is a timed essay: allow 30 minutes and score it on four traits (clear thesis, development with reasons and examples, organization, and language and mechanics), 0–3 points each.

1. (4 pts) Name the fourteen exercises of the progymnasmata in order.
2. (3 pts) Name the five canons of rhetoric and say which two this unit's speech day trained most.
3. (4 pts) Describe Ascham's double translation in four steps.
4. (3 pts) In Paul's farewell at Miletus (Acts 20:17–24), name the three parts of his arrangement.
5. (3 pts) Explain Pope's line "The sound must seem an echo to the sense" and give one example from the poem.
6. (2 pts) Fix the modifier: "Reading my old fables, the spelling made me laugh."
7. (3 pts) Cut the filler and fix the parallelism: "It is true that in ten years I learned telling stories, to argue, and how I should describe things."
8. (3 pts) Name Cicero's five moves in the opening of *De Officiis* as a letter of counsel.
9. (2 pts) Punctuate this opening of a letter: "dear peter you are about to begin your first fable and I remember mine well"
10. (3 pts) Why should the original early pieces in a portfolio appear exactly as first written? Give a reason from the unit and a reason from Scripture or the faith thread.
11. (12 pts) Timed essay (30 minutes): "Should a person write mainly to be understood, or mainly to be admired? Defend your answer."

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE TEN-YEAR PORTFOLIO

A bound portfolio containing a title page; a table of contents; the letter to a younger student (800–1,200 words); four sections holding one original piece from each stage of the ladder (Grades 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, 9–12), exactly as first written; the senior rewrite of a childhood piece with its revision memo; the strongest high-school work (a thesis section, poems or a novella chapter, the commencement address, and the piece revised in 8.3); the ladder memo; and the full inventory. It is presented and defended in a 20–30 minute oral examination (Lesson 8.4).

- **Completeness and arrangement:** Every required part is present and in order; the four stages are clearly divided; the originals are untouched so that growth is visible.
- **Letter to a younger student:** Addressed to one real reader in plain language; follows a clear order of counsel; each piece of counsel is tied to a true, specific story; humble, gracious and correctly punctuated.
- **Revision:** The rewritten childhood piece keeps its exercise and story; the memo names at least five specific changes and one thing kept; the final high-school piece shows revision by ear, no filler, and well-placed modifiers.

- **Oral examination:** A prepared opening statement; answers that explain, defend and reflect truthfully, quoting the work exactly; courtesy and calm under questioning (1 Peter 3:15).

Answer key

1. Fable, narrative, chreia, maxim, refutation, confirmation, commonplace, encomium, invective, comparison, impersonation, description, thesis, law.
2. Invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery. Speech day trained memory and delivery.
3. The master explains the Latin letter and construes it into English; the child translates it into English alone; the Latin is taken away and, after at least an hour, the child translates his English back into Latin; the master compares it with Cicero, praising what is done well and gently correcting faults.
4. What they know of the past ("Ye know, from the first day"); the turn to the present and future ("And now, behold"); the purpose of everything ("so that I might finish my course with joy").
5. The sound of a line should imitate or support its meaning. Example: the Ajax line is slow and crowded with consonants because it describes heavy labor; the Camilla line runs to twelve syllables because she moves swiftly.
6. "Reading my old fables, I laughed at the spelling."
7. "In ten years I learned to tell stories, to argue, and to describe."
8. Where you are; what I did; keep going; judge for yourself; why you may trust me.
9. "Dear Peter, You are about to begin your first fable, and I remember mine well." (In a friendly letter the salutation ends with a comma; the body begins on a new line.)
10. The portfolio is meant to show growth; corrected copies would hide where the writer began. Truthfulness requires it ("speak every man truth with his neighbour," Ephesians 4:25), and honest review is part of finishing a course well (2 Timothy 4:7).
11. Sample plan: Thesis: A writer should write to be understood, and whatever admiration is deserved will follow. Reasons: (1) writing exists to serve a reader, as Paul "kept back nothing that was profitable"; (2) Pope warns against the "unmeaning thing they call a thought," sound without sense; (3) the clearest writers (Lincoln, Bunyan, the King James translators) are also the most admired. Concession: style matters, and plain writing can be dull. Answer: true ease comes from art, so clarity is itself the highest style. Scored on four traits, 0-3 each.