

## WHY IS **WRITING** SO **IMPORTANT**

- **Writing** influences the way we think
- **Writing** forces us to confront issues, to define and redefine our own feeling and positions, and enables us to express ourselves to others in more effective ways.

**Writing** contributes to the way we learn

- Once you begin to write summaries and responses while reading, you will be forced to really understand what you are reading, connect them all together, and have a much better overview of the subject. This is what is probably meant by “making a thick book thin.”

**Good writing** leads to success in college and career

- The purpose of liberal arts education is to lay a broad and solid foundation for more advanced and more specialized training in the future. A broad-based education will lead to greater creativity and more fully developed individuals. On a more practical level, the broader vision would also enable one to engage in interdisciplinary research more productively.

**Writing** enriches personal growth

- On a personal level, **writing** enables us to reflect deeply on our own experience, to examine critically our most basic assumptions, and to be in touch with our innermost selves. In a way, **writing** is a self-discovery process. It would enable us to gain a deeper understanding of ourselves as well as society, people, and life in general.

What is **good writing**?

- What is **good writing**, anyway? Different cultures using different languages may come up with very different answers to the question. Indeed, even different individuals may have different standards, tastes or expectations. However, as far as **English** is

concerned, a set of basic characteristics, which is believed to be present in all **good writing**, has been promoted by educators in **English**-speaking countries:

What is **good writing**

- Unity----all parts or elements of the **writing** constituting an organic and harmonious whole
- Coherence----all parts or elements well connected to show clear logical (causal, contrastive, hierarchical, parallel, etc.) relations
- Emphasis---special and significant stress given to **important** ideas by means of position, repetition, or other indication
- Development----adequate elaboration and sufficient expansion

What is **good writing**

- Clarity----precise, concise, and lucid in style
- While these **good** old values are still relevant, today's discussion of **good writing** focuses on a different set of concepts.

**Good writing** is **good** thinking

- **Good writing** leads to **good writing**, and muddy thinking can only result in muddy **writing**. As simple as that. **Writing** is a thinking process; it is not making a big deal out of nothing, the so-called moaning and complaining loudly when one is not sick. **Good writing** should be substantive, really having things to say. Not only having things to say, but also having insightful things to say about the topic.

**Good writing** involves thoughtful revision

- When you read writings published in newspapers, magazines, masterpieces by great writers, you may be wondering how they could have written so beautifully yet so effortlessly! They are geniuses. They are cut differently. But geniuses are few and far

between. The truth is for the overwhelming majority of writers, it is ninety-nine percent hard work and one percent inspiration.

**Good writing** achieves a clear purpose

- **Good writing** must achieve your intended purpose. If you want to write about how to make dumplings, your reader should get everything he or she needs to know about how to make dumplings, from the necessary ingredients to step by step instructions. If your purpose is to convey the sublime and soul-awakening beauty of the morning sun bursting out of the horizon in the misty Huangshan Mountain in the Anhui Province, you should describe it in such a way that your readers should be able to visualize the scenery.

**ood writing** expresses ideas clearly

- **Good writing** reflects **good** thinking, and **good** thinking needs to be put in precise, concise, and lucid prose. An **important** task for revision is to trim all the deadwood, pruning all the redundancies, wordiness, and confusing and misleading ambiguities.

Analyze your audience in terms of your social relations

Whenever you write, you are interacting with other members of the society. Are you **writing** to a friend of yours? To a colleague? To the director of your business firm? To a customer who has written to you to complain about the quality of a product or service? In each situation, you have a different social relationship with your audience and this relationship has a definite impact on the shape of your **writing**.