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ACADEMIC WRITING AND COMPOSITION

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By: Kshyama Sagar Meher



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**Sample Preview
of the
Solved
Sample Question
Papers**

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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

ACADEMIC WRITING AND COMPOSITION

B.E.G.G.-173

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note: Answer all questions.

SECTION-A

Q. 1. Write short notes on the following:

(i) With suitable examples, explain how academic writing is different from non-academic writing.

Ans. Academic writing differs from other sorts of writing in that it is more formal, objective (impersonal), and technical. Academic writing is formal in the sense that it avoids casual or conversational language, such as contractions or informal terminology. Academic writing is impersonal and objective in that it avoids direct references to persons or feelings in favour of emphasising objects, facts and ideas. Academic writing is technical because it employs discipline-specific vocabulary. In the discipline of law, for example, law is divided into two types: common law and statutory law. Knowing these distinctions will aid in the organisation of your work and make it more technical and analytical. Non-academic writings do not follow all these rules.

(ii) Describe the three stages of the process approach to writing.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 12, 'The Different Stages of the Process Approach'.

(iii) What aspects should be considered while writing the introductory paragraph in an academic essay?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 58, 'Introductory Paragraphs'.

(iv) Why is "Citation" an essential part of academic writing?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 57, 'Citation'.

(v) Explain the main features of expository writing.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 80, 'Introduction' and 'Reading Understanding What Expository Writing Is'.

(vi) What are the elements of a business proposal? What aspects should be considered to make a business proposal effective?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 137, 'Length of Business Proposals' and Page No. 139, 'Vocabulary and Other Tips'.

Q. 2. Write short essays on the following:

(i) What are the foundational elements of critical thinking? How can they be applied to develop goods writing skills?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 1, 'Foundational Elements for Critical Thinking'.

(ii) Identify any four disciplines covered under the stream "Business and Professional Studies." Discuss the general features of academic writing in such disciplines.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 34, 'Business and Professional Degrees'.

(iii) With suitable examples, explain how an argumentative text differs from a persuasive text.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 102, 'Reading an Argumentative Text' and Chapter-12, Page No. 114, 'Introduction' and 'Warmup: How Good Are you at Persuading Others'?

(iv) What are the aspects to be considered while writing a book review? Write a review of any book that you have read recently.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 146, 'Writing a Good Review' and Page No. 153, Q. No. 11.

Q. 3. Write a well structured composition on the following topic:

"Air Pollution in India : What can we as citizens do to tackle it?" Your essay should have a clear introductory paragraph, body and concluding paragraph.

Ans. Earlier the air we breathe in use to be pure and fresh. But, due to increasing industrialization and

concentration of poisonous gases in the environment the air is getting more and more toxic day by day. Also, these gases are the cause of many respiratory and other diseases. Moreover, the rapidly increasing human activities like the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation is the major cause of air pollution.

How Air Gets Polluted?: The fossil fuel, firewood, and other things that we burn produce oxides of carbons which got released into the atmosphere. Earlier there happens to be a large number of trees which can easily filter the air we breathe in. But with the increase in demand for land, the people started cutting down of trees which caused deforestation. That ultimately reduced the filtering capacity of the tree. Moreover, during the last few decades, the numbers of fossil fuel burning vehicle increased rapidly which increased the number of pollutants in the air.

Causes of Air Pollution: Its causes include burning of fossil fuel and firewood, smoke released from factories, volcanic eruptions, forest fires, bombardment, asteroids, CFCs (Chlorofluorocarbons), carbon oxides and many more.

Besides, there are some other air pollutants like industrial waste, agricultural waste, power plants, thermal nuclear plants, etc.

Greenhouse Effect: The greenhouse effect is also the cause of air pollution because air pollution produces the gases that greenhouse involves. Besides, it increases the temperature of earth surface so much that the polar caps are melting and most of the UV rays are easily penetrating the surface of the earth.

Effects of Air Pollution on Health: The air pollution has many bad effects on the health of people. It is the cause of many skins and respiratory disorder in human beings. Also, it causes heart disease too. Air pollution causes asthma, bronchitis, and many other diseases.

Moreover, it increases the rate of aging of lungs, decreases lungs function, damage cells in the respiratory system.

Ways to Reduce Air Pollution: Although the level of air pollution has reached a critical point. But, there are still ways by which we can reduce the number of air pollutants from the air.

Reforestation: The quality of air can be improved by planting more and more trees as they clean and filter the air.

Policy for industries: Strict policy for industries related to the filter of gases should be introduced in the countries. So, we can minimize the toxins released from factories.

Use of eco-friendly fuel: We have to adopt the usage of Eco-friendly fuels such as LPG (Liquefied

Petroleum Gas), CNG (Compressed Natural Gas), bio-gas, and other eco-friendly fuels. So, we can reduce the amount of harmful toxic gases.

To sum it up, we can say that the air we breathe is getting more and more polluted day by day. The biggest contribution to the increase in air pollution is of fossil fuels which produce nitric and sulphuric oxides. But, humans have taken this problem seriously and are devotedly working to eradicate the problem that they have created.

Q. 4. (i) What are the aspects to be considered while writing the report of a meeting?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 134, Q. No. 1.

(ii) The head of your department has conducted a meeting to discuss strategies to improve motivation levels and productivity of employees. Write a report of the meeting.

Ans. Report of the meeting held on 12.7.2023

Hello all,

As we discussed in the meeting all managers and employees should have regular conversations, regardless of the state of their performance. But when performance is lacking, these conversations are even more important. We suggest checking in with the employee bi-weekly to monitor progress and discuss what's working and what's not and motivate them.

Remember to coach, rather than manage your employees' performance. Employees should have control over their productivity and performance, and it's your job to help motivate them. Empower your employees with proper guidance and feedback in your follow-up conversations.

It is advised some of the senior pros that it's easy to forget what was discussed and when, so make sure your conversations are detailed in a central location that you both can access. This makes your expectations concrete and clear, and enables both parties to reflect on and track progress according to the discussion. Any possible miscommunication or forgotten details are minimized with an effective one-on-one tool.

Allow the employee had their voice and share their point of view. We know that outside factors that you didn't know about may be negatively affecting performance. So we allow all of them to ask clarifying questions and provide their perspective.

It's very important that this meeting is a two-way discussion, not a lecture where the employee feels attacked or scolded.

Regards

Raman Vij



Sample Preview of The Chapter

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ACADEMIC WRITING AND COMPOSITION

BLOCK-1 : IMPROVING THE BASICS

Developing Critical, Analytical and Interpretive Thinking Skills



INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking needs to be practised to live more purposefully. It improves our ability to contribute to social change and, more significantly, it helps us understand why individuals act the way they do. The term “critical thinking” has numerous definitions. The three crucial elements that are present in all definitions are:

(a) It is the ability to evaluate various things, concepts, and even persons in comparison. Additionally, one has the ability to reflect on the assumptions that underlie judgments and develop better judgement through time. For instance, if you had to evaluate a politician’s speech, you wouldn’t only consider how well it sounded or whether it catered to your pre-existing preconceptions. Instead, as a critical thinker, you would assess the speech’s arguments and viewpoints to see whether they were ethically sound and based on accurate information.

(b) It is the ability to carefully examine various texts. Identifying context and analysing the specifics of a text are required for this. For instance, you shouldn’t just accept the opinions expressed in editorials of a newspaper. As a critical reader, you must determine whether the sentences flow logically from one another and evaluate the arguments and supporting details by doing more research.

(c) It is the ability to challenge and generate new meanings. It suggests that you don’t take things for granted and that you don’t just accept what established authorities tell you to be “true.” For instance, as a critical thinker, you ought to contrast, carefully examine, and query the definitions offered here.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS FOR CRITICAL THINKING

The process of critical thinking is best understood as a synthesis of numerous separate mental processes. Here we will know some methods for developing the

ability to read, write, and think critically in this article. These methods can be thought of as the building blocks for the development of critical thinking abilities.

(a) Listening and observing: Active listening entails both paying close attention to and grasping the spoken word in context. Without strong prejudices or preconceptions, observation entails taking note of the different details that make up any given event or text. Consider a situation where you and a friend disagree. Depending on how you are listening and paying attention, the talk will either finish in a yelling fight or in a fruitful exchange of ideas.

(b) Gathering data: To collect the information and data by which you may make sense of the world, listening and observing are both necessary. Gathering the necessary information or data is always the initial step in any study or research, after which you will organise and interpret it.

There are some helpful routines that can aid in data collection, such as taking notes as you observe what is going on around you, underlining and highlighting text while reading, recording audio or video while conducting interviews, and making a list of all the pertinent information you have learned through observation. It’s crucial that you acknowledge your biases when you gather data. You will end up developing constrained and false interpretations if you simply obtain selective facts that support your preconceptions.

(c) Organising and labelling the data: After assembling the necessary data, you will organise and label the data. Finding patterns and deciding how the data can be categorised or labelled will be necessary for data organisation. For instance, you must be monitoring various types of data as you read a chapter. You are receiving many kinds of information. You might wish to mark them as headings, definitions, explanations, and examples if you had to organise them.

Applying Critical Thinking Skills to Writing

We will understand how the foundational elements we learned in the previous section can help develop crucial writing habits.

(a) Learning to accurately summarise: A summary is a shorter, condensed version of a longer piece. To accurately summarise what someone is saying or what you are reading in an article, you will need to listen and observe carefully. Before making your own judgment about the content you are reading, it is necessary to ensure that you are properly comprehending the content. To do this, you will also need to carefully read the argument of what is presented and understand how the ideas in the argument are logically connected.

Task 1: Summarise ideas you disagree with: Practice summarising concepts that you disagree with or have negative feelings about is one technique to improve this skill. Our disputes are frequently the result of misinterpretations of the notion or biases that make it difficult for us to adequately study and consider the thought. You may still find the theory objectionable after meticulously summarising, but your assessment will be far more convincing this time.

The ability to effectively summarise allows you to increase conversational trust. Before summarising, you might want to seek up encyclopaedia or dictionary entries on those concepts to get a sense of how to write a summary of a subject.

The summary is descriptive and merely enumerates a few general traits of academic writing. There are no overt biases or prejudices presented. For all types of critical thinking, the summary is a crucial first step. It assists you in gaining a thorough comprehension of a subject before proceeding to critically analyse it.

(b) Learning to detail: It is important to take down all the many details you can notice while you read or observe something. Your comprehension will be more comprehensive and complex as you pay more attention to the details. Detailing will help you consider the various facets of the subject, whereas summarising will only provide you a general understanding of what you are reading or watching.

Task 2: Detailing everyday activities: You can think of routine actions you carry out and write them down in greater detail as you get better at taking down specifics. Consider how the straightforward act of sitting on a chair can be explained in progressively more detail:

Level 1: I am sitting on a chair.

Level 2: I am happily sitting on a plastic chair.

Level 3: I am happily sitting on a plastic chair, wondering what I can read next.

The first sentence's components—"I", "sitting", and "chair"—can each be expanded upon to convey the concept in deeper social and psychological complexity. The same exercise can be done using various items, occasions, and concepts.

Task 3: Summative detailing: You can perform a similar exercise using texts you have read. However, you will need to include a variety of levels of depth in this summary. Imagine you were required to summarise the passage below:

"Summary is indispensable in preparing for and writing an argumentative essay. When you summarize a text (or describe visual material), you distill the ideas of another source for use in your own essay. Summarizing primary sources allows you to keep track of your observations. It helps make your analysis of these sources convincing, because it is based on careful observation of fact rather than on hazy or inaccurate recollection. Summarizing critical sources is particularly useful during the research and note-taking stages of writing. It gives you a record of what you've read and helps you distinguish your ideas from those of your sources."

Summaries in levels of increasing detail:

Level 1: Summarizing sources is useful to write an argumentative essay.

Level 2: Summarizing primary sources and critical sources is useful to write an argumentative essay, in order to extract the ideas from the sources.

Level 3: Summarizing primary sources, to note down observations, and summarizing critical sources, to record one's reading and distinguish one's ideas from the sources, are useful to write an argumentative essay. Summarizing helps extract the ideas from the sources.

Each summary includes additional information. A similar technique might assist you decide which specifics to include when you lengthen or shorten the summary's word count. Before you can analyse and comprehend what you have read, you must first have a solid comprehension of the summarising details.

(c) Learning to organise and evaluate: Learning to recognise patterns in what you read and observe, as well as organising the information and data into labels and categories, are the main components of critical thinking. You must assess what you are seeing and reading in order to do this. The evaluation process has two components. To begin, we can group everything we read and see into many categories in order to comprehend how a bigger whole can be divided into smaller components. We will refer to this process as "analysis." Second, we can form our own opinions based on what we read and see; this process is known as "interpretation."

LEARNING TO ANALYSE

To make a more qualitative assessment of how the specific elements are, you would then need to observe and investigate them. To help you with the analysis, you'll also need to master the relevant conceptual or technical language. A larger entity is divided into smaller components, and both the pieces and the whole are examined and critically evaluated as part of the

DEVELOPING CRITICAL, ANALYTICAL AND INTERPRETIVE THINKING SKILLS / 3

analysis process. Three fundamental techniques are discussed below.

(a) Identifying the parts of a narrative: You will note that different sections of any lengthy piece serve various purposes as you read it. It's crucial to dissect the text into its component pieces and then consider any possible purposes each one might be serving. For example, let us read the following passage:

“We are what we say and do. The way we speak and are spoken to, help shape us into the people we become. Through words and other actions, we build ourselves in a world that is building us. That world addresses us to produce the different identities we carry forward in life: men are addressed differently than are women, people of color differently than whites, elite students differently than those from working families. Yet, though language is fateful in teaching us what kind of people to become and what kind of society to make, discourse is not destiny. We can redefine ourselves and remake society, if we choose, through alternative rhetoric and dissident projects. This is where critical literacy begins, for questioning power relations, discourses, and identities in a world not yet finished, just, or humane.”

The passage's central thesis is that language influences who we are and what we do, and that by altering our language use, we may transform our identities and reimagine society. Even though that is the overarching concept, we can dissect it into several portions and examine what each of these sections is focused on. The passage can be broken down into three pieces or portions. A context is being established in the first section, a contrast is being introduced in the second section, and a definition is being established in the third section. Each section is examined individually.

Section 1: Establishing a context

(a) ‘We are what we say and do. The way we speak and are spoken to, help shape us into the people we become. Through words and other actions, we build ourselves in a world that is building us.’

(b) ‘That world addresses us to produce the different identities we carry forward in life: men are addressed differently than are women, people of color differently than whites, elite students differently than those from working families.’

A number of opening statements are made in this section. You must understand the second half of the passage. It is creating a context. This section could alternatively be further divided into subsections A and B. The generalised statements in part A (such as “we are what we say and do”) are supported by the reasons and instances in subsection B. You might also dissect subsection B in more detail to look at the many instances provided. To carefully consider the function of each component, you can continue to divide the big idea into as many smaller ones as you can.

Section 2: Introducing a contrast

‘Yet, though language is fateful in teaching us what kind of people to become and what kind of society to make, discourse is not destiny. We can redefine ourselves and remake society, if we choose, through alternative rhetoric and dissident projects.’

Here, a contrast is being brought to the prior notion or the already-established context. Although it was said in the preceding section that language shapes identity, it is now being clarified that even if this is true, people do not have to accept it on a passive basis. Alternative decisions can be made as an alternative. The word “Yet” in this sentence should be highlighted for attention. The reader is now encouraged to consider the prospect of redefinition through language as a result of this word's announcement of a contrast. In general, pay attention to the transitions in arguments and language when determining how a piece might be broken up into smaller parts.

You can understand the logical relationship between the various elements of the narrative by paying attention to specific words that clearly proclaim the writer's or speaker's intention.

Section 3: Establishing a definition

‘This is where critical literacy begins, for questioning power relations, discourses, and identities in a world not yet finished, just, or humane.’

This section concludes the passage by defining and elaborating on the concept from the preceding section through the use of the word “critical literacy.” By pointing out how this definition lists the three components of power relations, discourses, and identities, this part can be further separated. You will now need to recognise and analyse the various arguments that comprise the larger narrative in addition to getting better at breaking down and segmenting lengthy paragraphs into distinct, smaller pieces.

(b) Decoding the argument: Finding the “argument” in the text is necessary for a thorough analysis of the text. Any proposition that is supported and backed up by reasons and facts is an argument, to put it simply. We must first become familiar with a few terms before learning how to interpret arguments:

Claim: It is a declaration, affirmation, or suggestion that expresses an idea or point of view. An example of a claim is that “Climate change is a serious threat to the future of humanity.” Now, if we can provide arguments to support this assertion will determine whether we can consider it to be reliable and trustworthy.

Reason: A form of statement known as a reason acts as proof or logical support for a proposition. For instance: We may cite the fact that “The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) expects a temperature rise of 2.5 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit

over the next century, which would bring major harm to diverse parts of the world” to bolster the aforementioned point. However, just because a claim is backed up by evidence does not automatically make it a strong argument. We could invent countless illogical justifications to back up false and harmful claims.

If a person makes the following argument, consisting of a claim (symbolised as C) supported by reasons (symbolised as R1 and R2).

C: I believe the world is flat.

R1: Because my parents believe so.

R2: Because I read it on the internet.

Since there is a claim that is supported by two reasons, this is undoubtedly an argument, but are these justifications sufficient for us to accept the claim? It's crucial to confirm the allegation from other, more trustworthy and knowledgeable sources because what we read online or hear from relatives and friends may not be accurate. In other words, in order to analyse the argument, it is important to look at the claims and reasons themselves.

(c) Examining ideas and arguments: It's crucial to pose a series of questions that will help you comprehend an argument better in order to investigate it. These queries can look at several facets of the story and argument. There are many other questions that can be posed, but a few fundamental ones are as follows:

(i) Can the statements and justifications be corroborated by numerous trustworthy sources?

(ii) What potential objections or challenges to the assertions and justifications could there be?

(iii) What is the author's purpose and viewpoint?

(iv) What are the arguments' biases?

You can start analysing the argument critically by posing these queries. However, asking questions is a rather arbitrary act. You are posing these queries in light of your personal viewpoints, biases, and interests. Based on your personal experiences, you have opinions and sentiments about what you are reading and seeing. In other words, you can never evaluate concepts and claims with a detached, unbiased viewpoint. The subjective parts of thinking and evaluating, or the process of interpretation, will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

LEARNING TO INTERPRET

A paradox could exist in the process of learning to interpret. You are already continuously, consciously and unconsciously, evaluating the environment around you. Being functional in the world requires at the very least being able to understand what is happening around you. You might not always be aware of how you are viewing the world and how you might want to develop it further. Furthermore, you might not even be aware of how the forces at play in your environment are affecting your perception. Because of this, it is crucial to practise

critical interpretation so that you may purposefully start a dialogue between your own worldview and other people's viewpoints.

Reflection and synthesis are the minimum requirements for an interpretation. Reflection is the act of thinking back on what you have read and seen. Synthesis is the process of fusing our comments and observations into a logical story or argument.

Task 4: Reflecting on everyday life: Asking yourself how you interpret routine activities is an excellent place to start. Write down your comprehension of some everyday activity you engage in, such as reading, singing, walking, cooking, or taking care of your family. You might consider the following inquiries:

(i) How do I feel after doing this task?

(ii) Why am I participating in this activity? What does it mean to me, exactly?

(iii) How should I talk to others about this activity?

(iv) What are others saying about this activity? Do I concur with them or not?

(v) Would I like to carry it out otherwise?

This reflective exercise can be practiced for any activity, relationships and events. This will help generate greater self-awareness about each aspect of your life.

Task 5: Reflecting on what you read: Reading reflectively entails paying attention to what we are reading, clarifying anything we don't understand or aren't sure about, and pursuing our individual interests. Let's read the passage below:

‘When reading a book, we should be receptive to any passage that triggers a deeper reflection on any topic, even if it's not the main subject of the book. Sensing a possible relationship between the read passage and our preoccupation, we as good readers should concentrate on analyzing the text, looking for a connection between the main idea and our own interest.’

You had some ideas, feelings, and probably even some words once you had completed reading. Note down your initial thoughts. Reread the passage, pausing every time a term or idea comes to you to research its meaning or the opinions of others, make connections to your own life and the social circumstances you observe around you, and then share your comments with friends and family. You will be able to interpret the passage more fully when you ponder on it more.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. Go over the three components of critical thinking mentioned above. Now think of an everyday activity that you do (listening to a lecture, watching the news, reading a book) and reflect on how you can apply these three components to that activity.