**English 125, College Writing Skills—ONLINE CLASS (there wil be no face to face meeting for this class)**

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00-1:00 and Friday from 10:00-11:00 via email correspondence.

Please purchase the following required texts. Purchase these specific editions at the REEDLEY COLLEGE BOOKSTORE. Purchasing other editions or at other bookstores may result in you using the wrong texts, which will significantly lower your grade.

* *Webster's New World Pocket Dictionary*, ISBN 978-0-7645-6147-4, publisher Idg Books. **Required.**
* *Pocket Thesaurus Merriam Webster*, ISBN 978-0-87779-524-7, publisher Idg Books. **Required**.
* *Handbook of Literary Terms*, by X.J. Kennedy, ISBN 978-0-321-84556-6, publisher Pearson. **Required.**
* *Effects Of Knut Hamsun On A Fresno Boy*, by Gary Soto, ISBN 978-0-89255-254-2, publisher Persea. **Required.**
* *Back Room At The Philosophers' Club*, by Christopher Buckley, ISBN 978-1-62288-069-0, publisher Stephen F. Austin State University Press. **Required**.
* *Zigzagger*, by Manuel Muñoz, ISBN 978-0-8101-2099-0, publisher Northwestern University Press. **Required.**

**Changes to the Syllabus/Calendar:**

The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary for the benefit of the class, to change policies on the syllabus, or dates on the calendar. Missing class is not an excuse for not being aware of any changes that are made to the calendar or the syllabus.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities ACT (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

**Course Description:**

In this course, students will develop the process of writing, revising, and finishing essays, which includes the logical development and organization of ideas. Students will avoid common writing errors, develop their writing skills by reading model essays and analyzing rhetorical strategies, develop critical thinking skills by matching the structures of writing to meaning and audience, and by using writing as thinking to explore and express ideas. This course is a companion to ENGL 126 and prepares students for ENGL 1A. Students must successfully complete written course work to receive credit.

**Course Outcomes—Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Write an essay of at least 750 words which include an introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and conclusion of some sophistication. This essay will include:

* a clearly defined thesis statement
* unified supporting paragraphs, which begin with topic sentences
* quotations that support the topic sentences and the thesis
* complete sentences which include a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence)
* descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice
* avoidance of fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses and other basic skills errors, such as capitalization, spelling, homophone issues, verb tense issues, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, word choice issues, confused syntax, etc.
* use of MLA guidelines to set up essays, correctly use in-text citations for at least one source, and complete a works cited page
* writing that is free from plagiarism
* demonstrated awareness of how to write from the 3rd person point of view for a specific audience

1. Plan and revise independently, employing all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate.
2. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.

**Course Objectives—In the process of completing this course, students will:**

1. Complete a multi-paragraph in-class essay with a thesis and support.
2. Learn about writing papers which include introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions.
3. Learn to write with some sophistication.
4. Practice writing thesis statements.
5. Practice writing topic sentences.
6. Learn about using quotations and in-text citations that support the topic sentences and the thesis.
7. Practice developing supporting material that exhibits critical thinking.
8. Develop an understanding of what a complete sentence is and practice using a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentence).
9. Learn about common sentence errors, such as fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses.
10. Develop their usage of descriptive vocabulary that exhibits growth and sophisticated word choice.
11. Learn how to follow MLA guidelines when formatting papers and using quotations and a works cited page.
12. Learn about avoiding plagiarism.
13. Write papers in which they will use 3rd person point of view and practice addressing a specific audience.
14. Practice using all stages of the writing process as necessary and appropriate practice writing in-class essays.

**Course Content:**

1. Using the writing process:
2. prewriting strategies
3. outlining
4. drafting
5. revising
6. editing
7. Writing a well-developed essay:
8. introduction
9. thesis statements
10. body paragraphs
11. topic sentences
12. supporting details
13. transitions
14. concluding paragraphs
15. coherent development
16. focus
17. organization
18. unification
19. Thinking critically:
20. analyze ideas
21. use supporting details to validate a thesis
22. Writing sentences:
23. sentence variety
24. simple sentences
25. compound sentences
26. complex sentences
27. compound complex sentences
28. crafting sentences
29. using parallelism
30. eliminating wordiness
31. avoiding and correcting sentence errors
32. fragments
33. run-ons (comma splices and sentence fuses)
34. punctuation
35. the comma
36. the semicolon
37. the colon
38. the dash
39. Understanding purpose, audience, voice:
40. awareness of audience
41. academic language use
42. third person point of view
43. Using MLA guidelines:
44. avoid plagiarism
45. set-up an essay
46. cite direct quotations
47. write a works cited page

**Semester Grading:**

First essay:

a. 100 points.

Second essay:

a. 100 points each.

Third essay:

a. 100 points each.

Fourth essay:

a. 150 points.

Final grammar exam:

a. 100 points.

550-495 = A; 494-440 = B; 439-385=C; 384-330=D; 329-000=F

**Extra Credit:**

Extra credit will be offered during the semester. When you turn it in, I will put it in my extra credit folder. At the end of the semester, I will calculate final grades; if you have earned a “C” or higher because of how you have done on the required course work, I will then add your extra credit to your final grade. Thus, the extra credit will not raise a final semester grade of an “F” or a “D.” It can, however, raise your final grade from a “C” to a “B” or from a “B” to an “A.”

**Revision Symbols:**

I will use the following symbols to leave comments on your work:

th = thesis

sm = supportive material

tr = transition

ts = topic sentence

cn = context

mla = citing direct quotations

sPh = signal phrase

dq = direct quotation

PG# = page number

ct = critical thinking

ct/1 = critical thinking, step 1

ct/2 = critical thinking, step 2

ct/3 = critical thinking, step 3

ct/4 = critical thinking, step 4

kw(s) = key word(s)  
ci = concrete image

ri = romantic image

fs = final statement

f = fragment

cs = comma splice

sf = sentence fuse

fd = follow directions

bs = basic skills

? = confusing

syn = syntax (the words you choose to express a thought and the order you put those words in to form a sentence).

√+ = good

√- = needs to improve

**Sample rubric: Areas that *NEED TO IMPROVE* will be checked.**

1. **Following the MLA Guidelines—did you follow directions? (20 points):**

* formatting the essay
* indicating titles of works
* citing direct quotations:

1. signal phrase\_\_\_\_\_
2. punctuation\_\_\_\_\_

Grading scale for 20 point sections:

20-18=A, 17-16=B, 15-14=C, 13-12=D,

11 and below=F

Grading scale for 30 point sections:

30-27=A, 26-24=B, 23-21=C, 20-18=D,

17 and below=F

1. page number\_\_\_\_\_
2. indenting direct quotations\_\_\_\_\_
3. long vs short direct quotations\_\_\_\_\_
4. **Focus and Organization—is it there?—did you follow directions? (20 points):**

* Title

1. Contains 2 illuminating concrete/romantic images from two of your direct quotations (Buckley and Veinberg)\_\_\_\_\_
2. Images are included in the final statement\_\_\_\_\_

* Introduction
  + 1. Thesis
    - 1 sentence\_\_\_\_\_
    - all key words\_\_\_\_\_
    1. Supportive material
    - 4 sentences\_\_\_\_\_
    - each sentence focuses on a concrete/ romantic image\_\_\_\_\_
* Body paragraphs
  + 1. Begin with a topic sentence
    - 1 sentence\_\_\_\_
    - key words\_\_\_\_\_
    - focuses on concrete/romantic image\_\_\_\_\_
    1. Context contains at least 4 sentences\_\_\_\_\_
    2. Contains a direct quotation that focuses on imagery\_\_\_\_\_
    3. Contains critical thinking with at least 7 sentences\_\_\_\_\_
* Conclusion:

1. Thesis is restated\_\_\_\_\_
2. Support is reviewed

* 4 sentences­­\_\_\_\_\_
* each sentence focuses a concrete/ romantic image\_\_\_\_\_
* diction and syntax are different than the introduction\_\_\_\_\_

1. Final statement

* 1 sentence\_\_\_\_\_
* contains 2 illuminating concrete/romantic images from two of your direct quotations (Buckley and Veinberg)\_\_\_\_\_
* images are used in the title\_\_\_\_\_
* final statement focuses on audience and art\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Development—how well you think (30 points):**

* Title is composed and has something to say\_\_\_\_\_
* Context

1. at least 4 sentences\_\_\_\_\_
2. writer uses his/ her own diction and syntax and avoids plagiarism\_\_\_\_\_
3. leads smoothly up to the direct quotation\_\_\_\_\_
4. avoids vague language\_\_\_\_\_
5. writer’s diction and syntax are easy to understand\_\_\_\_\_

* Critical thinking

1. step 1

* 1 sentence­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_
* restate key words\_\_\_\_\_

1. step 2 (content)

* 1 sentence
* summarize the direct quotation\_\_\_\_\_

1. step 3 (use of literary devices)

* at least 4 sentences\_\_\_\_\_
* STRAT 1/ image type and why\_\_\_\_\_
* STRAT 2/ setting\_\_\_\_\_
* STRAT 3/ symb\_\_\_\_\_
* STRAT 4/ link to them or tone (depending on the assignment) and image\_\_\_\_

1. step 4 (make larger judgments about the work)

* 1 sentence\_\_\_\_\_
* how art affects the audience\_\_\_\_\_
* includes direct quotation from appropriate letter that follows MLA guidelines\_\_\_\_\_

1. is written with proper diction and syntax that makes the writer’s ideas easy to understand\_\_\_\_\_
2. is free of plagiarism\_\_\_\_\_ (from model essay or original text)

* Final statement is composed and has something to say.

1. **Grammar and proofreading—how closely do you pay attention to your writing? (30 points):**

* command of basic skills (diction, verb tense, subject verb agreement, spelling…)
* punctuation (commas, semicolons, colons, and dashes)
* sentence structure (fragments, comma splices, sentence fuses, syntax)
* referring to the author correctly (last name only)
* third person point of view (avoid first and second person point of view)

1. **For each incomplete and/or missing paragraph, the score will be lowered approximately 20 points\_\_\_\_\_. Points lost\_\_\_\_\_.**
2. **Other problems with following directions (students who do not follow directions will lose up to 100 points)­­\_\_\_\_\_. Points lost\_\_\_\_\_. Reason\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
3. **Students who plagiarize intentionally or unintentionally will lose up to 100 points\_\_\_\_\_. Points lost\_\_\_\_\_.**
4. **Because poor proofreading lowers the overall quality of your work, essays that lack proper proofreading will receive no higher than a "D" and will be returned with little feedback. Do not procrastinate. Spend several hours proofreading your work before you turn it in to your instructor\_\_\_\_\_.**

Grade: A+ A A- B+ B B- C+ C C- D+ D D- F

**Being Dropped from the Course**

1. Students who do not check in during the first week of the semester will be dropped. Waitlisted students who do not check-in during the first week of the semester will not be added. Officially enrolled students who appear inactive for more than two weeks before the official Reedley College drop deadlines will be dropped from the course (consecutive weeks or nonconsecutive weeks).

**Academic Behavior:**

According to the Reedley College *Student Conduct Standards and Procedures*, if a student “Interferes with or disrupts faculty and administrators who are fulfilling their professional responsibilities that student is subject to discipline” (4). Such behavior includes anything that I find disruptive. Consider yourselves warned.

Proper academic behavior is especially important in an online class. Students must treat each other with respect at all times. In addition, if you email your instructor or send him a message on the discussion board, you must be respectful. Always address your instructor as Mr. Dominguez or Instructor Dominguez. Students who do not address their instructor properly will not receive a reply via email or the discussion board.

**Email Correspondence:**

If you send me an email, it must begin with “Dear Mr. Dominguez” and end with “Thank you” and “Sincerely, [your name].” Emails must be written with proper English. Emails that look like text messages or contain informal language will be ignored. Here is a properly written email:

Dear Mr. Dominguez,

May I have your feedback on my thesis statement? I have attached it to my email. I’m worried that it may not address the writing prompt. Thank you.

Sincerely, Andrew

Here is an email I will ignore:

yo. check it out. let me know right away cuz i wanna know, I need a good grade

**Completing Assignments and Missing Deadlines:**

All assignments must be completed on the given due dates. If you miss a deadline, you will receive a zero on the assignment. If you are unable to complete an assignment due to an emergency, I may consider a make-up assignment if you are able to present appropriate documentation. Emergencies may or may not include sickness, injury, bereavement of an immediate family member, or a court appearance. Remember, you are expected to keep track of what is going on in class at all times.

**Technology:**

Because this is an online class, students are expected to be familiar with technology. For example, students must be familiar with Black Board, use Microsoft Word (full version), have quality internet service, have a reliable computer, be able to use their SCCCD email, and use the QuickTime player to access lectures. Having problems with technology is not an excuse for falling behind in the class or for not turning in work.

**Plagiarism:**

If you are caught plagiarizing any work, you may receive an automatic “F” on the assignment, in the class, or dropped from the course, with the appropriate grade, and referred to campus administration.

**Course Outline: Please note that specific reading assignments will be announced in class. The course outline may be changed to adjust to the needs to the class; these changes will be announced in class—missing class is never an excuse for missing announcements.**

**January (we will be reading Gary Soto’s *Effects of Knut Hamson on a Fresno Boy*)**

12th-16th

* Syllabus.
* Proofreading: unacceptable work VS acceptable work.

19th-23rd

* Fragments.
* Comma splices.
* Sentence fuses.
* Comma use.
* How to write the five sentence types.

26th-30th

* Craft lecture.
* Reading discussions.
* How to write essay 1.
* Essay 1 assigned.

**February (we will be reading Gary Soto’s *Effects of Knut Hamson on a Fresno Boy*)**

2nd-6th

* Draft workshop.
* Essay 1 due.
* Craft lecture.
* Reading discussion.

9th-13th

* Reading discussions.

16th-20th

* Grammar Review (practice grammar exam).
* How to write essay 2—brainstorming and introduction.

23rd-27th

* Grammar Review (practice grammar exam).
* How to write essay 2—body paragraphs.
* How to write essay 2—conclusion.
* Essay 2 assigned.

**March (we will be reading Manuel Muñoz’s *Zigzagger*)**

2nd-6th

* Draft workshop.
* Essay 1 returned.
* Essay 2 due.
* Craft lecture.
* Reading discussion.

9th-13th

* Reading discussions.

16th-20th

* Grammar Review (practice grammar exam).
* How to write essay 3—brainstorming and introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion.
* Essay 2 assigned.

23rd-27th

* Draft workshop.
* Essay 2 returned.

30th-April 3rd

* Spring recess. No classes held.

**April (we will be reading Christopher Buckley’s *Back Room at the Philosopher’s Club*).**

6th-10th

* Essay 3 due.
* Craft lecture.
* Reading discussion.

13th-17th

* Reading discussions.

20th-24th

* Reading discussion.
* Grammar Review (practice grammar exam).
* How to write essay 4—brainstorming and introduction.

27th-May 1st

* Grammar Review (practice grammar exam).
* How to write essay 4—body paragraphs, conclusion.
* Essay 4 assigned.

**May**

4th-8th

* Draft workshop.
* Essay 3 returned.
* Essay 4 due.
* Study for final grammar exam.

11th-15th

* Study for final grammar exam.

18th

* Final grammar exam. Posted at 5pm and due at 7pm. Plan ahead.

**Lecture Notes**

**How to Write Complete Sentences**

**I. Understanding Complete Sentences**

A. A complete sentence is a group of words that contains a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. The grammatical term for a complete sentence is “independent clause.”

1. A subject is what the sentence is about.

a. example: Jackson Pollock defined modern American painting. 2. A verb is the action of the sentence.

a. example: Pollock painted in a style inspired by the American Indians.

3. The subject and verb must form a complete thought. To help yourself understand the concept of a complete and logical thought, read the word groups below. Which one or ones contains a complete thought?

a. After the dog ate his food.

b. Because the dog ate his food too fast.

c. Unless the dog is able eat his food slowly.

d. After the dog ate his food, he went outside and played in the leaves.

4. Example “D” is a complete thought. It contains a subject, which is “he”; it contains a verb, which is “went”; and it contains a complete thought: what happened?—the dog went outside and played in the leaves. To recognize whether or not a group of words contains a subject, a verb, and especially a complete thought, you must be a good reader, which is one reason reading is so very important to a young writer.

# II. Avoiding Fragments

A. If a group of words does not contain a subject, a verb, or a complete thought, it is an incomplete sentence. An incomplete sentence is also known as a “fragment.”

B. Occasionally, incomplete sentences begin with one of the following types of words: *after, although, because, before, if, unless, until,* and *when*. These words are called dependent words because the sentences

that they begin will require extra information to be complete. You can begin a sentence with any word that you want as long as you have a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.

C. As writers, you have three ways to correct a fragment:

1. Combine word groups:

a. During the winter months. I mulch the garden with compost.

i. During the winter months, I mulch the garden with compost.

2. Remove dependent words:

a. When I mulch the garden.

i. I mulch the garden.

3. Revise the fragment:

a. When I mulch the garden.

i. When I mulch the garden, my tomato plants produce more fruit during the summer.

**How to Avoid Comma Splices and Sentence Fuses**

**I. Comma Splices**

A. Definition: if two independent clauses are joined with a comma that is not followed by a coordinating conjunction, the sentence is called a “comma splice.” You may place a comma between independent clauses as long as the comma is followed by a coordinating conjunction. There are seven coordinating

conjunctions in the English language: “and,” “or,” “nor,” “but,” for,” “so,” and “yet.”

**II. Sentence Fuses**

A. Definition: if two independent clauses are joined with neither punctuation nor a coordinating conjunction, the sentence is called a “sentence fuse.”

**III. Examples of Comma Splices and Sentence Fuses**

A. Identify which are comma splices and which are sentence fuses. Explain why each example

represents a particular type of sentence error.

1. Today I cut the lawn, it was very green.

2. Today I cut the lawn, it was very green, my father was pleased.

3. I’m going to help my father build a fence the old one is infested with termites.

4. I’m going to help my father build a fence, the old one is infested with termites the posts are

rotten.

**IV. How to Join Together Independent Clauses Correctly and Thus Avoid Comma Splices and Sentence Fuses**

A. Join together independent clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction. There are seven coordinating conjunctions in the English Language: “and,” “or,” “nor,” “but,” for,” “so,” and “yet.”

1. Last night, I sprayed the grape vines with soap, and my wife pruned the fig trees.

B. Join together independent clauses with a semicolon if the independent clauses are closely related.

1. My wife and I love working in the yard every evening; the work releases day’s stress.

C. Join together independent clauses with a colon if the second independent clause summarizes or explains the first independent clause.

1. During the summer months, the dogs dig holes under the Sequoias and fall asleep: the cold dirt soothes their panting heart throughout the afternoon.

D. Join together independent clauses with a dash to add emphasis to the second independent clause.

1. The blackberry vines are bursting with blossoms—the fruit will be sweet and plentiful.

E. Join together independent clauses with a period.

1. The plum trees need to be pruned. The nectarine trees are already budding.

**V. Test**

A. How many independent clauses do you see in the sentence below? Are they joined together correctly?

1. Today I cut the lawn, and it was very green, so my father was pleased.

**How to Use the Comma**

**I. The Rules**

A. Use the comma after a subordinate phrase or clause that is followed by an independent clause. A subordinate clause contains a subject and a verb. A subordinate phrase contains one or neither. Subordinate word groups tell who, where, why, how, or under what conditions the main part of the sentence took place. Subordinate words groups *can’t* stand alone as independent clauses.

1. After I got home from school, I took a very long nap.

2. After school, I took a very long nap.

B. Use the comma with a coordinating conjunction to join independent clauses.

1. I drove home after school, and I took a nap.

2. After school, I drove home and took a nap, for I was exhausted.

C. Use the comma to join items in a series. A series includes at least three items. Place the comma before each item to prevent confusion.

1. After school, I drove home, took a nap, and ate dinner.

D. Use commas to set off parenthetical information. Parenthetical information appears in the middle of a sentence. The information is parenthetical if it can be removed without changing the meaning the sentence.

1. I took a nap, because I was exhausted, after school.

E. Use the comma to set off nonessential information that begins with the word “which,” “such as,” or “who.”

1. My truck is white, which is a very easy color to maintain.

F. Use the comma to separate sharply contrasting elements. Sharply contrasting elements are often defined by words such as “not” and “unlike.”

1. I want to go home and study, not sleep.

G. Use commas after or around transitional phrases including, but not limited to, “unfortunately,” “thus,” “still,” “in addition,” “however,” and “instead.”

1. I want to go home and take a nap; instead, I’m going to study.

2. I went to school and still worked-out.

H. Use a comma after a fragment introducing a short direct quotation.

1. Luis Rodriguez said, “reading saved my life.”

**How to Write a Variety of Sentences**

**Introduction**: To know how to write a variety sentences, you must understand three basic syntactical units: the subordinate phrase, the subordinate clause, and the independent clause. Once you understand these sentence parts, you can learn how to write the different types of sentences: simple, complex, compound, and complex compound. *By understanding how to write these types of sentences, you will become a better writer, for the sentence is the most important organizational unit that a writer uses. In other words, you will be able to articulate sophisticated ideas clearly so that your reader will understand your thoughts.*

I. There are three syntactical units: the subordinate phrase, the subordinate clause, and the independent clause.

A. The subordinate phrase is a group of words that cannot stand alone as a sentence; thus, it is a fragment. Subordinate phrases do not contain both a subject and verb. Subordinate phrases tell who, where, how, why, when, or under what conditions the main part of the sentence took place. The main part of the sentence is the part of the sentence that can stand alone as a complete sentence. Subordinate phrases can be at the beginning of a sentence or at the end of a sentence.

1. While at the library, I was able to study for my final exam.

2. I washed my car after work.

B. The subordinate clause is also a group of words that cannot stand alone as a sentence; thus, it is a fragment. Subordinate clauses do contain both a subject and verb. Subordinate clauses also tell who, where, how, why, when, or under what conditions the main part of the sentence took place. Remember, the main part of the sentence is the part of the sentence that can stand alone as a complete sentence. Like subordinate phrases, subordinate clauses can be at the beginning of a sentence or at the end of a sentence.

1. Because I woke up early, I enjoyed a healthy breakfast before my round of golf.

2. This winter, I’m going to enjoy freshly squeezed orange juice unless the frost ruins the fruit trees in my backyard.

C. The independent clause is a group of words that contains a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. It can stand alone as a complete sentence.

1. I love a good cup of coffee.

2. The Dallas Cowboys are the greatest football team ever.

II. There are four types of sentences: simple, complex, compound, and complex compound. These four types of sentences are written by combing together the different types of syntactical units.

A. The simple sentence contains one independent clause and no subordinate word groups.

1. The Los Angeles Dodgers are the greatest baseball team ever.

2. I drive a 1966 Chevy pickup truck.

B. The complex sentence contains at least one subordinate phrase or subordinate clause plus exactly one independent clause.

1. I worked at Red Carpet Carwash while in college.

2. After I picked tomatoes and jalapenos in the garden, I made fresh salsa.

C. The compound sentence contains at least two independent clauses and no subordinate word groups.

1. One of my favorite poetry books is The Sky by Christopher Buckley, and one of my favorite novels is Hunger by Knut Hamsun.

2. I was starving, but my wallet was empty.

D. The complex compound sentence contains at least one subordinate phrase or subordinate clause plus at least two independent clauses.

1. After I worked out, I took a shower, and then, we ate dinner.

2. While my brother and I were playing golf, it started raining, but we didn’t care and finished our round.

**Conclusion:** By mastering these types of sentences, a person can control the rhythm of his writing. If a person writes a poem that contains mostly one or two sentence types, the rhythm becomes monotonous. A conscientious writer, however, uses all of sentence structures to prevent monotony and, most importantly, to organize and present his ideas as clearly as possible. This scrupulous attention to the writing process shows respect for the reader.

**How to Write a Successful Essay**

**I. How to Write an Introductory Paragraph**

1. Read the essay topic carefully.
2. Identify **key words** in the essay topic.
3. Identify what the topic specifically requires.
4. Use those key words to address what the essay topic specifically requires and write your **thesis** sentence.
5. Make your thesis sentence the first sentence in your introduction.
6. Do not simply rewrite the topic.
7. Carefully list your **supportive material** in a series of well-written sentences. Write one sentence for each paragraph in the body of the essay. Each of these sentences must focus precisely on the part of the direct quotation that you are going to examine in the body of the essay. That part of the quotation must be in quotation marks and should be in the form of a word or a phrase. In other words, words, be very focused.

**II. How to Write a Paragraph in the Body of the Essay**

1. Write a **topic sentence** to establish the paragraph’s focal point. Use all your key words in the topic sentence. Make sure your topic is a clear reflection of the supportive material listed in your introduction by addressing the specific part of the direct quotation that you are going to examine in the critical thinking. Put that specific part of the direct quotation in quotation marks.
2. Establish the **context** of your supportive material. Your context must include at least four well-written sentences. The context describes what was taking place in the original text before the direct quotation. Use your own diction and syntax!
3. Support your topic sentence with a **direct quotation**.
4. Explain the significance of your direct quotation with **CRITICAL THINKING**. Your critical thinking must contain at least five well-written sentences. Do not begin a paragraph with a direct quotation. Do not end a paragraph with a direct quotation. To write your critical thinking, follow these four steps:
   1. Begin the critical thinking with a sentence that reinforces the key words—use the actual key words. (For the rest of the critical thinking, feel free to use synonyms). One sentence.
   2. Carefully summarize the direct quotation. One sentence.
   3. Focus on form by pulling out specific parts of the direct quotation. Place those specific parts of the direct quotation in quotation marks. At least three sentences.
   4. Focus on art by explaining how the reader/audience is affected by the text. One sentence.
   5. These steps will be elaborated upon during class.

## **III. How to Write a Concluding Paragraph**

1. Restate your thesis. Copy and paste it. Make it the first sentence in your introduction.
2. Restate your supportive material. Write one sentence per paragraph in the body of the essay. Do not copy and paste; rather, show a variety of sentence structure.
3. Make a **final statement**. Use the literary devices to craft the final statement. The final statement is pure critical thinking. It must reach beyond the thesis and explain why your essay is important. Use concrete or romantic images from one of your direct quotations to allegorically represent your point. Make the images the focus of your title.

**MLA Format Checklist for Typed Essays**

**Thanks to Reedley College English Instructor Carey Karle for This List**

All essays must be formatted according to Modern Language Association guidelines. Any paper that is not correctly formatted as noted may receive no higher than a “C” on their essay.

* Font set for TIMES NEW ROMAN 12
* Line spacing set for DOUBLE
  + Entire essay is DOUBLE line spaced only—no more and no less ANYWHERE
  + In the PARAGRAPH menu, set the SPACING **BEFORE** and **AFTER** for ZERO
* Margins are set for one inch (1”) top and bottom, left and right.
* Page numbers have been INSERTED (not typed) into the upper right hand corner beginning with page one.
* Student’s last name appears before the page number—AND there is a space between the name and page number
* On page one ONLY, in the top left hand corner of the page, double line spaced, the following appears
  + Student’s Name
  + Instructor Dominguez
  + Course
  + Due Date for Essay
* Next, the essay has an appropriate title, which is centered—USING the computer’s function to center (not tabbed or spaced into the center)
* The first line of each paragraph is indented using the tab function AND the tab is set for 0.5” (one half inch)
* The work(s) cited page/annotated bibliography is the last page of the essay—INSERT NEW PAGE
  + Works Cited utilizes a hanging indent as needed
  + Works Cited entries are alphabetized by the author’s last name
  + Works Cited entries are formatted correctly

**How to Use MLA Author Named in a Signal Phrase to Cite Prose (short direct quotation)**

## **I. Quotations, Signal Phrases, and Page Numbers**

## Limit your quotation to four lines.

## Introduce a quotation using a signal phrase. There are a variety of possible signal phrases. Following are several signal words: stated, said, says, believed, expressed. The signal phrase should also contain either the name of the author or the name of the speaker.

## Follow the quotation with the appropriate page number inside a set of parentheses. Finish the citation with a period.

## Here is an example of a direct quotation cited according to the MLA guidelines:

Esquivel writes about the theme of love by carefully describing a dinner that took place on the ranch. To prepare the dinner, Tita plucked rose petals off their stems to make a sauce. When she plucked them, she scratched herself on the thorns. Drops of blood dripped into the sauce as she thought about Pedro—the man she loved. After she made the sauce, she prepared the quail. Tita was sweating while cooking the quail; as she prepared the quail, she was still thinking about Pedro. When she presented the dinner to her guests, Tita’s blood and sweat magically affected the food. **Esquivel said,** “**I**t was as if a strange alchemical process had dissolved her entire being in the rose petal sauce, in the tender flesh of the quails, in the wine, in every one of the meals **aromas” (52).** **THEN THE CRITICAL THINKING BEGINS HERE FOLLOWED BY THE TRANSITION.**

E. There are several important MLA rules to learn from the example:

1. The quotation is introduced with a comma because the signal phrase is not a complete sentence and because there is an end stop before the quotation.
2. The first letter of the quotation should be capitalized according to the way it appears in the text.
3. Do not begin a quotation with an ellipsis mark; rather, when appropriate, begin a quotation with a lower case letter. You may, however, end a quotation with an ellipsis mark if you end the quotation in the middle of a sentence.
4. The page number is placed outside the quotation marks. Include only the page number inside the parenthesis. Close the sentence with a period outside the parentheses. Please note: there is no punctuation included inside the last set of quotation marks, such as a period or a comma. If the quotation includes an exclamation mark or a question mark, then include either of those forms of punctuation; otherwise, simply use a period after the page number, outside the parentheses.

F. Other MLA formatting issues may come up in class. If so, we will address them during lecture. If you have any questions about citing direct quotations, be sure to ask. These rules (A-E), however, will serve as the backbone.

# How to Use MLA Author Named in a Signal Phrase to Cite Poetry (short direct quotation)

## **I. Lesson One**

## Limit your direct quotation to three lines or fewer of actual poetry, not how it looks on your screen

## but how it looks in the original text.

## Introduce a quotation using a signal phrase. There are a variety of possible signal phrases. Following are several key words: stated, said, says, believed, expressed. The signal phrase should also contain either the name of the author or the name of the speaker.

## Use the “/” mark to indicate line breaks.

## Follow the quotation with the appropriate page number inside a set of parentheses. Finish the citation with a period.

## Here is an example of a direct quotation cited according to the MLA guidelines:

“Pig” uses the concrete images of a Mack truck and sausage to create a theme of toil. As the poem opens, Abraham Tovar is pulling into the parking lot of a sausage factory. He sees the workers swatting at flies, and he sees how the workers wear their work in the form of blood and fat clinging to their skin. Above the workers is the sun. The heat melts the frozen meat products, making the men even more aware of their surroundings as they sink their hands into the cartons of meat to make sausage. The poet shows the toil of the day. He says, “Mack trucks came in with unprocessed pork/ and took out chorizo, linguica, hot links, and sausage/” (11). **And continue on here with your critical thinking…**

1. There are several important MLA rules to learn from the example:
2. The quotation is introduced with a comma because the signal phrase is not a complete sentence and because there is an end stop before the quotation.
3. The first letter of the quotation should be capitalized according to the way it appears in the text.
4. Do not begin a quotation with an ellipsis mark; rather, when appropriate, begin a quotation with a lower case letter. You may, however, end a quotation with an ellipsis mark if you end the quotation in the middle of a sentence.
5. The page number is placed outside the quotation marks. Include only the page number inside the parenthesis. Close the sentence with a period outside the parentheses. Please note: there is no punctuation included inside the last set of quotation marks, such as a period or a comma. If the quotation includes an exclamation mark or a question mark, then include either of those forms of punctuation; otherwise, simply use a period after the page number, outside the parentheses.

**All other MLA rules,**

**which were reviewed on the previous PAGE, apply**.

**How to Create a Works Cited Page**

**(a sample works cited page will be complete in class)**

**I. Formatting**

* Begin your works cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper.
* It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper.
* Label the page Works Cited (do not italicize the words works cited or put them in quotation marks) and center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.
* Double space all citations, but do not skip spaces between entries.
* Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations five spaces so that you create a hanging indent.
* Entries are listed alphabetically by the author’s name (or, when appropriate, editor names). Author names are written last name first; middle names or middle initials follow the first name.

**II. How to Cite Sources**

* Basic Format for a Book: first, give author’s name. A single author's name appears in last name, first name format. The basic form for a book citation is: Last name, First name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication:

Henley, Patricia. *The Hummingbird House*. Denver: MacMurray, 1999. Print.

* Book with more than one author: The first given name appears in last name, first name format; subsequent author names appear in first name last name format:

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. Boston: Allyn, 2000. Print.

Works Cited

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. 26 Aug. 2005. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue University. 23 April 2006. Web.

**How to Proofread More Effectively**

* Students, because poor proofreading lowers the overall quality of your work, essays that lack proper proofreading will receive no higher than a "D" and will be returned with little feedback. Do not procrastinate. Spend several hours proofreading your work before you turn it in to your instructor. To help you become a better proofreader, here are some pieces of advice from one of my favorite online resources for writers:

**Welcome to the Purdue OWL**

*This page is brought to you by the OWL at Purdue (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/). When printing this page, you must include the entire legal notice at bottom.*

**Contributors:**Jaclyn M. Wells, Morgan Sousa, Mia Martini, and Allen Brizee.

**General Strategies**

1. Take a break! Allow yourself some time between writing and proofing. Even a five-minute break is productive because it will help you get some distance from what you have written. The goal is to return with a fresh eye and mind.
2. Leave yourself enough time. Since many errors are made by speeding through writing and proofreading, you should take your time to look over your writing carefully. This will help you to catch errors you might otherwise miss. Always read through your writing slowly. If you read at a normal speed, you won't give your eyes sufficient time to spot errors.
3. Read aloud. Reading a paper aloud encourages you to read every little word.
4. Role-play. While reading, put yourself in your audience's shoes. Playing the role of the reader encourages you to see the paper as your audience might.
5. Get others involved. Asking a friend or a Writing Lab tutor to read your paper will let you get another perspective on your writing and a fresh reader will be able to help you catch mistakes that you might have overlooked.
6. Make sure you are following directions by comparing your essay to the assignment sheet (Mr. Dominguez).

**Personalizing Proofreading**

In addition to following the general guidelines above, individualizing your proofreading process to your needs will help you proofread more efficiently and effectively. You won't be able to check for everything (and you don't have to), so you should find out what your typical problem areas are and look for each type of error individually. Here's how: Find out what errors you typically make. Review instructors' comments about your writing and/or review your paper with a Writing Lab tutor. Learn how to fix those errors. Talk with your instructor and/or with a Writing Lab tutor. The instructor and the tutor can help you understand why you make the errors you do so that you can learn to avoid them. Use specific strategies. Use the strategies detailed to find and correct your particular errors in usage, sentence structure, and spelling and punctuation.

**Finding Common Errors**

Proofreading can be much easier when you know what you are looking for. Although everyone will have different error patterns, the following are issues that come up for many writers. When proofreading your paper, be on the lookout for these errors. Always remember to make note of what errors you make frequently—this will help you proofread more efficiently in the future!

**Spelling**

* Do NOT rely on your computer's spell-check—it will not get everything!
* Examine each word in the paper individually by reading carefully. Moving a pencil under each line of text helps you to see each word.
* If necessary, check a dictionary to see that each word is spelled correctly.
* Be especially careful of words that are typical spelling nightmares, like "ei/ie" words and homonyms like your/you're, to/too/two, and there/their/they're.

**Left-out and doubled words**

Reading the paper aloud (and slowly) can help you make sure you haven't missed or repeated any words.

**Fragments**

* Make sure each sentence has a subject. In the following sentence, the subject is "students": The students looked at the OWL website.
* Make sure each sentence has a complete verb. In the following sentence, "were" is required to make a complete verb; "trying" alone would be incomplete: They were trying to improve their writing skills.
* Make sure each sentence contains a complete thought (Mr. Dominguez).
* See that each sentence has an independent clause; remember that a dependent clause cannot stand on its own. The following sentence is a dependent clause that would qualify as a fragment sentence: Which is why the students read all of the handouts carefully.

**Sentence Fuses**

* Review each sentence to see whether it contains more than one independent clause.
* If there is more than one independent clause, check to make sure the clauses are separated by the appropriate punctuation.
* Sometimes, it is just as effective (or even more so) to simply break the sentence into separate sentences instead of including punctuation to separate the clauses.

Example sentence fuse: I have to write a research paper for my class about extreme sports all I know about the subject is that I'm interested in it.

Edited version: I have to write a research paper for my class about extreme sports, and all I know about the subject is that I'm interested in it.

Another option: I have to write a research paper for my class about extreme sports. All I know about the subject is that I'm interested in it.

**Comma Splices**

* Look at the sentences that have commas.
* Check to see if the sentence contains two main clauses (independent clauses—Mr. Dominguez).
* If there are two main clauses (independent clauses), they should be connected with a comma and a conjunction like and, but, for, or, so, yet.
* Another option is to take out the comma and insert a semicolon (if closely related or a colon if the second independent clause summarizes or explains the first independent clause—Mr. Dominguez).

Example: I would like to write my paper about basketball, it's a topic I can talk about at length.

Edited version: I would like to write my paper about basketball, for it's a topic I can talk about at length.

Edited version, using a semicolon: I would like to write my paper about basketball; it's a topic I can talk about at length. (Actually, a colon should be used here—Mr. Dominguez).

**Subject/Verb Agreement**

* Find the subject of each sentence.
* Find the verb that goes with the subject.
* The subject and verb should match in number, meaning that if the subject is plural, the verb should be as well and vice versa.

Example: Students at the university level usually is very busy.

Edited version: Students at the university level usually are very busy.

**Apostrophes**

1. Skim your paper, stopping only at those words which end in "s." If the "s" is used to indicate possession, there should be an apostrophe, as in Mary's book.
2. Look over the contractions, like you're for you are, it's for it is, etc. Each of these should include an apostrophe.
3. Remember that apostrophes are not used to make words plural. When making a word plural, only an "s" is added, not an apostrophe and an "s."

**Read Your Paper Aloud**

Any time your text is awkward or confusing, or any time you have to pause or reread your text, revise this section. If it is at all awkward for you, you can bet it will be awkward for your reader.

**Tighten and Clean up Your Language**

Do all of the ideas in the paper make sense? Are there unclear or confusing ideas or sentences? Read your paper out loud and listen for awkward pauses and unclear ideas. Cut out extra words, vagueness, and misused words.

**Eliminate Mistakes in Grammar and Usage**

Do you see any problems with grammar, punctuation, or spelling? If you think something is wrong, you should make a note of it, even if you don't know how to fix it. You can always talk to a Writing Lab tutor about how to correct errors.

**Switch from Writer-Centered to Reader-Centered**

Try to detach yourself from what you've written; pretend that you are reviewing someone else's work. What would you say is the most successful part of your paper? Why? How could this part be made even better? What would you say is the least successful part of your paper? Why? How could this part be improved?

Special thanks to the Owl at Purdue and its contributors for these outstanding suggestions. —Mr. Dominguez

**Practice Paragraphs**

**Fragments**

**Attending UCLA**

Next year, I want to attend UCLA. Because it will help prepare me for a life’s work in medicine. Since my childhood. I have always wanted to be a doctor. If I major in biology. I will learn a great deal about the human body and how it works. I took several science classes at Long Beach City College. For example, I took physics, chemistry, and environmental science. Since I did exceptionally well in these courses. I am certain that I will continue to do well at UCLA because I am confident, put school first, and work hard. Because I want to spend my life as a doctor. I have volunteered my time at a hospital. At the hospital, which was in an economically disadvantaged area. I learned that a doctor must above all else be compassionate and listen to his patients. I want to learn how to serve my patients well. While attending the UCLA School of Medicine.

**First Job at Bulldog Stadium**

When I was thirteen years old. I started my first job selling snacks in the stands at Bulldog Stadium. The reason I worked at Bulldog Stadium was because I wanted to see the games for free. I quickly learned, however, that if I was going to make any money. I couldn’t stand around and do nothing. At first, I sold only hotdogs. I’d run up and down the stands. Until my legs burned. Of course, stuffing cash into my pockets kept my legs moving. Because I wanted to make more money. I started selling hotdogs and Pepsis simultaneously. I carried a box full of hotdogs. On top of that a tray full of Pepsis. If someone yelled, “Hotdog,” I’d ask them if they wanted a soda too, and they always did. I had a friend with whom I worked, and he was lazy. Every time I saw him. He was leaning against the rail and eating the food that he was trying to sell. After the games, we’d walk home together. He liked complaining about not making very much money. Once, while he was whining. I told him he should sell hotdogs instead of eating them. He looked at me. With a blank face and said, “Are you calling me fat?” That night, I sat on my porch step before going inside the house. I was thirteen years old, and I had sixty dollars. In the palm of my hand.My legs burned, and I had blisters on my toes, but I didn’t care. As I put my money in my wallet.

**Fragments, Comma Splices, and Sentence Fuses**

**My Study**

My favorite room in the house is my study because it is where I sit at my desk to write. Over the past several months. I have worked to create an environment that encourages those passions. For example, one wall is lined with bookshelves that stretch from the floor to the ceiling, needless to say, they are stocked with books. I have poetry books, I have fiction books I also have reference books, such as the dictionary, the thesaurus, and books about rocks, bugs, and stars. Some of the shelves are not full I left them empty to display my wife’s ceramic pots. Some of them are made with coils, some are thrown, and others are sculpted, thus, the pots, the shelves, and the books create an environment that encourages literature and art. Which is just one reason I love my study. On another wall is a twenty gallon fish tank. In it are freshwater fish, such as tiger barbs, catfish, mollies, and red-tailed sharks. Along with the shelves, the books, the pots, and the aquarium, I have several photographs in my office. My favorite photograph is black and white, it is a snapshot of my grandfather. In this photograph, he is playing his trumpet at the Rainbow Ballroom. Behind him, the other musicians dressed in their best black suits with sweat dripping down their faces. At their fingertips are the congas, the tumbas, the quintos, the bass, the trombones, and the saxophones, and their eyes are alive, there is salsa in the air, and the people are dancing. This is how I like to think of my office, it is not a study, it is a night club where the happy ones are singing, laughing, and drinking. Because they know the music will not stop.

**(Fragments, Comma Splices, and Sentence Fuses Continued)**

**UC Irvine**

When I was attending the University of California at Irvine, my roommates and I were college poor. Sometimes, we lived off of the kindness of our neighbors, next door, lived four girls who knew how to cook. Because they felt sorry for us. They brought us beans, Spanish rice, and enchiladas that we devoured in minutes. After they became sick of our begging, we were on our own. At the grocery store, my roommates and I bought fruits and vegetables that were discounted because they were old, we also bought cheap cans of jalapenos that were dented. We didn’t drive trucks that were so low they scraped against speed bumps as the mufflers purred and the rims spun, we had cinder blocks, milk crates, and 2 x 4s that we used to build book shelves in the evening, as our stomachs settled in for the night, we’d sit in our apartment and drink beer so old that it had lost its fizz, one by one, each of us would take a book from the shelf, open it, and share what we had learned in class. My two roommates were engineers. Who dreamed of building bridges in Peru and Mexico, and I was a comparative literature major who wanted to become a published poet. We talked about timber, steel, and soil we talked about concrete imagery, alliteration, and the sublime, these were the things that were shaping our future. After we graduated with our degrees tucked in our back pockets. We went off in pursuit of our dreams now, when we get together, we sink into the couch and talk about work, but before long, we are lost in conversations about life in general. They are the same conversations that we had as twenty-one year old students. Who were inspired by ideas that cost less than a can of beer.

**Commas**

**The Citrus Trees**

# Last night because the season’s first frost was going to settle in the valley I went outside and took a close look at my young citrus trees. I have a lemon, an orange and a lime. The trees which I purchased at Home Depot, are only two to three feet high. The foliage was tipped with the soft and delicate shoots of new growth, and I knew that the freeze might kill the young leaves. In my shed I discovered three unused plastic tarps. The tarps which I bought to cover the tile floor while painting the kitchen had eyelets so that the plastic sheets could be secured to the ground. In the garage I dug through my tool box, and found the metal pins that I normally use for the tent. I grabbed the hammer and marched outside. By then the grass was already showing the night’s early frost. I started sneezing and my cheeks, and nose burned. I unrolled the tarps, draped them over the redwood stakes supporting the trees, pulled out the edges of the plastic, and pinned them down. The citrus trees stood under a tent and I hoped that in the morning the leaves would still be bright and green not black, withered, and curled.

**Unacceptable Work Due to Poor Proofreading, Procrastination, and/ or ~~Empathy~~ Apathy**

**Identify Each Error**

ricardo garza

Instructor dominquez  
English 125,TTH11:00

September 9, 2014

Essay 1:Noisy sparrows pouring from his heart.

INDENT!The most important theme in ‘First Love” by Gary Soto are longing. As Gary sits in his room, he hears ”noisy sparrows” in the jard. He imagines ~~that~~ Carolyn ~~girl is~~ camping. He sees the “lantern” beside that one right there on it. Finally, as the easy comes to an end, Gary looks threw his ‘window” and realizes live aint two bad.

**Proofreading: Because poor proofreading lowers the overall quality of your work, essays that lack proper proofreading will receive no higher than a "D" and will be returned with little feedback. Do not procrastinate. Spend several hours proofreading your work before you turn it in to your instructor. (See page 18-19 of the syllabus for proofreading suggestions).**Practice Grammar Exam

1. Which of the following is the best sentence using the dash?

1. Last month, I went to the Richard Blanco reading—I was twenty minutes early.
2. He read “Some Days the Sea”—which I love.
3. After the reading, he answered one of the questions I submitted to my instructor—because he answered it I felt a great deal of pride.
4. Then, I got in line to have my book signed—the line was long, so I went home.
5. Later that night, I talked to my friend on the phone, and he said he stood in line for two hours and that when he reached the table, Blanco signed his book and even took a picture—I wish I had waited in line too.

2. Which of the following shows the best compound complex sentence?

1. After the semester is over, I’m going to wash my truck, it’s so filthy.
2. I need to buy new tires, and I need to wax it.
3. I haven’t changed the oil in years, and I’m worried the engine will blow up because of neglect.
4. After the oil change, I’ll buy new windshield wipers and I’ll buy new mud flaps.
5. I can’t wait to fix it, so it runs better.

3. Which of the following is a simple sentence?

1. I need to pull weeds in the back yard, and I need to take out the trash.
2. Because the summer is hot, weeds grow like crazy.
3. I like pulling weeds, but my wife prefers shopping.
4. Sometimes, my dogs eats the weeds, so I squirt them with the hose.
5. The weeds crowd my tomato plants.

4. Which of the following is the best example of a complex sentence?

1. I took my nephew to play golf.
2. He is only twelve and hits the ball far.
3. Because he loves the sport he always asks me to take him golfing.
4. After we play he loves to relax.
5. At the restaurant, my nephew orders peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

5. Which of the following is a comma splice?

1. When I got home from school this evening, I ate dinner.
2. After I worked out, I took a shower, and I drank a protein shake.
3. I sat down at the counter and corrected essays, because I had to return them the next morning.
4. After grading essays for five hours, I finally finished, most of my students did well.
5. The next day, I returned the essays to my students, and they were happy with their grades.

6. Which of the following is a compound sentence?

1. When I was little, I saved my money, so I could buy pencils.
2. I was eight years old, and across the street from my house was a stationary store.
3. The stationary store sold paper, erasers, staplers, and lots of pencils.
4. I liked the Dixon Ticonderoga pencils, because the lead erased easily.
5. One pencil costs a nickel, but I always had a dime, so I could buy two.

7. Which of the following is an example of a fragment?

1. After I feed the dogs and clean the kitchen.
2. I have a chance to relax.
3. Every night, I read.
4. I love reading.
5. I’m reading a poetry book.

8. Which of the following is an example of a comma splice?

1. I like taking black and white photographs, they are dramatic.
2. My father took black and white photographs, which is why I like them too.
3. He took photographs with his camera, and developed them in his darkroom.
4. His darkroom was in the garage, and I loved helping him.
5. I learned how to develop the pictures, because I watched my father do it too.

9. Which of the following shows the best use of the colon?

1. When I get home from work, I check the garden: sometimes, however, I forget, and it starts to dry up.
2. Usually, I remember to check it: because the days grow increasingly hot during the summer.
3. I water all the vegetables, such as: tomatoes, squash, and peppers.
4. When I go outside and water the garden, the doves in my plum tree fly away: they scare easily.
5. After a few minutes, the doves return to their nest: I return to my watering.

10. Which of the following shows the best use of the comma?

1. Because my dog Moby is old, I make him his food every Sunday afternoon, after going to the grocery store.
2. When I prepare his food, I make him brown rice, and I add organic vegetables, such as carrots, spinach, and sweet potato.
3. Moby is spoiled, for example, as soon as he sees me put the pots on the stove, he starts begging for food.
4. Unless I say, “Stop begging,” he’ll sit in the middle of the kitchen, and stare at me.
5. Still, I love him, when we brought him home, he was a puppy, and he fit in a shoe box.

11. Which of the following shows the best use of the dash?

1. When I graduated from college—I was so happy my heart pounded.
2. I was happy for several reasons—for example, I could get a job and pay off my school loans.
3. After I graduated from the University of California at Irvine, I earned a Masters Degree—I earned my Masters Degree at Arizona.
4. I was the first person in my family to earn a Masters degree—my parents were very proud.
5. After the graduation ceremony—my parents took me out to dinner, and my mom started crying over her salad because she was happy.

12. Which of the following is the best example of a compound complex sentence?

1. Texting is addictive, and I love it.
2. Sometimes, I pick up bad habits, such as spelling poorly.
3. I could spend more time reading a book, instead, I text my friends.
4. Unless I’m in a hurry, I should call my dad and talk to him, but he likes texting too.
5. My mother is addicted to texting, she sends me pictures with her texts because she loves her camera phone.

13. Which of the following is an example of a sentence fuse?

1. My dogs sleep in my office, there is dried up drool everywhere, they’re names are Moby and Madison.
2. They shed a lot their hair makes me sneeze.
3. They eat my shoes, eyeglasses, and my phone even my wallet and my golf balls.
4. Still, their snoring relaxes me while I’m working at my desk.
5. They look like they’re dreaming because they bark and kick their legs while they sleep.

14. Which of the following shows the best use of the semicolon?

1. When I was seven years old, I learned how to play the guitar; I was a first grader at Manchester Elementary School.
2. I took guitar lessons at the music store across the street from my house; because my dad new the music teacher who worked there.
3. First, I learned the notes; next, I learned how to play songs.
4. Eventually, I sang the songs to an audience; when my school had a talent show.
5. I sang a song called “Oh, Suzanna”; because my mom loved it.

15. Which of the following is the best example of a complex sentence?

1. I went home and took a long nap.
2. I must have slept for five hours, because when I woke up, I felt rested.
3. I drank a cup of coffee, because I wanted to grade essays for a little while.
4. After grading for a few hours I turned on the TV and watched the Dodgers and the Giants.
5. Before I knew it, the Dodgers were winning by ten runs.

16. Which of the following shows the best use of the semicolon?

1. During the summer, I love cooking; when I cook, my wife has a chance to relax.
2. I cook hamburgers, and I always grill them outside and use vegetables from our garden such as; peppers, egg plant, and tomatoes.
3. Sometimes, we make vegetarian burgers; usually, we use the egg plant in place of the meat.
4. Personally, I love my burgers with meat; I cook them for a few minutes on each side, because I like them rare.
5. My wife is a vegetarian; she likes to eat healthy, and can’t stand blood.

17. Which of the following is the best example of a compound sentence?

1. I woke up this morning, and the back yard was flooded because of the rain.
2. I was worried about my garden, so I went outside and checked my vegetables.
3. Luckily, my tomatoes and peppers were perfectly fine, but my eggplants were missing, I bent over the planters and stared at the dirt.
4. I felt disgusted, for gophers had invaded my yard, and taken off with my egg plants.
5. I stuffed the hose down a gopher hole, and the gopher popped up I whacked him on the head with my shovel.

18. Which of the following is an example of a sentence fuse?

1. Because I needed to study for my grammar exam, I went to the library, found a corner, and pulled out my notes.
2. I studied independent clauses, fragments, and dependent words, and I studied coordinating conjunctions.
3. After studying the terms for hours, I took a practice exam and checked the answers on Blackboard unfortunately I failed it.
4. I decided to study with my friends, so I bought a couple of pizzas and invited them over to my apartment, but one dude didn’t bring his notes, and he didn’t even pitch in for the pizza, so we kicked him out because all he wanted were answers.
5. Finally, as I studied with my friends, the material began sinking in, and at last, I understood that the key to doing well was having the vocabulary memorized and identifying independent clauses.

19. Which of the following shows the best use of the colon?

* I went grocery shopping and bought: eggs, milk, and butter.
* While I was at the store, I picked up Swiss cheese and pepperoni: I wanted to make cookies.
* When I got home I started pulling out all the ingredients to make chocolate chip cookies but then my heart sank: because we didn’t have any flour.
* I got back in my truck and drove to the store: no flour, no cookies.
* After I got home, I baked a batch of cookies, and my wife smiled: the house smelled like chocolate chips.

20. Which of the following shows the best use of the comma?

1. I love reading, and I especially love reading the work of Tobias Wolff, because of the way he explores moral dilemmas.
2. Another one of my favorite authors is Ernest Hemingway, I love his short stories because the language is always economic, image driven, and narrative.
3. The first author I fell in love with was Emily Dickinson because I loved the way she explored themes, such as death, happiness, sorrow, and the afterlife.
4. I also love William Carlos Williams, and Robert Frost, because their images develop the physical landscape, emotional landscape, and the tone.
5. My favorite novel is *Hunger* by Knut Hamsun, because he focused on starvation; in addition, I enjoyed the way he presented characters rising above hardships.