

Overview

In *Essential Writing 1*, students take a step-by-step approach to develop skills and knowledge in basic sentence and paragraph writing. Each unit provides instruction on the essential structural and mechanical elements for producing good writing while actively engaging students in the learning process.

Essential Writing 1 is especially suited for beginner to low-intermediate Japanese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the university level but may be used by any level writer wishing to develop basic sentence and paragraph writing skills. Depending on the structure of classes at each university, the 12 units in *Essential Writing 1* can be taught over a 28–30-week academic school year by teaching one unit over a two-week period: thus, covering Units 1–6 in the spring semester and Units 7–12 in the fall semester.

Some of the highlights found in *Essential Writing 1* include:

◆ Opportunities for Active Learning

A majority of the over 75 exercises found in the book incorporate some element of pair work, making each exercise an opportunity to collaborate and actively engage students in the learning process.

◆ Model Paragraphs

Throughout the book there are numerous “model paragraphs” tailored to the beginning writer that provide students with examples of the structure and mechanics of quality writing. Additionally, the model paragraphs provide context for the target lessons found in each unit.

◆ Specific Areas of Focus

Each unit centers around a particular language focus that provides the learning target for that unit. These “Focus On” sections serve to help learners build the knowledge and skills needed to effectively produce a piece of quality writing.

◆ Common Errors

Many of the units highlight common errors made by beginning Japanese writers to address writing problems before they take place. This unique feature of *Essential Writing 1* will raise learner awareness and develop more independent writers.

◇ Vocabulary Checklists

The vocabulary checklists in *Essential Writing 1* are designed to develop a shared classroom language between the teacher and students. This allows for greater ease of communication when offering corrections and feedback. Additionally, these checklists facilitate increased responsibility and autonomy in the learner by ensuring that the student has understood the contents of each unit.

◇ Writing Checklists

Writing checklists found throughout *Essential Writing 1* serve as a quick reference for students to make certain they are meeting the demands of the assignment. These checklists are an invaluable resource for reinforcing the lessons found throughout the book to help students build good habits in formatting quality drafts.

Organization

Essential Writing 1 is made up of three distinct sections. “Part 1: From Sentence to Paragraph” introduces the elements of sentence and paragraph structure and mechanics. “Extra: On Writing” introduces the approaches of product and process writing and provides a blueprint for properly formatting a written document. “Part 2: Rhetorical Patterns,” provides instruction, exercises, and assignments working with four different paragraph types.

PART I FROM SENTENCE TO PARAGRAPH

Part 1 is covered in Units 1–4. Units 1–2 provide a step-by-step approach to developing practical knowledge and skills, specifically: building basic sentences; avoiding common fragment errors; and building compound sentences for better writing clarity and fluency.

Units 3–4 focus on building paragraphs through practical knowledge and skills, including writing effective topic sentences, major and minor supporting details and concluding sentences.

EXTRA ON WRITING

Extra: On Writing is an intermediary between Parts 1 and 2 of *Essential Writing 1*, serving to provide context and instruction on writing approach and formatting. Students often focus too heavily on producing the final work of an assignment, while missing the opportunity to engage in the writing process. “Extra” is a way of raising students’ awareness that while the final product is important, the process by which that final product is created is what develops the skills and experience needed for quality writing. Therefore, these two approaches are juxtaposed so that students can differentiate and gain greater control and understanding of both.

PART II RHETORICAL PATTERNS

Part 2 consists of Units 5–12 and provides instruction and practice using four different paragraph types: process, descriptive, narrative, and opinion. Each rhetorical pattern is covered in two units, giving students ample time to engage in the writing process before creating their final work. The exercises and assignments in these units reinforce the skills of sentence and paragraph building learned in Part 1 while providing further instruction on the structural and grammatical characteristics of each specific paragraph type. Part 2 helps build paragraph writing experience and confidence in students through interactive exercises and assignments that engage learner interests.

APPENDICES

There is a brief set of appendices at the end of the book to offer some supplementary materials for select units. These resources can be used as part of the unit exercises or as additional reference materials at any stage of the writing process.

We hope that skills and practice covered in *Essential Writing 1* will prove a valuable and engaging resource in developing sentence and paragraph writing skills for university EFL students in Japan.

Jethro Kenney

BUILDING THE SENTENCE

"You can make anything by writing."—C.S. Lewis

Sentences are the building blocks to paragraphs. To write well, we must know how to write **complete sentences**. A complete sentence, also called an **independent clause**, is a set of words that includes both a subject and a verb. It is also a complete idea that needs no more information to be understood.

An **incomplete sentence**, on the other hand, has either no subject, or no verb; or it is a **dependent clause**. This means that it is an incomplete idea that needs more information to be understood. Incomplete sentences are also called **fragments**. In this unit, you will learn about four common sentence fragments that beginning writers make.

COMPLETE SENTENCES

Focus on GRAMMAR Independent clauses

A **clause** is a set of words that includes a subject and a verb.

An **independent Clause** is a complete idea. It has at least one subject and one verb, and its meaning can stand alone. These are **Complete Sentences**:

Circle the subject and underline the verb in each sentence below. Then compare your answers with a partner.

1. The man sat.
2. Yuji loves animals.
3. I received your email yesterday.
4. The woman sitting next to the window is my friend.

FRAGMENTS

Focus on GRAMMAR Common fragment errors

A **fragment** is not a sentence because it is not a complete idea. It may be missing a subject or verb, or it may be a dependent clause that needs more information to make sense. There are three common fragment errors that new writers make: 1) **-ing fragments**, 2) **infinitive fragments**, and 3) **dependent clause fragments**. A fourth sentence error, which we will call an 4) **example fragment**, is another common problem found in beginning writing.

1. The man **sitting** next to the window. (No verb.)
2. **To call** a good friend. (No subject.)
3. **When** the phone rang.
(Has subject and verb but needs more information.)
4. **For example**, Saturday and Sunday.
(No verb and needs more information.)

Discuss with a partner why the fragments above need more information to be understood.

EXERCISE 1 Identify Complete Sentences and Fragments

Work alone. Read the short paragraph. Underline the complete sentences and circle the fragments. Check your answers with a partner.

When I came home, the TV was on. My friend Hiro was there. Watching a movie. I have known him for six years. Since I was 14 years old. We met in junior high school. He loves animals. For example, dogs. To have as a pet.

EXERCISE 2 Identify and Correct Fragments

Read the following fragments. Work with a partner to make them into complete sentences. Don't forget punctuation, such as a period (.) and a comma (,).

1. A brown dog.

I can see a brown dog.

2. To buy a new car.

3. Raining tomorrow.

4. Because she doesn't like horror movies.

5. For example, pizza, hamburgers and ice cream.

EXERCISE 3 Read the Model Paragraph

Work with a partner. Read the short paragraph aloud one time each. Then work alone. Circle the subjects and underline the verbs in each sentence. Sentences may have more than one verb. Then discuss your answers with your partner.

Last weekend I went to the park with my friend. We sat in the park and talked about our plans for the future. My friend said that he wants to travel in the future. He said he wants to see many places around the world. Mostly, he said he wants to visit Egypt. He is very interested in the pyramids and ancient Egypt.

EXERCISE 4 Write a Short Paragraph

Work alone. What did you do last weekend? Write 5-7 sentences describing what you did. Then circle the subject and underline the verb in each sentence.

Last weekend I

EXERCISE 5 Listen for Detail

Work with a partner. You will take turns reading aloud your short paragraphs from Exercise 4. After your partner has finished reading, fill in the chart about your partner. If you do not know the answer, ask your partner.

What did your partner do?

Where was s/he?

Who was there?

CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION

Focus on GRAMMAR Completing the sentence

Capitalization and punctuation are also vital to writing complete sentences. Here are some rules for capitalization and punctuation.

- The first letter in a sentence is **capitalized**.

She bought a new car.

- The first letter of a **proper name** is **capitalized**.

Yesterday, Miki bought a new Toyota in Yokohama.

- Complete sentences usually end with a **period**.

It is going to rain tomorrow.

- Questions end with a **question mark**.

Is it going to rain tomorrow?

- Use an **exclamation point** to add emphasis.

It rained every day for a month!

For more practice with capitalization, go to Appendix Unit 1. [→ Page XX](#)

EXERCISE 6 Capitalize and Punctuate the Sentences



Work alone. Correct the sentences below with capitalization and punctuation. Then check your answers with a partner.

- we left the hotel early in the morning

We left the hotel early in the morning.

- yuna wants to go to france more than germany

- are you sure he is from canada

- when is david going to arrive

- there is a spider in your hair

EXERCISE 7 Let's Write



This is a short writing assignment to give you practice with the skills you learned in this unit.

For each of the questions below, write six or more sentences. Use the checklist to be sure you are writing correctly.

- Who are you? Introduce yourself.
- Where are you from? Write about your city, town, or country.

✓ Checklist

- Each sentence has a subject and a verb.
- Each sentence can stand alone. It is an independent clause.
- Dependent clauses also include an independent clause.
- I capitalized the first letter of each sentence.
- I capitalized proper names of people, places and companies.
- I have punctuation at the end of each sentence.

✓ Vocabulary

Check the words you know. Review the words you do not.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clause | <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independent clause | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent clause | <input type="checkbox"/> Proper name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Complete sentence | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fragment | <input type="checkbox"/> Question mark |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Exclamation point |