

PROGRAMED TEXT

EFFECTIVE WRITING
PARTS VI - VIII

WD 54-56/OD 42-44



JANUARY 1968

UNITED STATES ARMY
PRIMARY HELICOPTER SCHOOL
FORT WOLTERS, TEXAS

PROGRAMED TEXT

PROGRAM TEXT

FILE NO:

WD 54-56/OD 42-44

PROGRAM TITLE

EFFECTIVE WRITING
PARTS VI - VIII

POI SCOPE: Part VI, an exercise in which the student demonstrates effective writing by developing effective sentences. Includes a review of the previous five parts in effective writing. Part VII, student utilization of all previous instruction to develop meaningful paragraphs demonstrating all the qualities of effective writing. Part VIII, a discussion and exercise demonstrating the six basic formats of military correspondence.

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCES:

PREPARED BY:

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DATE:

JANUARY 1968

REVISED BY:


CPT L. Willman
Fac Dev Br

DATE:

JUNE 1968

APPROVED BY:

DATE:

for  *mas*
MARTIN HEUER
LTC, CE
Dir, OCD

AUG 1968

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PREFACE

The study of the sentence progresses from a brief review of the more critical sentence parts to a thorough evaluation of sentence construction and use. The text evaluates the role of the sentence in paragraph development and you will be required to construct and to evaluate paragraphs of your own design. As a member of the military you will utilize many forms and conform to formats in your writing. This will also include the military messages.

Throughout the text you will be given situations and problems that will require responses from you. Correct examples or confirmation will follow your response in the text.

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PART VI EFFECTIVE WRITING
WD 54/OD 42
Effective Sentences

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES
WD 54/OD 42
EFFECTIVE SENTENCES

Given a subject, properly write effective sentences demonstrating correct use of speech and proper punctuation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SENTENCE

What is an effective sentence? Suppose YOU tell us by checking one of the responses below.

() 1. An effective sentence is one in which the various parts of speech are correctly used.

() 2. An effective sentence is one that communicates the idea that it was designed to communicate.

The correct response is number two. Here are two sentences. Which of these sentences, in your opinion, best communicates the idea that it was designed to communicate.

() 1. The sky is blue.

() 2. The refraction of solar illumination under specific atmospheric conditions produces an effect which the brain interprets as those wave lengths of light on the visible spectrum that we have been culturally conditioned to call "blue".

Each of the preceding sentences is equal to the other in communicating the idea that it was designed to communicate.

The first sentence states a simple fact without qualification, while the second sentence goes on to provide a scientific basis for the fact.

If sentences about a subject as the color of the sky can come in such a wide variety of form and content, what is it that should be controlling the form and content of the sentences you write?

- () 1. Your ability as a writer.
- () 2. Your reader and the use he is expected to make of the material.

While your ability as a writer will go a long way in determining the form and the content of the sentences you write, it is your reader and the use he will make of the material that should be the controlling factor in the form and content of your sentences. As an example of this, the preceding sentence contains 2 distinct ideas, an adverbial clause and main clause, and 50 words. We would not (nor would you) write that way for a group of grade school students, but it is acceptable for an USAPHC reader. But, even so, we have to admit that 50 word sentences do not normally communicate as well as shorter sentences.

Right?

A study of sentence form and content follows on the next page.

SENTENCE FORM AND CONTENT

To introduce the subject area of sentence form and content, we decided to remind you of a little poem and then show you a variation of the poem. Here is the original poem. You probably recognize it.

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November,
February has twenty-eight alone,
All the rest have thirty-one;
Excepting leap year,---That's the time
When February's days are twenty-nine.

Most of us use that poem, at one time or another, to compute the number of days in a given month. Here is another version of it. Have you heard this one or one like it?

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and no wonder,
All the rest have peanut butter
Except grandmother, and she wears gym shoes.

That is a humorous version of the first poem. What has all this to do with sentence form and content? Well, you can decide that by first deciding why the second poem is humorous. Select one of the responses below.

- () 1. The second poem is humorous because it is a nonsense rhyme.

- () 2. The second poem is humorous because it is in the form of the first poem, but it violates the logical content of the first poem.

Right, the second poem is humorous because it uses the form of the first poem, and intentionally violates the logical content of the first poem. This process is the basis of much of our humor, and, like it or not, we often do the same thing unintentionally when we write. Effective writing **REQUIRES** logical order in form, content, and continuity. Here are three narratives about the same subject, the troposphere. After you read each narrative, select one of the responses that follow.

1. The lowest level of the atmosphere is called the troposphere. This layer is only five to ten miles thick, but it contains 90 percent of the earth's atmosphere. The peak of Mount Everest, which is 29,028 feet high, is well within the upper limits of the troposphere. It is within the troposphere that most aircraft flight take place.

- () a. Both the form and content of the preceding narrative are logical.
- () b. The content of the preceding narrative is logical, but the form is illogical.
- () c. The form of the preceding narrative is logical, but the content is illogical.

In the preceding narrative, both the form and content are logical. This situation can exist only when the individual sentences are logical in form and content, and there is logical continuity between the sentences.

Here is the narrative in another form:

2. The lowest level of the atmosphere is called the troposphere.

This layer is only five to ten miles thick, but it contains James Bond, Brigitte Bardo, and the abominable snowman. The peak of Mount Everest, which is 29,028 feet high, is well supplied with abominable snowmen. It is within the troposphere that most flights of fancy take place.

- () a. The content of the preceding narrative is logical, but the form is illogical.
- () b. The form of the preceding narrative is logical, but the content is illogical.

Here is the narrative in yet another form:

3. The lowest level of the atmosphere is called the troposphere.

The peak of Mount Everest at 29,028 feet, aircraft flights, and 90 percent of the earth's atmosphere is what the troposphere contains all of or most of in its five to ten mile thickness.

() a. The content of the preceding narrative is logical, but the form is illogical.

() b. The form of the preceding narrative is logical, but the content is illogical.

In narrative number two, the form is logical (it is the same form as the first narrative), but the content is illogical.

In narrative number three, the content is logical (it is the same content as the first narrative), but the form is illogical. Your responses should have been "b." to number two and "a." to number three.

In the exercises that follow, we complete our study of sentence form and content by giving you your first opportunity to do some original writing in the text. We want you to identify and TO CORRECT a breakdown in logical form and content.

Here are three basic sentences that you are to work with. Read them carefully, and, as you read, analyze the relationship of one to another.

(1) Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. (2) USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing in which form and content must be parallel and complementary to be successful. (3) The reader can advance uniformly through successful USAPHC writing because the ideas are presented in a logical form.

Let's take them one at a time. How about the first sentence?

Select a response from the alternatives that follow.

- () 1. It is an effective lead sentence, and the idea that it communicates is a logical one. It should not be rewritten.
- () 2. It is a good lead sentence, but it is illogical in content.
- () 3. It is a poor lead sentence. It should be rewritten.

The correct response is number one. It is logical in form and content. For reasons other than taste or style, it should not be rewritten.

Here is the first sentence in the context of the second. After you have evaluate them together, select a response that applies to the second sentence.

(1) Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. (2) USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing in which form and content must be parallel and complementary to be successful.

- () 1. The second sentence merely restates the content of the first. It does nothing to advance the thought of the first sentence.
- () 2. The second sentence is an effective sentence. It does not have to be rewritten to logically follow the first.
- () 3. The idea communicated by the second sentence is illogical. It cannot, therefore, follow the logical idea of the first sentence.

The correct response is number one. The second response is not true. In isolation, it is an effective sentence, but in the context of the first sentence, it is illogical in content. The last response is untrue because the second sentence is nothing more than a restatement, in other terms, of the idea advanced in the first sentence.

We will now give you three versions of the second sentence. You are to evaluate each of them in the context of the first sentence and select the version that you prefer.

- () 1. Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. Because USAPHC writing makes form and content parallel and complementary, it is a form of Army writing.
- () 2. Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful USAPHC writing.
- () 3. Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. Because USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing, it, too, must make form and content parallel and complementary.

The form of the second sentence in choice number one is not bad, but its content is illogical. The content of the second sentence in choice number two is logical, but it is in the form of a simple declarative statement like the first sentence. There is no logical transition between the two sentences. The third version of the sentence is the best one.

Here are the two sentences as they now stand. To them, we have added the original third sentence. Does it fit in form and content?

Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. Beacuse USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing, it, too, must make form and content parallel and complementary. The reader can advance uniformly through successful USAPHC writing because the ideas are presented in logical form.

Well, does it fit? Not really. We want you to rewrite the third sentence in such a way that it logically follows the first two. Rewrite your sentence in the space provided.

Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. Because USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing, it, too, must make form and content parallel and complementary.

We cannot guess what form your sentence took, but we offer the following as our version of the third sentence. Yours could be quite different from ours and still be perfectly acceptable.

This logical presentation of ideas allows the reader to advance uniformly through USAPHC writing extracting the significant points that have been set out for him.

Here are the three original sentences followed by our version of their rewritten form. Compare the two versions carefully before going on.

Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing in which form and content must be parallel and complementary to be successful. The reader can advance uniformly through successful USAPHC writing because the ideas are presented in a logical form.

Form and content must be parallel and complementary in successful Army writing. Because USAPHC writing is a form of Army writing, it, too, must make form and content parallel and complementary. This logical presentation of ideas allows the reader to advance uniformly through USAPHC writing, extracting the significant points that have been set out for him.

Why is the second version better than the first? Because, you've heard it somewhere before; in the second version, the form and content are parallel and complementary.

TRANSITIONS WITHIN AND BETWEEN SENTENCES

In the preceding section on sentence form and content, we said that the effective writer is one who can construct effective sentences and control the relationship between sentences. We saw that careful attention to sentence form and content is necessary if the writer is to construct logical and coherent sentences. There is another feature of sentence construction that is just as important as form and content. That feature is the careful use of transitional devices within and between sentences.

To understand the role of transitions within and between sentences, let's look at the way in which the sentence has evolved through the years.

once upon a time there was no such thing as a transitional device within and between sentences spaces between words and sentences did not exist and punctuation marks were many years in the future it came to pass that some scholar contrived the idea of separating one sentence from another with a blank space it was not too long after this that another scholar hit upon the next logical step of separating the words within the sentence with blank spaces while this did much to end some of the confusion it was still a little difficult to tell where one sentence ended and another began to resolve this the period was invented. closely on the heels of the period came the capital letter to begin the sentence. We were on our

way. At this point in the evolution of the sentence it was up to a fiendishly clever or sadistic scholar to introduce internal punctuation marks, and the world, by the way, has not been the same since.

Spaces between words and sentences, periods at the end of declarative sentences, and capital letters at the beginning of sentences are so much a part of our written language that we rarely give them a second thought.

Other transitional devices, however, require more of our attention than the customary second thought. One of these devices is the whole family of internal punctuation marks, and you have seen, in Section One of this text, that the use of these marks requires conscientious effort.

The use of punctuation marks is a common way of effecting transitions within and between sentences, but an equally common and far less understood way is through the conscious use of selected words.

The selected words that we have in mind are these:

1. CONJUNCTIONS as they are used within (and occasionally between) sentences.
2. KEY WORDS AND PHRASES as they are used to establish a thematic relationship between sentences through repetition.

Let's take a look at conjunctions as transitional devices within sentences.

CONJUNCTIONS

Of all the parts of speech that are used for transitions within sentences, the most common by far is the conjunction. A conjunction is a sure sign from the writer to the reader that a transition is taking place within the sentence.

Here are the two types of conjunctions that we will examine in their role as transitional devices:

1. The COORDINATING CONJUNCTION and
2. The SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION.

In the exercises that follow, in order not to obscure the role of the conjunction as a transitional device, we have eliminated all of the sentence parts except for the conjunction and, if any, related punctuation marks. Your exercise sentences will look like this:

-----, and -----.

After each exercise sentence is presented, you will be asked to check a single response from the two that we offer.

Here is your first exercise sentence. Notice the conjunction being used, its position within the sentence, and the associated punctuation mark. All of these things are clues to the correct response in the exercise that follows the sentence.

Because -----, -----.

() 1. In the exercise sentence, "because" is a SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION. In the position that it occupies, it subordinates the information preceding the comma to the information following the comma.

() 2. In the exercise sentence, "because" is a COORDINATING CONJUNCTION. In the position that it occupies, it indicates that the information preceding the comma is equal in importance to the information following the comma.

The correct response is number one. "Because," in its position in the sentence, subordinates the entire first part of the sentence to that part of the sentence following the comma.

Here is a space with the "because" and the associated comma furnished. You construct a sentence to occupy the blank spaces.

Because _____,
_____.

We cannot begin to guess about the content of your sentence, but here is a model sentence against which you can evaluate your own.

Because we are members of the Army, it is important that we make a contribution to its mission.

Here is your second exercise sentence:

_____, and _____.

() 1. In the exercise sentence, "and" is a COORDINATING CONJUNCTION. In the position that it occupies, it indicates that the information preceding the comma is equal in importance to the information following the comma.

() 2. In the exercise sentence, "and" is a SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION. In the position that it occupies, it subordinates the information preceding the comma to the information following the comma.

The correct response is number one. The conjunction "and" in the position that it occupies tells the reader that the information preceding the comma is equal in importance to the RELATED information following the comma.

Here is a space with the "and" and the associated comma furnished. Construct a sentence to occupy the blank spaces.

_____, and

_____.

Your sentence should have consisted of two independent clauses (each having its own subject and verb), and the clauses should be

related in their context. Here is such a sentence against which you can evaluate your own:

We are all members of the Army, and it is important that we make a contribution to its mission.

There are so many conjunctions and combinations of conjunctions that can be used as transitional devices, we cannot hope to cover them all. We leave the subject of conjunctions as transitional devices with the hope that you will, in the future, pay very special attention to the way that you use conjunctions. We will now take a brief look at key words and phrases as they are used as transitional devices between sentences.

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

In order to talk about transitional devices between sentences, we have to talk about CONTINUITY. The use of key words and phrases as transitional devices is an attempt by the writer to achieve and to maintain continuity. There are many ways in which continuity can be destroyed, but we are not concerned with those ways. We are more concerned with the ways in which the writer BUILDS continuity into his sentence.

Here is a paragraph in which the continuity is good. In it, there are numerous ways in which the writer developed the continuity between his sentences. Read the paragraph, and see how many of the key words and phrases that you can find. Be ready to describe the ways

in which these key words and phrases are used as transitional devices.

Texas is a hunter's paradise. Fox, quail, and other small game abound in the piney woods of East Texas. In the High Plains of northwest Texas, coyotes, jack rabbits, and prairie dogs challenge the hunter who prefers the wide open spaces. In the south Texas hill country, scrub forests and well-traveled game trails invite him to try his hand at bagging deer. In the hills and dry washes of West Texas, the hunter must be constantly alert for desert cats and rattlesnakes as he stalks wild goats and sheep. There is probably no other place in the world in which such a diversity of game is so near at hand as in Texas.

There are at least three obvious uses of key words and phrases as transitional devices in the preceding paragraph. After you have listed them in the spaces provided below, you may check your responses against ours.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

1. The repetition of the word "Texas" in each of the sentences.
A pronoun in the place of one or more of the uses of "Texas" would have served just as well.
2. The repetition of an introductory adverbial phrase in three of the sentences. The repetition of an introductory adverbial CLAUSE (with its own subject and verb) would have accomplished the same thing. This repetition of a construction form is called PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION, and it is a very common transitional device between sentences.
3. The repetition of the word "hunter" or a substitute for this word throughout the narrative.

In the exercise that follows, we give you the opportunity to use the type of transitional devices just covered. Remember that the key to a correct use is the CONSCIOUS REPETITION of a key word or phrase or a substitute for that key word or phrase. If you want to try your hand at parallel construction, that's fine with us.

Here are four sentences about effective writing. In the form that they now exist, there is no continuity between them. They are simply isolated facts. Your job is to relate these sentences to one another through the conscious use of transitional devices. DO NOT change the order in which these sentences appear. Other than that requirement, you are allowed to make any changes you desire to make. Rewrite your sentences in the spaces provided.

1. Effective writing is hard work.
2. Effective writing requires the conscious use of selected punctuation marks.
3. Effective writing requires constant attention to details such as verb voice, sentence form and content, and the conscious use of transitional devices within and between sentences.
4. Effective writing is not child's play.

Write the revised version of the sentences in these spaces.
Make any changes you like in sentence form, but do not change the order in which the facts appear.

Evaluate your effort against a model response on the following page.

Here are two versions of the rewritten sentences. Your version could be totally unlike either of these, and still be acceptable. These are model responses only, and are furnished in order that you will have something against which to evaluate your own response.

Effective writing is hard work which requires the conscious use of selected punctuation marks. In addition to punctuation marks, the effective writer must pay constant attention to details such as verb voice, sentence form and content, and the conscious use of transitional devices within and between sentences. In sum, the effective writer knows that his task is not child's play.

In that version, we introduced the term "the effective writer" to serve as a transitional device. We combined sentences one and two into one sentence, and we repeated the reference to punctuation marks in our second sentence.

Effective writing is hard work. It requires the conscious use of selected punctuation marks, and it requires constant attention to details. Some of these details are verb voice, sentence form and content, and the conscious use of transitional devices within and between sentences. This requirement to attend to details serves to prove that effective writing is not child's play.

You identify the transitional devices we used in that version.

As we said before, it is not necessary for your version of the sentences to be like ours. What IS necessary is that your sentences be organized into a logical and coherent WHOLE, and this organization be accomplished through the conscious use of key words and phrase used as transitional devices. Obviously, this is not something on which we can place arbitrary limits. It has to come from your own desire and ability to improve your writing skills.

In this study of the basic sentence, we have purposely avoided such subject areas as word choice and word order. Subject areas similar to these are more appropriate in a grammar text.

Before going on to a study of the paragraph, be sure and study the brief review that follows on the next page.

REVIEW OF THE SENTENCE

1. AN EFFECTIVE SENTENCE IS ONE THAT COMMUNICATES THE IDEA THAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO COMMUNICATE.
2. SENTENCE FORM AND CONTENT IS PRIMARILY DECIDED BY YOUR READER AND THE USE HE IS EXPECTED TO MAKE OF THE MATERIAL.
3. EFFECTIVE WRITING REQUIRES LOGICAL ORDER IN FORM, CONTENT, AND CONTINUITY.
4. TRANSITIONAL DEVICES WITHIN AND BETWEEN SENTENCES ARE NECESSARY FOR EMPHASIS CONTROL AND THE ORDERLY PRESENTATION OF IDEAS.
5. THE CONJUNCTION IS THE MOST COMMON DEVICE USED FOR TRANSITIONS WITHIN SENTENCES.
6. THE COORDINATING CONJUNCTION IS USED TO EFFECT A TRANSITION BETWEEN EQUALLY IMPORTANT AND RELATED SENTENCE PARTS.
7. THE SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION IS USED TO SUBORDINATE ONE SENTENCE PART TO ANOTHER.
8. THE CONSCIOUS REPETITION OF KEY WORDS AND PHRASES OR SUBSTITUTES FOR THESE KEY WORDS AND PHRASES IS THE MOST COMMON DEVICE USED FOR TRANSITIONS BETWEEN SENTENCES.