

WRITING

101



English Writing 101

“Say all you have to say in the fewest possible words, or your reader will be sure to skip them, and in the plainest possible words or he will certainly misunderstand them”.

- John Ruskin (1818–1900)

Writing English is an art that requires constant practice, regular improvisation, honest feedback, and a lot of reading. It is not something that can be mastered overnight or within a span of a few weeks. You need to have a strong base in grammar, have knowledge of most literary devices used in popular literature, be aware of the nuances and contexts revolving around effective sentence construction, and also be acquainted with the modern language trends in different fields like politics, socioeconomics, finance, marketing, entertainment, sports, fine arts, academia, and literature.

For many people, writing can be an arduous experience. Just sitting in front of a computer with a blank Word doc in front of you, or pondering over to pen down the first word in your notebook can make you irritable and frustrated. You freeze, scratch your head, and keep struggling until you finally manage to scribble some words, yet the end result is not something that pleases you. But don't worry. Never put pressure on yourself thinking that the first draft will be the perfect one. That rarely happens. Even an acclaimed writer like JK Rowling had to revise her *Harry Potter* book drafts several times before she submitted it to her publisher.

Pep Talk India presents the most powerful writing tips in this pdf, distilled in a lucid and compact format for you. This book is a result of hundreds of hours of painstaking research studying the works of classic and modern writers, accumulating pieces of wisdom and advice from various legends of the literary world, as well as engagements with influential writers from academia. Whether you are a novice writer or a seasoned professional, you will immensely benefit from this instructional handbook.

This handbook covers the basic of writing i.e. punctuation, usage, diction, and organization, and includes golden nuggets of writing advice from famous and influential authors to make the learning experience more fruitful.

Once you are finished with the booklet, you will be able to express your ideas in a clear and grammatically correct manner, and eventually, gain confidence in your writing abilities.

1. Let's get down to the basics!

- a) Use plain English as much as possible. Writing long and flowery sentences is only recommended if you are working on a novel.
- b) Use simple sentence structure, with your sentence length being a maximum of two lines.
- c) If you use any unknown or technical terms, make sure you explain them so that the reader does not get confused.
- d) Whatever you write, it should be written for the needs of the audience. Your writing should connect with the reader.

The 4 points above are some of the basic rules you should keep in mind before planning to write something. Your mind should be crystal clear about what direction you intend to take and what the reader visualizes when he or she reads your text.

2. Capitalization

- a) Always capitalize the first word of a sentence. If the first word is a number, then write it as a word.
E.g. It was a sunny day today.
Ten of them were working in the fields.
- b) Capitalize the pronoun I or the contraction I'm.
E.g. The group left when I asked them to go.
Do you think I'm required there?
- c) Capitalize the first word of a quotation. Do not capitalize the first word of a partial quotation.
E.g. He asked me "When is your baby due?"
He called me "the worst excuse of a worker" he ever had.
- d) All proper nouns have to be capitalized. This includes:
Days of the week- **M**onday-**S**unday
Months- **J**anuary- **D**ecember
Holidays- **H**oli, **D**iwali, **E**id
Historical events or holidays- **R**epublic **D**ay, **I**ndependence **D**ay
Names of people and places- **R**ahul **V**erma, **T**aj **M**ahal
- e) Name of relatives (for family relationships) when used with a name:
E.g. I received a gift from **A**unt **M**ary, but not from my other aunt.
- f) Titles that precede a name should be capitalized:
E.g. **C**hief **M**inister Siddaramaiah
- g) However, titles after the name should not be capitalized:
E.g. K Siddaramaiah, chief minister of Karnataka.
- h) Do not capitalize titles used as general words:
E.g. There have been several chief ministers of the state.

'Never use jargon words like reconceptualize, demassification, attitudinally, judgmentally. They are hallmarks of a pretentious ass' - David Ogilvy

3. Periods, Question Marks, and Exclamation Points

- a) Use a period at the end of a complete sentence
E.g. I knew the boy well.
- b) If the last word in a sentence is an abbreviation that includes a period, then do not end it with another period.
E.g. Tanya and her husband lived in Texas, U.S. (← Do not use an additional full stop at the end)
- c) Questions marks and exclamation marks replace a period at the end of a sentence.
E.g. Will you go to the movie with me? (**Don't use a full stop after?**)
It was total chaos there! (**Don't use a full stop after!**)
- d) Use a question mark only after a direct question.
E.g. Shall I go with you? (**Correct**)
I am asking if I should I go with you? (**Incorrect**)
- e) Exclamation marks should be used only to express strong emotions- shock or joy. Avoid using them in formal communication.

'If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time — or the tools — to write. Simple as that.' -
Stephen King

4. Sentence construction

- a) First of all, remember that a sentence is a mix of words that makes sense on its own. Any garbled collection of words is not a sentence.
E.g. I had my dinner in the restaurant. (This sentence can be understood easily).
Cheese, toast, omelet, late dinner in restaurant (This doesn't make any sense and sounds like some cryptic puzzle)
- b) Use correct punctuation. A sentence always begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, question mark, or an exclamation mark. Remember, no sentence can be ended with a comma [,], colon [:], or a semicolon [;].
- c) A sentence should always have a verb and a subject. Verb- refers to an action being done by the subject but can also be a state.
E.g. She was **cooking** food. She **desired** to buy a fridge.

The subject can be a person or a thing. However, when the sentence is meant to be an instruction or request, there is no need to include a subject.

E.g. Maintain silence. Please sit down.

- d) **Use proper articles-** definite or indefinite. There is only one definite article in the English language i.e. **the**, and is used to refer to a specific noun.
E.g. She ate the orange. Here, 'orange' is a particular orange.
Indefinite articles (**a, an**) are used to refer to general nouns.
E.g. She ate an orange (it can be any orange).
- e) **Use prepositions properly-** many people tend to get their prepositions all muddled up because they cannot differentiate the context in which different prepositions are being used.

There are six types of prepositions used:

- 1) **For time:** **in** (months, years, century, a specific time in the past or future)
on (day, dates, particular days e.g. birthday or Independence Day)
at (time of a clock; short and precise times e.g. at lunchtime, at breakfast, at night, at sunrise/sunset, at bedtime)
- 2) **For place:** **in** (usually for someplace having a certain defined physical or virtual boundary e.g. in a school, in the building, in a room etc.)
on (for the surface of things e.g. on the map, on the roof)
at (specific places e.g. at the gate, at the edge of the terrace)
- 3) **For direction:** into, to, towards, through. These are used to convey the idea of a direction of a particular thing.
E.g. The children were going **to** the classroom.
The crocodile menacingly crawled **towards** her.
The ball went **into** the gutter.
- 4) **For agent:** by, with. When a causal relationship needs to be expressed between the noun and the action.
E.g. The draft was summarized **by** him.
- 5) **For instruments, machines, or any devices:** on, by, with the help of.
E.g. The lock was opened **with** the key.
The plants were watered **with the help** of a hosepipe.
- 6) **Prepositional verb:** Some verbs are required to be followed by a preposition. This combination is called a prepositional verb and it always has an object following the preposition.
E.g. He was **waiting for** her.
She is **listening to** music.

f) **Rules for subordinating conjunctions or dependent clauses:** Consider the following sentences-

If I did my homework earlier.

Whenever Shyam tried to explain his position.

Do the above the two sentences sound complete? No.

This is because of the presence of subordinating conjunctions like **if** and **whenever**. Following is a list of the most commonly used subordinating conjunctions.

After	Because	Even though	Once	Since	That	Until	Where
Although	Before	If	Provided that	So that	Though	When	Whereas
As	Even if	Whether	Rather than	Than	Unless	Whenever	Wherever

“I would advise anyone who aspires to a writing career that before developing his talent he would be wise to develop a thick hide.” - Harper Lee

5. Proper use of commas (,)

Using commas properly is essential to writing proper English. A comma is usually considered as a small pause but owing to improper knowledge, is often misused by most people. Here are some precise rules when to use this punctuation mark in a sentence:

- a) **A comma is used before any coordinating conjunction (and, for, or, but, nor, so, yet) that connects two independent clauses** e.g. I went swimming, *and* I saw an otter. You might think here that you don't need to say 'I' again but that will make the second part i.e. "and I saw an otter" not an independent clause because it would lack the subject 'I' and thus, won't require a comma. It will simply be 'I went swimming and saw an otter.'
- b) **Comma splice mistake-** This is a mistake made often when you want to join two independent clauses. **E.g.** We were out of medicines, I went to the pharmacy. In this sentence, a comma is not enough to connect the two independent clauses, and a conjunction or semicolon should be used to make it sound better.
- c) **A comma is always used after a dependent clause that begins a sentence as well as after introductory adverbs.** E.g. - when I went swimming, I saw an otter. However, if a sentence is ended by a dependent clause, it no longer needs a comma.
E.g. Finally, I went to the party.
Unsurprisingly, I saw many people in the park in the morning.
- d) **As a general rule, a comma should not separate the subject from its verb.**
E.g. My friend Shyam, is a wonderful dancer. (**Incorrect**)
My friend Shyam is a wonderful dancer. (**Correct**)

- e) Don't use a comma when you are making a comparison.**
E.g. Paperbacks are more expensive, than ebooks. **(Incorrect)**
Paperbacks are more expensive than ebooks. **(Correct)**
- f) Commas are used before and after interrupters or parenthetical elements.**
Interrupters or parenthetical elements are phrases that provide additional information about a sentence but can be removed without changing the meaning of a sentence. If these elements appear at the end of a sentence then a comma is used just before the element.
E.g. It was sadly the last day of college. **(Incorrect)**
It was, sad, the last day of college. **(Correct)**
It was the last day of college, sadly. **(Correct)**
E.g. Vishal unlike Mohit was very hard-working. **(Incorrect)**
Vishal, unlike Mohit, was very hard-working. **(Correct)**
- g) Use commas when attributing quotes.**
If the attribution comes before the quote, put the comma outside the quotation marks.
E.g. The man said, "I saw an aeroplane."
if the attribution comes after the quote, place the comma inside the quotation marks.
E.g. "I saw an aeroplane," said the man.
- h) Use comma when the first word of a sentence is 'yes' or 'no'.**
E.g. Yes, I have completed my work.
- i) When you directly address someone, then also use a comma.**
E.g. Shikha, are you done with the project?
- j) Use a comma before the word 'but' if it is joining two independent clauses. However, don't use the comma if it doesn't join two independent clauses.**
E.g. Mansi is a good singer but she is an even better dancer. **(Incorrect)**
Mansi is a good singer, but she is an even better dancer. **(Correct)**
E.g. The headmaster was strict, but fair. **(Incorrect)**
The headmaster was strict but fair. **(Correct)**
- k) When a list has only two items then don't use a comma. If it has more than two items, the use a comma.**
E.g. My cat Cleo is cute, and smart. **(Incorrect)**
My cat Cleo is cute and smart. **(Correct)**
My cat Cleo is cute, smart, and adorable. **(Correct)**
- l) Use of Oxford comma.**
When three or more items are listed in a sentence, it is recommended to use a final comma before 'and'. This is known as the serial comma or Oxford comma.
E.g. I was thankful to my colleagues, my mentors and my parents. **(without Oxford comma)**
I was thankful to my colleagues, my mentors, and my parents. **(with Oxford comma)**

The use of the Oxford comma has been deemed as optional by many but it helps distinguish between the last two items in the list. If you don't place the comma before 'and' (like in the first sentence) then it can seem to the reader that your parents and your mentors are the same.

m) Comma before parenthesis.

A comma is placed after the closing parenthesis but not before the opening or closing parenthesis.

E.g. After opening the rusted aluminum box (which had only a single hinge), Ravi had a hard time closing it again. **(Correct)**

After opening the rusted aluminum box (which had only a single hinge,) Ravi had a hard time closing it again. **(Incorrect)**

n) Comma is used with 'as well as' and 'such as' if it is associated with a nonrestrictive clause

E.g. Spelling mistakes, as well as grammatical errors, can distract readers.

Please proofread for grammatical mistakes as well as spelling (Comma not required).

E.g. Coniferous trees, such as pine and spruce, do not drop their needles in the winter.

Trees such as pine and spruce do not drop their needles in the winter. (Comma not required).

"Writing a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout with some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand." - **George Orwell**

6. Use of colons and semicolons

Colons and semicolons look similar, but have different functions. The colon is usually used to provide a pause before introducing certain related information or a list of items. The semicolon is used to introduce a break in a sentence that is stronger than a comma but not as final as a full stop.

- a) **Colons are used to introduce a list of items**, as long as the part before the colon is a complete sentence.

E.g. We packed all the items for the trip: hiking gear, camera, inflatable tent, sunscreen

- b) **Use of colons to introduce a formal quotation**

E.g. Steve Jobs made this remarkable comment at the 2005 Stanford commencement address: "You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers."

- c) **Colons showing a subordinate relationship**

i) Between two sentences when the second explains the first -

E.g. Rahul ignored the phone: He knew it was from a tele-caller again.

ii) Between the title and subtitle of a book -

E.g. Hacking 101: A Complete Guide to Ethical Hacking

- iii) Between hour and minute
E.g. 12:30 AM
- d) **Semicolons are used to connect two clauses** that could be separate sentences to form a longer sentence
E.g. Rohan calls football passions; his parents consider it a waste of time.
- e) **Semicolons are used to join two clauses with words like ‘therefore’, ‘however’, ‘in addition, or ‘on the other hand’**

“Words can be like X-rays if you use them properly--they'll go through anything. You read and you're pierced.” - Aldous Huxley

7. Use of apostrophes (‘) and dashes (-)

Apostrophes convey key information in the written form, while dashes are used to emphasize something. Dashes should be used sparingly.

Apostrophes

- a) **To show possession**

Singular nouns (add ‘s)	Plural nouns ending in s (add ‘)	Plural nouns not ending in s
girl’s toy (the toy is the girl’s)	boys’ bicycles	women’s schedules
child’s play	kids’ bedrooms	children’s playground
gentleman’s coat	ladies’ skirts	men’s department
doctor’s attendant	players’ rooms	people’s choice

- b) **Used in words showing periods of time or amounts of money when used as possessive adjectives**
E.g. day’s pay, month’s vacation, afternoon’s work
- c) **When a possessive pronoun (like my, mine, our, ours, your, yours etc) is used as an adjective, no apostrophe is required.**
E.g. This is their plan. The plan is theirs.
This book must be yours.

Dashes

A dash is different from a hyphen. A dash can be considered to be two hyphens i.e. –

- a) **Use of dash to indicate a sudden break in thought or to insert a comment**
E.g. Here is your lunch and- look out for that bee!
- b) **To emphasize on explanatory material. It is not necessary but you can.**
E.g. We spend our summer vacation in the U.S. – California, to be exact.
- c) **To indicate omitted letters or words**
E.g. Oh da – did you mail the report to the client?
- d) **To connect a beginning phrase to the rest of sentence**
E.g. Life Coach, Facilitator, Motivator – these are the terms that describe Pep Talk leader Rocky Saggoo.

“If you can tell stories, create characters, devise incidents, and have sincerity and passion, it doesn’t matter a damn how you write.” - Somerset Maugham

8. Use of quotation marks

Quotation marks are used when you want to quote or use the words of someone else in your writing. There are different rules governing their usage. The important ones are listed below:

- a) **When you want to include a direct word-to-word quotation**

E.g. At Pep Talk India, we live by the golden words of Steve Jobs: “Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected.”
- b) **The first word in a complete quotation is always capitalized, no matter what it’s location in the sentence.**

E.g. The underlying principle behind all businesses is what Jeff Bezos believes in: “If you do build a great experience, customers tell each other about that. Word of mouth is very powerful.”
- c) **Quoted material that continues a sentence should not be capitalized**

E.g. Khushi Singh told the students to “get over their fears” and “be more optimistic”.

- d) The quoted text should end with a comma, if it comes at the beginning of a sentence. This holds true even if it is only one word.**

E.g. “I don’t know,” the station master said when asked about the whereabouts of the driver.

- e) Commas and periods are ALWAYS used inside a quotation. Most people become confused regarding this, so take note.**

E.g. She yelled at her husband, “Hurry up or we will miss the train.”

- f) Use of question marks within quotation comes out of logic. Is the question included within the quoted text? Then use it within the text. Does the question come outside the quotation marks? Then use it outside the text.**

E.g. He asked, “Will you be my partner?”
Do you agree with his statement that “Indians are gullible fools”?

- g) For quotations within quotations, use single quotation marks**

E.g. My mom told me: “There is nothing that stops you from being successful. You just need to be patient. Remember Steve Job’s quote ‘If you really look closely, most overnight successes took a long time.’”

- h) Quotes are also used when you have to emphasize on a technical term and also when you want to make a sarcastic remark**

E.g. The oil-extraction method used is called ‘fracking’.

E.g. Airtel really has the “best” customer service. They kept me waiting for several days for a solution.

“It is perfectly okay to write garbage – as long as you edit brilliantly.” ~ C. J. Cherryh

9. Use of parentheses and brackets

Parentheses or () are widely used by writers to convey additional information in a sentence. They can be considered as a mild digression from the subject and the information included within it is normally not integral to the sentence.

On the other hand, brackets or [] (which many people confuse for parenthesis) are used mainly in quoted material.

Parentheses ()

a) Use parentheses to enclose additional information that is not too important to disclose

E.g. The student answered (after 10 minutes) the teacher that he did not understand the subject.

b) If some information ends a sentence then the period is included after the parentheses

E.g. I received a handsome bonus (INR 60k).

c) When a complete sentence is written within the parentheses then a period should be used.

E.g. Please read the report. (You will be shocked.)
Please read the report (you will be shocked).

d) Don't use a comma before or after parentheses. The sentence should be such that it should read in a flow without any commas if the parentheses are removed.

E.g. Use a fountain pen (a good one from Parker would work well) for the report.
If you remove the parentheses, it becomes 'use a fountain pen for the report.

Note: Commas are used after the closing parenthesis only if the sentence really requires it.

Brackets []

A bracket allows a writer to correct mistakes, add explanatory information, edit a quote to fit in a sentence, or stress on a word in bold or italics. Like the parentheses, brackets cannot change the meaning of the quote.

a) Brackets are considered as interruptions. They are mostly added by someone else to explain or comment on the quote.

E.g. Donald Trump shook hands with [his son] Eric.

- b) **When a quoted material has some spelling or grammatical mistake or the text sounds confusing, then the term sic is used in italics with non-italic brackets (unless the text is itself in italics).**

E.g. The wrestler said, “I would rather retire than [sic] fight with my teammate.
In the above sentence, the use of sic indicates that then was used erroneously instead of than.

- c) **Brackets are also used to translate a quote, indicate a change in capitalization, remove objectionable content etc.**

E.g. “The first question that the foreign exchange kid asked was qu'est-ce que c'est [What's going on]”
The military instructor commanded the recruits to “get their [expletive] moving.”

“Any man who keeps working is not a failure. He may not be a great writer, but if he applies the old-fashioned virtues of hard, constant labor, he'll eventually make some kind of career for himself as writer.” ~ Ray Bradbury

10. Verb tense

Verbs describes actions or states of being. They drive the written word and bring it to life. Therefore, the errors related to them are also the most common. Using verbs properly and avoiding errors concerning them is reflective of a proper understanding of the language and this is also tested in several civil service exams.

Principal parts of Verbs

Verbs have three principal parts:

- a) **Present-** the form that completes the sentence, “Today, I _____”
- b) **Past-** the form that completes the sentence, “Yesterday, I _____”
- c) **Past Participle-** the form of that would complete the sentence, “Often, I have _____”

Below is the table that shows the principal parts of verbs that are often misused.

Three Principal Parts of Verbs		
Present	Past	Past Participle
do	Did	done
go	Went	gone
see	Saw	seen
drink	Drank	drunk
break	Broke	broken
bring	brought	brought
choose	Chose	chosen
know	Knew	Known
wear	Wore	Worn
write	Wrote	written

There are three basic Verb tenses: **present, past, and future**. When you write, you need to keep these tenses consistent. Use the present with the present, the past with the past, and the future with the future. Following is an example of the wrong usage of tenses:

E.g. Mohan opened the car and looks for his keys. (**Incorrect**)

E.g. Mohan opened the car and looked for his keys. (**Correct**)

Now, each of these three tenses have three subdivisions: **progressive, perfect, and progressive perfect**. They are all explained in detail below:

a) Present tense

Present Tense			
Present	Progressive	Perfect	Perfect Progressive
shows an action happening now	shows action continuing now	shows action that began in the past continues now	shows action that began in the past
Writers ask for grants.	Writers are asking for grants.	Writers have asked for grants.	Writers have been asking for grants.
Carbon pollutes the air.	Carbon is polluting the air.	Carbon has polluted the air.	Carbon has been polluting the air.

b) Past tense

Past Tense			
Past	Progressive	Perfect	Perfect Progressive
occurred in the past	continuing action in the past	completed prior to another action	continuing action started in the past
Authorities spoke to the management.	Authorities were speaking to the management.	Authorities had spoken to the management.	Authorities had been speaking to the management.
The journalist covered the event.	The journalist was covering the event.	The journalist had covered the event.	The journalist had been covering the event.

c) Future tense

Future Tense			
Future	Progressive	Perfect	Perfect Progressive
action that will happen	continuing action that will happen	action that will be completed by a certain time	continuing action that will be completed by a certain time
We will begin the political campaign.	Everyone will be participating in the political campaign.	By summer, we will have participated in the political campaign.	MLAs will have been witnessing the participation in the political campaign throughout the year.
Media will cover this case.	Media will be covering this case.	By summer, the entire media will have written about this case.	Media will have been covering the case throughout the year.

“Words are a lens to focus one’s mind.” ~ Ayn Rand

11. Using verbs to write more effectively

If you are keen to become a great writer then you need to write in a manner that makes your writing more lively and interesting for the reader. A drab or dull writing style is usually ignored by the reader as it can make anyone lose interest pretty quickly.

Active vs Passive voice

A sentence is active when the subject of a sentence performs the action of the verb. Using active verbs makes your writing more interesting and conversational. In a sentence with an active verb, the person or thing that performs the action is named before the verb, or the action word(s).

E.g. I was taken to my first Comic-Con by my father. **(Passive Verb)**

E.g. My father took me to my first comic Con. **(Active verbs)**

Verb Tense	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Present	The secretary opens the mail.	The mail is opened by the secretary.
Past	The secretary opened the mail.	The mail was opened by the secretary.
Future	The secretary will open the mail.	The mail will be opened by the secretary.
Present Perfect	The secretary has opened the mail.	The mail has been opened by the secretary.
Past Perfect	The secretary had opened the mail.	The mail had been opened by the secretary.
Future Perfect	The secretary will have opened the mail.	The mail will have been opened by the secretary.

When should you use Passive voice?

a) **When the object is more important than the agent of action (the doer)**

There are times when the object is the focus rather than the doer e.g. in scientific writing.

E.g. The two-inch incision is made above the right pubic bone. **(Passive)**

The doctor makes the two-inch incision above the right pubic bone. **(Active)**

Passive is better in this case because the operation is more important than the doctor.

b) When the agent of action (doer) is unknown or secret

When you want to protect the identity of a source.

E.g. It was reported that the incident took place in the metro.

When you don't know who the perpetrator of an action was.

E.g. Punjab National Bank was robbed...

c) When passive voice results in shorter sentences without deflecting from the meaning.

Normally, active voice is shorter and more concise than passive voice. However, in some cases, using the passive voice results in a shorter sentence.

E.g. The police apprehended the criminal, the detectives interrogated him, and the jury indicted him. **(Active)**

The criminal was apprehended, interrogated, and indicted **(Passive)**.

Other verb constructions to follow

a) Using state-of-being verbs

State-of-being verbs are all the forms of be: *am, is, are, was, were*, and so on. Use state-of-being verbs when you have to say small or trivial things. When you have to state more complex or interesting ideas, bigger and better verbs should be used.

E.g. The sunshine was bright **(State-of-being verb)**

E.g. The sun shone brightly **(Action verb)**

b) Avoiding unnecessary auxiliary verbs

There are many auxiliary verbs like have, had, is, are, was, were, will, would etc. If you don't require to use one, then don't.

Unnecessary Auxiliary Verbs	Correct Version
After lunch they would meet in the lounge.	After lunch they met in the lounge.
The mercury was rising steadily.	The mercury rose steadily.
Every night the gates will close at 8 pm.	Every night the gates close at 8 pm.

c) Using lively, interesting verbs

If you want to write more efficiently, then use words that have more life to them.

E.g. Violent cartoons are harmful to children's emotional development and sense of reality (**Dull**).

E.g. Violent cartoons stunt children's emotional development and distort their sense of reality (**Lively**).

"Ideas are like rabbits. You get a couple and learn how to handle them, and pretty soon you have a dozen." - **John Steinbeck**

12. Subject-verb agreement

Barring some exceptions, subjects and verbs are usually in agreement with each other, be it speaking or writing. We will discuss in detail those exceptions here:

Agreement between noun subjects and verbs

Usually, when a subject is singular then the verb is also singular and when it is plural, the verb is plural. When you are not sure that the verb is singular or plural, then remember this:

'Verbs ending in s are usually singular'

Singular	Plural
One person speaks.	Four people speak.
One person does.	Four people do.
One person was.	Four people were.

Agreement between pronoun subjects and verbs

Pronoun subjects are confusing for even seasoned speakers. Some pronouns are always singular while others are always plural. Some can be singular or plural.

➤ Following pronouns are always singular:

Each	Anybody	Everyone	One
Either	Anyone	No one	Somebody
Neither	Everybody	Nobody	Someone

- Following pronouns are always plural and require a plural verb:

Both, few, many, several

- Following pronouns can be singular/plural depending on the prepositional phrase that follows them:

All, any, most, none, some

Singular	Plural
All of the work is finished.	All of the jobs are finished.
Is any of the pizza left?	Are any pieces of the pizza left?
Most of the grass has become brown and dull.	Most of the blades of the grass have become brown and dull.
None of the time was wasted.	None of the minutes were wasted.
Some of the fruit was spoiled.	Some of the oranges were spoiled.

Questions and sentences beginning with 'There' or 'Here'

When a sentence asks a question or begins with the words there or here, the subject follows the verb.

Incorrect	Correct
What is the conditions of the agreement?	What are the conditions of the agreement?
Why is his reports always so disorganized?	Why are his reports always so disorganized?
Here's the records you requested	Here are the records you requested
There is four people in the queue.	There are four people in the queue.

Inverted Sentences

Inverted sentences contain subjects that follow, rather than precede the verbs. See the examples below:

Incorrect	Correct
Beside the front desk stands three new printing machines.	Beside the front desk stand three new printing machines.
Suddenly, out of the blue comes three large notes	Suddenly, out of the blue come three notes.
Along with our highest recommendation goes our best wishes in your new job.	Along with our highest recommendation go our best wishes in your new job.

“A writer without interest or sympathy for the foibles of his fellow man is not conceivable as a writer.” ~ **Joseph Conrad**

13. Use of pronouns

Pronouns and Antecedents

The noun represented by a pronoun is called its ‘antecedent’. An antecedent comes before the pronoun.

E.g. The wage laborers received *their* paychecks

Remember, the pronoun is singular if the antecedent is singular, and plural when plural.

Pronoun Case

Have you faced problems while using I, me, and my?

They are examples of the first person singular pronoun: nominative (I), objective (Me), and possessive (my)

Personal Pronoun Case		
Nominative	Objective	Possessive
I	Me	My
We	Us	Our
You	You	Your
He	Him	His
She	Her	Her
They	Them	Their
It	It	Its

Nominative case pronouns

The pronouns in the first column are used as subjects or as complements following linking verbs (am, is, are, was, were – any form of be).

E.g. They left a few hours early in order to reach the destination. **(Subject)**

I looked all over the town for the type of paper you wanted. **(Subject)**

Objective case pronouns

These are used as objects after an action verb or as prepositional objects.

E.g. The customer support gave **her** an answer over the phone. [follows an action verb]

We went to lunch with Rohit and **him**. [object of the preposition with]

Possessive case pronouns

The pronouns showing ownership (column 3 of the table) such as mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, and theirs.

E.g. They say the engine won't work for those cars. Well, hers did.

"If my doctor told me I had only six minutes to live, I wouldn't brood. I'd type a little faster. - Isaac Asimov

14. Understanding modifiers

Modifiers are words and phrases that describe other words. In the English language, they play a crucial role in communication and using them is an essential part of writing well.

Words that describe nouns and pronouns are called **adjectives**.

Words that describe verbs, adjectives, or adverbs are called **adverbs**.

Modifiers as adjectives

When a modifier is used as an adjective, it modifies a noun or a pronoun.

- Vishal caught a **large** fish. (large modifies fish)
- Vishal caught **a** large fish. (a modifies the fish)
- Vishal caught another one. (another modifies the pronoun one)

Modifiers as adverbs

When a modifier is used as an adverb, it modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb.

- Vishal **accidentally** caught a small fish. (accidentally modifies caught)
- Vishal caught an **incredibly** small fish. (incredibly modifies small)
- Vishal **supposedly** accidentally caught a small fish. (supposedly modifies accidentally)

Modifiers as phrases and clauses

- Vishal caught a fish **smaller than a thimble**. (the phrase modifies the noun fish)
- Vishal caught a fish **of tiny proportions**. (this is a prepositional phrase that modifies fish)
- **When alone**, Vishal tried to catch fish. (this is an adverbial phrase that modifies tried)
- When we left him alone, Vishal **set up** his rod to catch fish. (this is an adverbial clause that modifies set up)

“A good writer possesses not only his own spirit but also the spirit of his friends.” ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

15. Understanding diction

Effective writing means to be concise and precise. While diction mainly refers to the pronunciation of words, it also refers to which words you choose.

Here is what all you need to take care with diction:

Wordiness

Excess words are not only a waste of space but can also distort the message and distract the reader from the message. Make your sentences as concise as possible.

E.g. It was decided that the temple would set up a committee for the purpose of conducting a search for a new priest. **(Wordy)**

The temple set up a committee to search for a new priest. **(Concise)**

Buzzwords and fluffy modifiers

There are many buzzwords like *aspect, element, factor, situation, scope, type, kind, forms* etc that probably sound important but add no real meaning to a sentence.

There are many modifiers also like *absolutely, definitely, really, important, very, current, major* that add length but seldom any meaning.

E.g. The *nature* of the appraisal system is a *very important matter* that can *definitely* have a *really significant* impact on the morale *aspect* of an employee's attitude. *Aspects* of our current appraisal policy make it *absolutely necessary* that we undergo a *significant* change. **(This sentence is filled with buzzwords and fluffy modifiers that are highlighted in italics).**

The appraisal system can affect employee morale. Our policy needs to be changed. **(Revised and concise)**

Redundancy

Repeating sentences or words that convey the same meaning is another writing trap known as 'redundancy'. There are many such cases below:

- Enclosed *with this letter*- Enclosed itself means it is in this letter
- Revert *back*- Revert means to get back. This becomes get back back!
- Past *history*- History is always in the past!
- Compulsory *requirement*- If it is compulsory, it would by default be required, right?
- Weather *outside*- When you refer to weather, it always refers to the conditions outside!

Jargon

When you are in a certain trade or profession, there is a tendency to use technical and wordy that is filled with passive voice, acronyms, technical terms, and abstract words. Jargons are used by writers to sound educated and sophisticated but they mostly come across as pretentious and muddies up the sentences.

E.g. Rohan exhibits a tendency to engage inappropriately in verbal social interaction during class time. His grades are deficient because he suffers from an unwillingness to complete supplementary assignments between class periods. **(Filled with technical jargon)**

Rohan talks in class when he isn't supposed to. He has low grades because he doesn't do his homework. **(No unnecessary jargon)**

Refer to a group by the term it prefers

Language changes as per the evolving social structures. What was deemed acceptable some fifty years ago could be seemingly offensive today. **For example:**

- Black people were referred to as 'colored' or 'negro' earlier, but now the acceptable terms are African American and Black.
- Asian is used instead of Oriental.
- Latino/Latina is used for males and females from Central and Latin America, respectively.
- It is best to avoid mentioning the race unless it is absolutely necessary to your narrative.

Don't use insensitive language for people with disabilities

There are many celebrities who suffer from different disabilities that create physical, emotional, or mental impairments. For example, actor Tom Cruise and singer Cher suffer from dyslexia, a processing disorder that impedes their ability to read. But when you talk about them, would you focus on their disabilities or their success and influence in the entertainment industry?

Do not use insensitive or biased language for those with disabilities.

Biased: the deaf

Nonbiased: people with hearing impairments

Biased: the mentally retarded

Nonbiased: people with mental retardation

Don't use language that is offensive to older people

Biased: old people, geezer, aged

Nonbiased: senior citizen, elderly, retired person, pensioner

Avoid sexist language

Sexist language is one of the most problematic ones today. It assigns gender roles and qualities to people on the basis of stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes.

Example:

Don't cry like a girl!

Grow some balls and be a man!

Such phrases should be expunged from your writing.

Other offensive expressions are those that exclude one sex. **For instance,**

Sexist	Nonbiased
chairman	chair, moderator
female lawyer	lawyer
fireman	firefighter
male nurse	nurse
policeman	police officer
waitress	server
old wives' tale	superstition

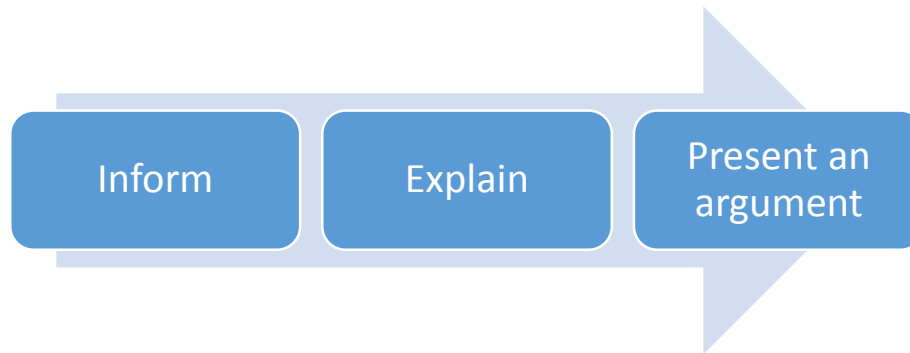
NOTE: Members of the same ethnic or religious group may sometimes call each other by offensive racial terms. DON'T COPY THEM.

"The unread story is not a story; it is little black marks on wood pulp. The reader, reading it, makes it live: a live thing, a story." ~ **Ursula K. Le Guin**

16. Communicating your ideas

Once you become thoroughly adept with all the grammar rules and semantics of writing, it is time to use your knowledge to pen down your ideas in a logical and effective manner to create the maximum impact on the readers.

Through writing, you seek to do one of the following three things:



Let's read in detail all the **three communication processes**:

- **Writing to inform**

Effective informational writing means to directly get to the point, instead of beating around the bush with warm-ups and introductions. This is particularly prevalent in business writing, where you have to clearly communicate the facts or data, instead of being vague.

Here is a seven-step process to help you out:

1. **Summarize the main idea**
2. **Identify your audience**
3. **Brainstorm on necessary information**
4. **Organisation of information**
5. **Write introduction**
6. **Presenting the idea**
7. **Write logically**

Writing to Inform
Summarize the main idea in a single sentence. If the information includes statistics or facts then try to briefly describe the purpose of the info.
Identify your audience. Who will be reading your write-up? Your peers? Your superiors? Your client? Maintain an appropriate tone and attitude.
Brainstorm all the information that can be included in the communication. Identify and collate all resources to have the most credible information.
Organize your information in a structured manner. This can be done through the spatial order, chronological order, logical order, general to specific and vice-versa
Start writing. Introduce the purpose of your communication through a sentence or a brief paragraph.
Develop your ideas and present them in whatever form that seems feasible as per the topic. It can be in the form of a list, paragraphs with bullets etc.
Don't clutter your writing with excess words or information. Be as clear and logical as possible. Aim to convey more info with minimum words

- **Writing to explain**

When you have to explain something to someone, say a policy or action, or describe a product, then you have to follow in a similar manner to the informational process, with some additional rules:

- *Present the steps, points, and arguments in a chronological manner.*
- *Use facts and examples to support every point.*
- *Focus on introduction and conclusion. Many times, readers just skip over the main body to get an idea of what the article is trying to convey.*

- **Writing to persuade**

One of the most common types of writing is when you have to make a clear and convincing argument. Being able to write persuasively involves three common characteristics: **logical order, solid support, and credibility.**

- **Logical order:** If your arguments are solid but all over the place, then a reader won't be able to recognize or follow them. Carefully organize your arguments and make your introduction and conclusion solid so that the maximum impact is created on the reader.
- **Solid support:** Your arguments must have strong convictions but also be backed by solid support. You must cite examples, facts, and statistics, some respected authority in the field, and use familiar analogies.
- **Credibility:** Your writing should be trustworthy and be credible. No matter what the written communication is- a political piece, a critical opinion on social mores, you must establish credibility with the reader. It can be done in the following ways:

a) **Demonstrate your knowledge of the subject**

You must have personal experience on the subject so that your perspective is considered reliable. If you have no personal experience then you should show that you have used reliable, neutral sources and your views are based on them.

b) **Be fair and objective**

You must take into account all the significant viewpoints. Convince the reader that you see the merit in other arguments and perspectives. You should show that you have carefully examined all evidence, even those ones that don't support your view.

c) **Seek areas of agreement**

If your ultimate objective is a compromise, say, on some controversial topic, then find out common viewpoints and build trust and credibility on common ground.

"There's no such thing as writer's block. That was invented by people in California who couldn't write." ~ Terry Pratchett

17. 5 important tips to follow up

Once you have thoroughly mastered the grammatical concepts mentioned in steps **1-16**, it is time to ensure that your write-up is smooth and impactful. Use the following tips when you embark on your writing journey:

a) **Use pyramid construction**

Get to the point using the pyramid style. Introduce 'who, what, when, where, and why' in the first paragraph and develop supporting information for it in the subsequent paragraphs.

b) **Use topic sentences**

A topic sentence, which is usually the first sentence of the introductory paragraph, contains the main idea that is to be developed throughout the rest of the article.

c) **Write short paragraphs**

If you want your writing to be compact, concise and livelier, then make the habit of writing short paragraphs. Your thoughts will be succinct and better-organized, and the overall content will be more readable

d) **Use transitional phrases**

When someone reads your write-up then they should effortlessly move from one place to another. This particular place can be a location of a scene, a spot in time, or an area of discussion. The transition should be done in a smooth and subtle manner and should be able to connect the reader to different bodies of information with ease.

e) **Don't explain when there is no need**

Many times, writers pen down long-winded and unnecessary sentences simply because they feel that short phrases have not conveyed enough information. For example, if a person is driving to a certain place then you need not mention that he got into this car, switched on the ignition, reached so and so place etc.

Simply say that the person drove to that particular place.

“Write. Rewrite. When not writing or rewriting, read. I know of no shortcuts.” ~ Larry L. King

18. 12 questions you should ask yourself once your write-up is complete

Once you are complete with your first draft, you need to pass it through the following sieve comprised of 12 questions. This will help you determine whether your write-up is fit for publication while allowing you to analyze your writing style, grammar structure et al:

Q1. Have I written a catchy headline?

The title of your article or essay should grab eyeballs immediately else your prospective readers will skip the entire thing.

Q2. Is my introduction interesting and relevant?

The introductory paragraph should start with an eye-opening anecdote or some shocking facts or statistics to grip the reader. The sentences in the first paragraph should also be germane to your topic and not go in an altogether different tangent.

Q3. Have I used paragraphs appropriately?

Do not write in huge text chunks. Space out your write-up using paragraphs. For more information, refer to this article that helps you write using a 5-paragraph structure.

Q4. Have I used appropriate verb tenses?

Know the proper verb tenses-past, present, and future, their types and usage.

Q5. Is my point of view clear?

The reader should not get alienated with abstract concepts or too many references. Your message should be crystal clear and easy to understand.

Q6. Have I stayed on the topic and not wandered?

Do not beat around the bush or start talking in detail about an unrelated topic. Stay on the topic. Do not deviate.

Q7. Have I included interesting comparisons?

People love comparisons. If you are writing how a certain thing is so harmful or useful for the society then make apt comparisons to include some context

Q8. Have I avoided slang words?

Unless the content demands it, avoid using slang words. It makes one look unprofessional.

Q9. Have I repeated any words or ideas unnecessarily?

Don't make the article too verbose and filled with unnecessary repetitions of ideas. It can make the reader lose interest. Your thoughts and ideas should be organized in a logical sequence.

Q10. Have I proofread my work twice and sorted out all punctuation errors?

Any typo, spelling mistake, or grammatical error can really damage your credibility as a writer. Proofread as many times as possible and make sure there are no punctuation errors.

Q11. Does my write-up have an effective conclusion?

Your conclusion should be apt and be a logical consequence of your topic. It can offer a suggestion, a solution, or an interesting insight that should make the reader think.

Q12. Is my work ready for presentation?

Imagine you are writing a best-selling novel and you have to present an excerpt to a group of publishers. You would write as if your life depended on it. Make sure your write-up is chiseled and polished to perfection!

WRITING SAMPLES

In this section of the book we will learn how to put everything studied in previous section into practice. As it is imperative to write purposefully and keep practicing to improve your overall writing style. In order to bring finesse to your write-up you can take help of these samples but remember instructions and ideas encapsulated in Writing 101 are only meant to guide you to come up with new ways to accomplish your writing assignments as writing is a creative process. Here we will look at various writing samples viz:-

- > **Formal Email**
- > **Informal Email**
- > **Resume**
- > **Cover Letter**
- > **Blog**

FORMAL EMAIL TEMPLATE

Email to exec.businessdev@dac.com

(Executive Head, Business Development,
DAC Corps, Pune – MH)

Subject – Quarterly sales report (Q2 2018)

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing this email to apprise you about the second quarter sales figures for year 2018. Based on the communication I had with your sales representative of the concerned department, I have also attached sales report for the preceding financial year for bringing out meaning comparison and putting things in perspective.

Kindly contact me on the email provided in case you require more information or need further clarification.

Regards,

ABz

Manager, Financial Services

Apostle Enterprises Z3

Email: abfinserve@apostlez.com

Learn more about formal email writing from our blog

[Business English: Effective email writing skills](#)

INFORMAL EMAIL TEMPLATE

Email to closed one

Subject: Glad Tidings

Hi dear,

I hope everything is well at your end. I just wanted to tell you that recently Payal and I moved to Pune. After spending wonderful three years in Delhi, it's kind of a fresh start for both of us. We're sorry, we could make it to your big day but our best wishes will always be there with you. It'd just great if you could visit us in this part of the world. The weather here is really great, enjoying it immensely. And many thanks for the gift.

Hope to hear from you soon. I'm sending you the photographs I captured during recent shoot.

Take care,

Amit

Learn more about informal email writing from our blog

[Writing informal email: Skill for life](#)

RESUME TEMPLATE

Resume writing

Resume is snapshot of your academic-cum-professional track record that is presented to the potential employer even before you appear in an interview for that particular position. In this backdrop, writing and developing resume is of paramount importance in the ever competitive world of business. Before we go through sample resume, let us look at the difference between a CV (Curriculum Vitae) and a resume.

A resume or résumé is brief document highlighting the candidate's professional profile in a single page. The purpose of a resume is to make it easier for interviewer to peruse through vital career details without going into all the information. The job seekers have to adopt and adapt their resume to every position they wish to apply for. Resume gives bird's eye view of interviewee's professional journey. When it comes to resume writing, the old adage "less is more" stands perfectly valid.

On the other hand, a CV is more detailed professional history of the candidate highlighting the whole career journey in chronological order. The length of a CV can go beyond two pages as it is fairly detailed document. In most cases, the CV remains the same and changes are brought in accompanying cover letter according to the profile applied for. Now let us look at sample resume of a soft skills trainer.

Learn more about resume writing from our blog

[Use these words in your resume to impress your potential employer interview skills](#)

SAMPLE RESUME

ABC

Mobile: +91 98888 98888

Email: abc.canditate1@mail.com

EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

Masters in Business Administration MBA, (2011-2013)
JIMS, Lucknow

Bachelor of Commerce B.Com, (2008-2011)
Lucknow University, Lucknow

Higher Secondary, Delhi Public School, Lucknow (2008)

Secondary, Delhi Public School, Lucknow (2006)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Trainer, **Feb 2015 – Present**
XYZ Corps,

- Handling Trainings (Online, Instructor Led Trainings, External trainings, project trainings) India and Overseas of the company.
- Training Need Analysis, Creating Annual Training planning, Launching Quarter Calendars and tracking completion on closure of all training needs
- Conducted Class room trainings on modules like Voice & Accent (neutral & US)
- Conducted sessions for agents to identify gaps and incorporate them in the trainings
- Conducted refresher workshops and training sessions for employees who were slow to climb up to the required learning curve
- Took part in hiring process and selected suitable candidates
- Have undergone a Train the trainer program for a Voice and Accent trainer

Trainer, **Sep 2014 – Feb 2015**
ABC Ltd.

- Recruitment & Selection – Engaged actively in sourcing, initial screening and co-ordination for middle level recruitments.
- Training and Development – Designing programs, plan and calendar for the front end employees. Imparting Process and induction and soft skill training for the front end.
- Certified as a Voice and accent trainer, also dealt with classroom training and floor coaching imperatives as well as customer handling techniques.
- Worked with a SAP process as a floor coach wherein implemented the coaching imperatives.

SKILLS

- > Proficient in MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Windows, CADie
- > Fluent in English, Hindi, Spanish

INTERESTS

Traveling, Photography, Blogging

COVER LETTER TEMPLATE

Mr. XYZ

Human Resources Manager

ABC Associates

Email: enquiries@abc.edu.ca

Dear Mr XYZ,

I am interested in the Trainer's position at ABC Associates, as advertised in HRportal.com. I am currently employed as VNA Trainer for TechBizz. I believe that the skills and experiences I have gained at this position make me an ideal candidate for the job of Communication Trainer.

As VNA Trainer, I have developed strong skills in handling and development. For example, one of my main duties is to enhance and develop the skills of my trainees.

This duty requires meticulous grammatical, convincing and explaining skills, and an ability to convey complex ideas clearly. I have trained dozens of trainees and have been praised for my efforts.

I am always eager to augment my current skillset by avidly reading about different topics of interests and latest technologies to become more knowledgeable and adept. I would love to bring this passion to be used effectively for your company and at the same time sustain personal growth as well.

I have also enclosed my resume. I look forward to hearing from you and discussing my passion for training and my potentialities in more detail. I am more than happy to provide any other details you may require.

Yours Sincerely,

Candidate 1

BLOG TEMPLATE

Blog Title - The History of Public Speaking

“The use of rational speech is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs.” – Aristotle

The roots of tradition of public speaking can be traced back to the ancient Greek period when the scholars elaborated and developed novel techniques of public speaking. Public speaking was considered imperative to facilitate political debate and participation in assemblies. They understood the power of words and the impact the powerful words had on audience. And “rhetoric” became quintessential tool to make public speaking more effective. Oxford dictionary defines “rhetoric” as “the art of using language so as to persuade or influence others; the body of rules to be observed by a speaker or writer in order that he may express himself with eloquence”.

About 2500 years ago four Ancient Greek scholars developed and mastered the art of rhetoric in public speaking. They are also known as the "fantastic four" - Aspasia, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Aspasia is often regarded as the “mother of rhetoric” and believed to have taught rhetoric to Socrates. Socrates greatly influenced the thought during the Classical Period. The writings of his protégé Plato are the main source of Socrates teachings. Plato wrote about rhetoric in the form of dialogues with Socrates as the main character. In that period the emphasis was on the best ways to write and deliver speeches, with a great deal focus on the importance of truth and ethics in public speaking.

“These are the three things - volume of sound, modulation of pitch, and rhythm - that a speaker bears in mind.” – Aristotle

The tradition was taken to new heights by Aristotle, Plato’s student and whose contribution to the field of public speaking and rhetoric is unparalleled.

Aristotle defined “rhetoric” as “the art of identifying and using the best available means in a given situation to ethically persuade an audience”. The both aspects of the definition are important - the “purpose” of public speaking is to persuade others and the best “means of persuasion”. Aristotle divided the “means of persuasion” into three parts, or three artistic proofs, necessary to persuade others: logical reason (**logos**), human character (**ethos**), and emotional appeal (**pathos**). Logos is the presentation of logical consistency in reasons or arguments that support speaker’s talk. Ethos refers to the speaker’s credibility or trustworthiness. Pathos, occurs when a speaker evokes particular emotion in the audience. In contemporary world, advertisements are often judged as effective based on their use of pathos.

After Greeks, Romans scholars like Cicero and Quintilian made momentous contribution to study of rhetoric and oratory. Like Aristotle, Cicero saw the relationship between rhetoric and persuasion and its applicability to political sphere. Cicero is well known for creating the five canons of rhetoric, a five-step process for developing a persuasive speech that is still used in modern-day public speaking. Cicero, in his treatise, *De Inventione* elaborated the five canons of rhetoric. Invention (**Inventio**) is the formulation of arguments based rational appeal or logic. Arrangement (**dispositio**) - the process of arranging and organizing arguments for maximum impact. Style or Elocution (**elocutio**) means the process of presenting arguments using figures of speech and other techniques. Memory (**memoria**) pertains to process of learning and memorizing speech so that it can be delivered without the use of notes. Delivery (**actio**) is process of practicing and delivering the speech using nonverbal communication cues such as eye contact, gestures, and tone of voice. Quintilian shared similar ideas and argued that public speaking was inherently moral activity. He stated that the ideal orator is "a good man speaking well".

Throughout the history public speakers and scholars have utilized the classical approach to rhetoric by adapting and applying it to contemporary situations. William Shakespeare and other writers used rhetorical devices to a good effect. Francis Bacon, believed that the journey to truth was paramount to the study of public speaking. According to Bacon, reason and morality are essential elements in oration. In 19th century, a number of notable speakers, politicians, and right activists engaged public speaking to promote their cause. In the last few decades, rhetoric developed as a concentrated field of study and became increasingly conspicuous in election campaigns, advertisements, entertainment industry and digital domain. In current scenario, the purpose of public speaking has become threefold – to persuade, to inform and to entertain the audience. Now let's consider some rhetorical devices employed by modern public speakers.

ALLITERATION: involves repetition of the same sound or same letter at the beginning of the words in a sentence.

"Let us go forth to lead the land we love" – **J. F. Kennedy**

ANALOGY: used to compare unfamiliar object to the familiar object in order highlight the line of thought.

"A man without ethics is a wild beast loosed upon this world." – **Albert Camus**

ANTITHESIS: this deliberately contrasts two opposing ideas in consecutive phrases or sentences.

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character." – **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

CHIASMUS: a very effective technique where the words in one phrase or clause are reversed in the next.

"When the going gets tough, the tough get going".

PARALLELISM: involves using similar sentence structure and grammatical patterns in a sequence.

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn" – Benjamin Franklin

TRICOLON: the use of words, phrases or examples in three parallel succession without interruption.

"Government of the people, by the people, for the people" – Abraham Lincoln

Please share your thoughts in the comment section below. They are always appreciated.