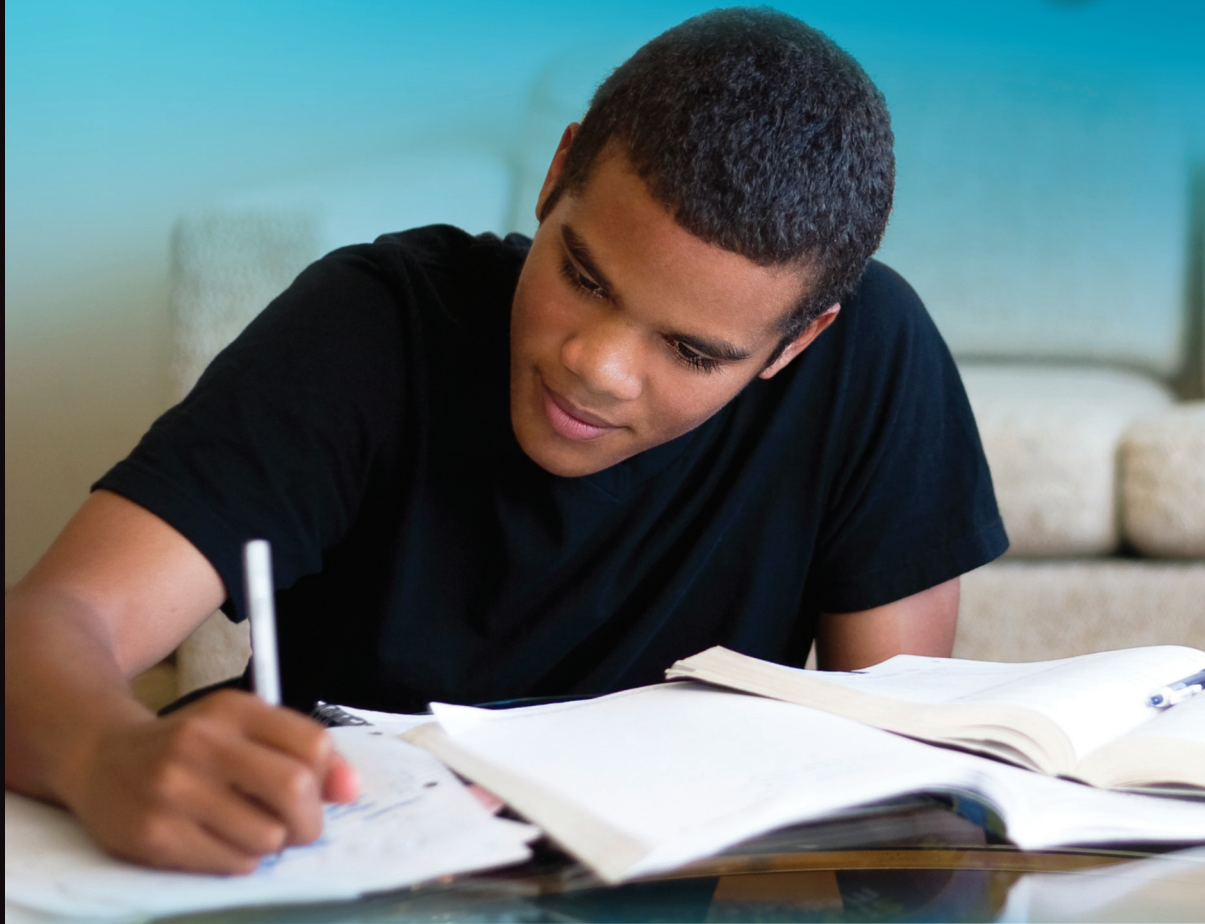


# Writing



## Topics Include:

Effective Writing: Content and Form, Sentences, Paragraphs, Rewriting: Proofreading and Revising, Writing to Explain or Inform, Writing at School, Business Writing

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## 1

## FORM: CONTENT IN THE PROPER PACKAGE

There are two basic elements to any piece of writing. One is *content*—what the writer has to say. The other is *form*—the way the content, or message, is presented. The form of a written piece includes its organization and layout. Form gives a reader an immediate idea of what to expect. Without reading a word you could probably recognize a written piece by its form. A letter *looks like* a letter, an ad like an ad, an essay like an essay, a novel like a novel.

### A

The items on the right are made up of nonsense letter groups. Using form as a clue, write a letter to match each item on the right with a type of communication named on the left.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ poem

2. \_\_\_\_\_ friendly letter

3. \_\_\_\_\_ conversation

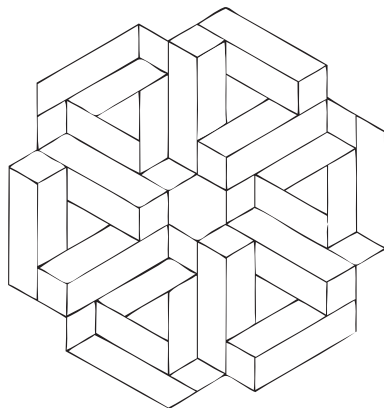
4. \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph

a. Xmxm Zxyxwvs,  
X vzwkh xm nvtrtng. Wijwrm nrvink  
vr sklmpk xzyurst. Brggg flmzrx zsixxt stt.  
Trrrl frngzr clmp! Glrzzz frrr gbmlpzqr.  
Szzbmlp,  
Zrrrtship

b. Lgfr rjjklpt fdhbm fg zppprt vrfj zzwvqrt  
spl. Sqwww zzgrh brft ff, clp spbmkllzzz  
vbnm lpwqg. Zsddvg hb ghfddd rwfr zzzvw  
qwwwt blppp nmgg. Crz bmpldffg zpp wwq  
vrghj klpqww.

c. “Splggfr wf grhqt nwwz?” klggwd Brggz.  
“Nz Slllkkzt frxxv dip?”  
“Gzzzlwrk skl tdddwq,” trddid Mrgqk. “Jlkz!”

d. Trug fligget mrik splinger con splan,  
Wrik dugget mon brinker lon flan.  
Pog wigget on plug,  
Wrip stimet von slug,  
Splig micket don wicket son blan.



## B

The activity on page 6 showed you form without content. This activity shows you content without form. Rewrite each item in its proper form.

1. Dear Joel, I can't believe it's your fifteenth birthday! Are you excited to get your learner's permit and begin driving? I'm sorry I can't visit, but you know it is harvest time on our farm. Hope you have a great birthday! Love, Aunt Amanda

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2. Harvest Moon The first full moon of autumn is known as the Harvest Moon. It usually occurs around September 23 and rises at about the same time for several nights. The bright moonlight allows northern farmers to work in the fields late at night. They say the Harvest Moon is nature's gift.

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## C

Write *T* or *F* to tell whether each statement is *true* or *false*.

1. \_\_\_\_ Proper form helps a reader separate main ideas.
2. \_\_\_\_ Form helps a reader recognize the writer's purpose.
3. \_\_\_\_ The proper form of a poem and a letter is the same.
4. \_\_\_\_ Form separates main parts of a written work.
5. \_\_\_\_ Form shows which person is speaking in a conversation.
6. \_\_\_\_ Proper form is only important in business writing and formal documents.

# 2

## FORM COUNTS!

Proper form makes your message clearer. Good form is the mark of a good writer. Whenever you write, pay close attention to even margins, even spacing between words, and clearly indented paragraphs.

### A

**As you read this article, look for errors in form such as uneven margins, uneven spacing between words, and incorrectly indented paragraphs. Mark each error with a check (✓). The first error has been marked for you.**

#### The Know-Nothings

✓ *Between 1852 and 1860 a group of Americans turned a secret society into its own political party. The party slogan was “Americans must rule America,” and the members had some unfair ideas. They wanted to pass laws against electing foreign-born citizens or Catholics to public offices. They called themselves the American Party, but others called them the Know-Nothings.*

*The Know-Nothings held secret meetings. They never told anyone what they discussed. Whenever an outsider asked a question, a Know-Nothing would reply, “I don’t know.” This phrase gave the party its nickname.*

### B

**The Know-Nothings had foolish ideas. Write a paragraph about a good idea for America. Make sure to do the following: write the title correctly; clearly indent the first line; keep even margins on both sides of the paper; and maintain even spacing between words and sentences.**

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## CHECK YOUR FORM

3

Before you turn in a written work, take time to check form as well as content. Did you use the correct form for your purpose? Are the margins, indentations, and spaces even? Make sure you check your handwriting carefully. Did you cross *t*'s and dot *i*'s? Is it easy to tell an *o* from an *a* and an *n* from an *m*?

A

Carefully copy the paragraph in your best handwriting or printing.

### The Loco-Focos

*In 1835, a small group of New York Democrats earned a nickname. At a party meeting, the group brought up unpopular ideas about banking laws. Other Democrats would not listen! They blew out the lights and left the hall. The rebels relit the lanterns with a new type of match called the "loco-foco." The press quickly named the group the "Loco-Focos."*



B

Use the following list to evaluate the paragraph you copied in Part A. Check the box as you review each item.

- ☐ I capitalized the title and centered it above the paragraph.
- ☐ I indented the first sentence of the paragraph.
- ☐ My left margin is exactly even.
- ☐ My right margin is nearly even.
- ☐ There are even spaces between words and sentences.
- ☐ I crossed all *t*'s and dotted all *i*'s.
- ☐ There is a clear difference between my *n*'s and *m*'s, *o*'s and *a*'s.
- ☐ It is clear that all sentences begin with a capital letter.
- ☐ There are correct punctuation marks at the ends of sentences.

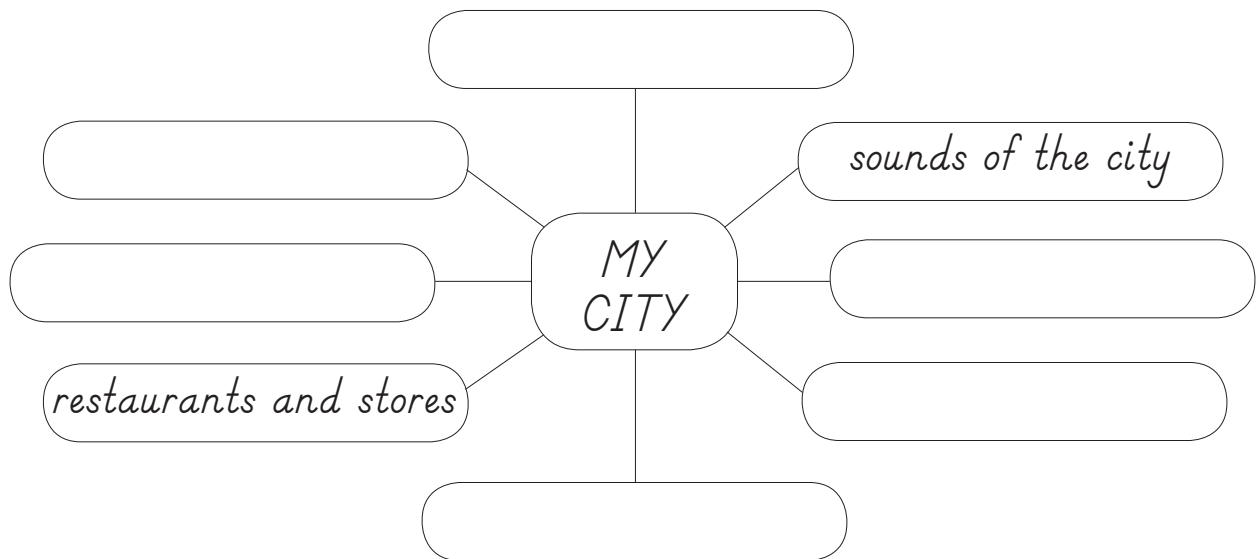
# 4

## BRAINSTORMING FOR CONTENT

*Brainstorming* is a good way to come up with content ideas for your writing. You can brainstorm alone, with a partner, or with a group. Suppose your teacher has assigned you to write a paragraph about a general topic. Your first job is to narrow the topic. Only a *specific* topic can be fully discussed in one paragraph. Brainstorming can help you explore possible ideas.

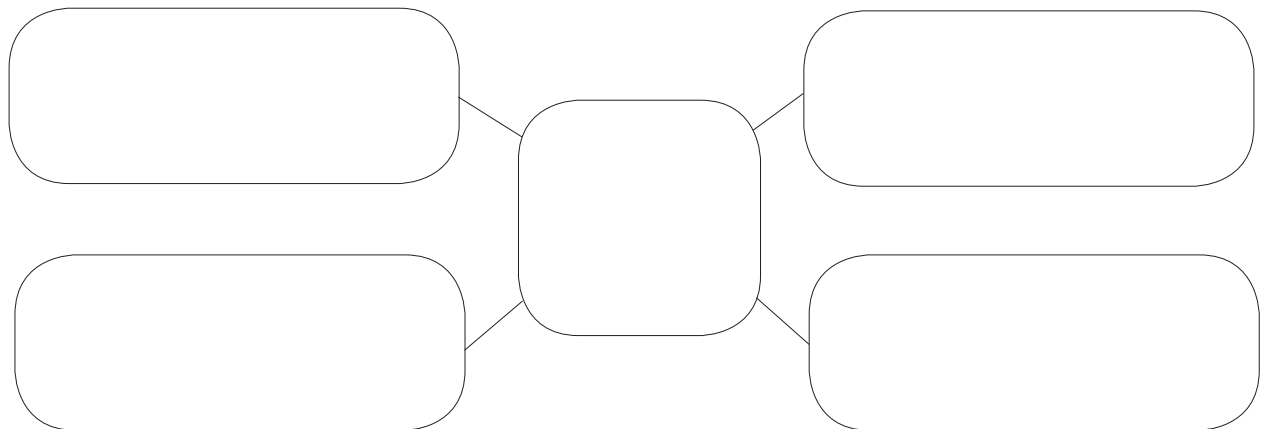
### A

**A general topic appears in the large center circle. Brainstorm related ideas and write them in the smaller circles. Some examples are shown.**



### B

**Once you have a specific topic, brainstorming can help you develop content. Select one topic from Part A. Write it in the center circle below. In the outer circles, write main ideas about that topic.**





# UNIT REVIEW

1

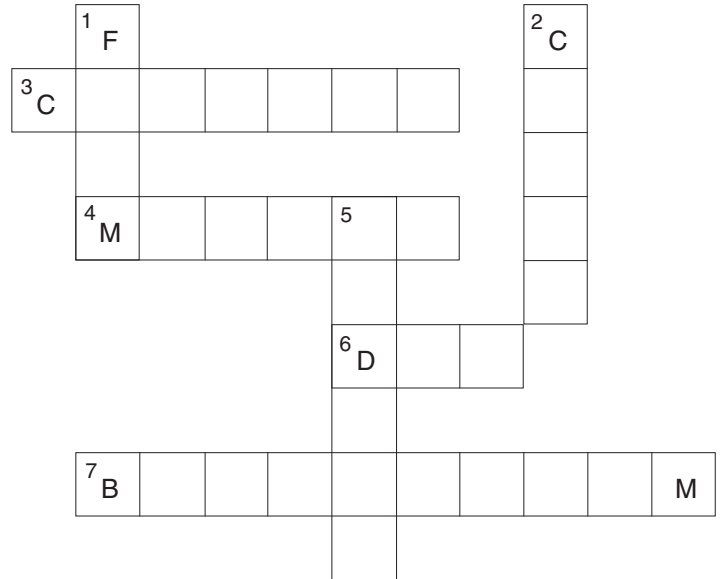
**A** Use the clues below to complete the puzzle.

## ACROSS

3. the ideas in a piece of writing
4. the border along each side of a written piece
6. to complete the letter *i*
7. a technique for coming up with ideas

## DOWN

1. the way something is written; its style and layout
2. to complete the letter *t*
5. to set the first line of a paragraph in from the margin



**B** Brainstorm four ideas you might include in a letter to a friend. Write your ideas in the outer circles.

*Dear* \_\_\_\_\_

**C** Use the ideas from Part B to write a letter to a friend. Use the checklist from page 9 to review your form.

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## 5

# COMPLETE SENTENCES: AVOIDING SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

A *complete* sentence must have a *subject* and a *predicate*. It must express a complete thought.

**EXAMPLE:** An orange cat rested on the sunny window sill. (sentence)

SUBJECT

PREDICATE

A sentence fragment is a word group that begins with a capital letter and ends with an end mark but does not have both a subject and a predicate. Avoid this writing error in your own work.

**EXAMPLE:** *An orange cat on the sunny window sill.* (sentence fragment; no predicate)

### A

**Write S for sentence or F for fragment beside each group of words.**  
**Hint: You should find three fragments.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Jumping beans grow in Central and South America.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ To jump and roll from side to side.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The larva of a gypsy moth lives inside the bean.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The larva moves about.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The larva's movement makes the bean jump.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Not an edible product.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ These beans from south of the border.

### B

**Rewrite each fragment from Part A as a complete sentence.**  
**You will have to add a subject or a predicate.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_