



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

COURSE CODE: ENG416

COURSE TITLE: CREATIVE WRITING III



ENG416 CREATIVE WRITING III

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CONTENTS	PAGE
Introduction	1
Course Aims	2
Course Objectives	2
Working Through This Course.....	3
What you will Learn in the Course.....	3
Course Materials	3
Study Units	4
Set Textbooks/ References	4
Assignment File.....	5
Presentation Schedule.....	5
Course Marking Scheme.....	5
Course Overview.....	6
How to get the best from the Course.....	6
Assessment	7
Tutor-Marked Assignment.....	7
Final Examination and Grading.....	7
Tutors and Tutorials.....	8
Summary.....	8

Introduction

ENG416 is a one semester course of two credit units. It has fourteen units which cover the basic principles that students need to know about creative writing. It broadens your scope in creative writing skills which have been acquired in ENG 223 and 224 (Advanced English Composition I and II), ENG 212 (Creative Writing I), and ENG 312 (Creative Writing II). These courses on composition and creative writing introduce students to the basic composition writing, essay types, argumentative, expository, persuasive, narrative, and so on. They also treat specialized writings such as minutes of meetings, speech writing, public announcements as well as other technical matters. But ENG 416 will build on the knowledge and skills that may have been acquired in the previously thought courses through practical engagements. The course is designed for English Language students, as well as others in other departments of National Open University of Nigeria. Other people outside the University environment whose works aim to promote creativity and effect change will also benefit from this course.

Researchers and teachers at the different levels of education in Nigeria have expressed concern about the poor performance of students in Creative Writing, especially those in the Universities. It is as a result of this that the course ENG 416 focuses on issues such as, the purpose of writing, how to determine the interest of your readers, qualities of a good writer, paragraph development, the writing process, how to write a draft, essay writing, prose writing, poetry writing and play writing. The course also involves useful practical examples that will make you your own teacher in creative writing.

This course material is not just another type of creative writing book. The aspects of creative writing which you need to know during and after your four or five years in the University and when you leave for the 'world of works' have been treated step by step, the way you read your A, B, C. This course guide is addressed to you so that you would believe that 'creativity' and 'writing' are two very important concepts that will live with you throughout your life time: as undergraduates, in the work force, and in all other areas of life till old age. You may be a little bothered as to why you still need to be taught ENG 416, after you had gone through ENG 223, ENG 224, ENG 212 and ENG 312. Be informed that ENG 416 will discuss some of the important aspects you may have forgotten in the above mentioned courses. It is also a vital improvement on the course, as it is a more practical guide to how to write well and present your thoughts creatively. Through the course, you will become aware of the fact that our 'global world' is a world of creativity. Creativity is not limited to scientific inventions alone.

Just as the world came about through creativity, there is creativity in everything you do. In fact, if you do not try to be a little creative in how you do things, you could hardly excel in life. So, you should also learn to be creative in the way you dress, cook, speak or write.

This interactive course guide is designed to give you a brief description of the course, the course materials you need, the set of textbooks and the tutor-marked assignments. In this course guide, you will know the time you need on each of the fourteen units and the number of tutor marked assignments you need so that you can be successful in the course.

You are expected to read this course guide carefully so that you can know more about the course. This guide is like your torch through a tunnel or your creative ‘road map’. You may also call it your ‘creative compasses. Please attend your tutorial classes for further discussion of the course. This course is expected to prepare you for the business of writing as you may be involved in writing after your university career. This is because, irrespective of your positions later in life, you may be forced to write something specific to the satisfaction of your readers. Such things as reports, letters, articles or essays may require considerable skill in composition.

Course Aims

This course is designed to take you through the principles of creative writing. It is meant to:

- remind you of some of the basic principles of creative writing, including the reasons why we write
- acquaint you with the qualities of a good writer
- teach you the writing process
- equip you with the special skills for descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative writings
- to make you a good creative writer who will be able to write a good play, prose and poetry
- enable you write coherently, and creatively in all categories of writing.

Course Objectives

Objectives are those things we expect you to be able to do at the end of the study. These objectives will guide you when reading through the study and they will also help you in self assessment and where you need to improve on your learning and study habits. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- 1) Mention some of the processes involved in creative writing.
- 2) Explain some of the technical terms involved in the writing process.
- 3) Attempt the practice exercises that will enable you demonstrate the knowledge of all you have learnt on how to write prose, poetry and drama.
- 4) Write a good draft of your creative works.

Working through this Course

There are fourteen study units which you have to go through in this course. You should study the contents in each unit before you attempt the questions. Also, you should pay attention to the objectives of each study unit to guide you through the unit. You should be ready to think and write as you go through this course material because it has been designed to make you do so. You will be assessed through tutor-marked assignments which you are expected to do and turn in to your tutor at the right time. You are also expected to write an examination at the end of the course. The time of the examination will be communicated to you.

What You Will Learn in the Course

Through ENG 416 - *Creative Writing*, you will be familiar with the thorny areas of creativity. The course addresses particular creative problems that most books avoid in their presentations, but which are, of course the essence of creativity. Through the writer's interactive style, you will be thoroughly 'schooled', even in those aspects of creative writing that you may have considered baffling. This course will not only improve your writing ability, it will help your communicative competence. If you do not already have creativity in you, you will discover, as you read through this course that you can acquire it. You will only have to go through some processes. You will also learn that creativity is not just about writing, but about planning, choosing and exploring topics, identifying purpose and audience, and so on.

Course Materials

The major components of the course are:

- 1) Course guide
- 2) Study units
- 3) Textbooks
- 4) Assignment files
- 5) Presentation schedule

Study Units

Each study unit is a week's work and this is preceded by the objectives which you are expected to study before going through the unit. Each study unit contains the reading materials and the self assessment exercises. The tutor-marked assignments; the study units, the tutorials; will help you to achieve the stated objectives of this course.

There are fourteen units in the course and they are as follows:

Module 1

Unit 1	Why We Write
Unit 2	Determining Readers' Interests in your Writing
Unit 3	Qualities of a Good Writer
Unit 4	The Paragraph and Its Structure
Unit 5	The Writing Process (I)

Module 2

Unit 1	The Writing Process (II)
Unit 2	The Writing Process (III)
Unit 3	Writing a Draft (I)
Unit 4	Writing a Draft (II)

Module 3

Unit 1	The Descriptive/Narrative Essay
Unit 2	The Expository/Argumentative Essay
Unit 3	Prose Writing
Unit 4	Poetry Writing
Unit 5	Play Writing

Set Textbooks/References

Each unit has a list of recommended textbooks and materials. Read through the recommended textbooks and materials for necessary assistance while going through the unit and before attempting the exercises.

Adeniran, Adekunle (2008). *Nigeria as Babel – The Paradox of a Sociolinguistic Blessing*. Ibadan: Constellation Nigeria Publishers.

Benson, Davidson (2004). *Writing and Rewriting*. London: Hope.

Berke, Jacqueline (2000). *Twenty Questions for the Writer: A Rhetoric with Readings*. Chicago: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Cleave, Dave (2009). *The Writer's Psychology*. London: Web Publishers.

Hatcher, Jeffrey (1996). *The Art and Craft of Playwriting*. Ohio: Story Press.

Julia Bell, Paul Magrs (2001) *The Creative Writing Course Book*. London: Macmillan

Kem, Kem (1996). *I Can Write*. Arizona: Patersons.

Leggelt, G. Mead, D. Kramer, M. and Bean, R. eds. (1988). *Prentice Hall Handbook for Writers*. New Jersey: Eaglewood Cliffs.

Lord, Gruive (200). *Editing and Rewriting*. New Delhi: Cleaves Publishers.

Oriole, Stanly (2008). "Writing for Academic Purposes". In Joel Ayodabo and Demola Jolayemi (Eds). *Effective Communication Skills for Higher Education. The Use of English*. Ilorin: Ajayi Crowther University.

Richard, Kramer (2007). *A Writer in the House*. Canada: Hope Publishers.

Yerima, Ahmed (2003). *Basic Techniques in Playwriting*. Ibadan: Kraft Books

Assignment File

In this file you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for grading. The mark you obtain from the assignment will be added toward the final mark you obtain for this course. Additional information on assignment will be found in the assignment file itself as well as in the section on assessment in this course guide.

Presentation Schedule

The "presentation schedule" which have been included in your course materials give you the important dates you are expected to complete your Tutor-Marked Assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments as when due.

Course Marking Scheme

The table below gives a breakdown of the Course Mark:

Assessment	Marks
Assignment 1 - 15	Three assignments, best three marks of the assignments counts for 30% of course marks.
Final examination	The final examination counts for 70% of overall marks.
Total	100% of course marks.

Table 1: Course Marking Scheme

Course Overview

This table brings together the units, the number of works you should take to complete.

Unit	Title of Work	Week's Activity	Assessment (end of unit)
	Course Guide	1	Assignment 1
Module 1			
1	Why We Write	2	Assignment 2
2	Determining Reader's Interests Writing	3	Assignment 3
3	Qualities of a Good Writer	4	Assignment 4
4	The Paragraph and its Structure	5	Assignment 5
5	The Writing Process (I)	6	Assignment 6
Module 2			
1	The Writing Process (II)	7	Assignment 7
2	The Writing Process (III)	8	Assignment 8
3	Writing a Draft (I)	9	Assignment 9
4	Writing a Draft (II)	10	Assignment 10
Module 3			
1	The Descriptive/Narrative Essay	11	Assignment 11
2	The Expository/Narrative Essay	12	Assignment 12
3	Prose Writing	13	Assignment 13
4	Poetry Writing	14	Assignment 14
5	Play Writing	15	Assignment 15
		16	Review
		17	Review
		18	Review

Table 2: Course Overview

How to Get the Best from the Course

The study units in this course have been written in such a way that you will understand them without the lecturer being physically there with you. And, this is why your programme is a Distance Learning one. Each study unit is for one week. The study unit will introduce you to the topic meant for the week; it will give you the stated/expected objectives for the unit and what you are expected to be able to do at the end of the unit. You only need to be focused and consistent in your creative writing practice, to find ENG 416, which is a creative course exciting. If you take to the instructions, and do the exercises that follow, you will find yourself a better creative writer.

Assessment

You will be assessed in two ways in this course – the tutor-marked assignment and a written examination. You are expected to do the assignments and submit them to your tutorial facilitator for formal assessment in accordance with the stated deadlines in the presentation schedule and the ‘assignment file’. Your tutor-marked assignments will account for 30% of the total course mark.

Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMA’s)

ENG 416 is a course that deals on creativity so you should prepare for a lot of writing. You are expected to do the tutor-marked assignments at the end of every unit. You are expected to have practiced writing some of the creative works which the units expect you to know, before you meet your tutorial facilitator. You will be assessed on the different kinds/principles of creative writing in the genres/essays and so on, but some of them will be selected and used for your continuous assessment. Your completed assignments which must reach your tutorial facilitator before the stated deadline must be sent with your tutor-marked assignment.

The best three that have the highest grades will be counted. The total mark of the best three will be 30% of your total course mark. Assignments for the units in this course are contained in the Assignment file. You should be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your set textbooks, reading and study units. However, you should use your other reference to broaden your knowledge of the subject.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination for ENG 416 will be a two and half hours paper in which you are expected to answer three questions. Each question accounts for twenty marks giving you a total of seventy (70) marks for the examination. The thirty marks for the tutor-marked assignments and seventy marks for the examination give a total of one hundred marks (i.e. $30 + 70 = 100$). The patterns of the questions for your examination will not be very different from those you are familiar with in your tutor-marked exercises. You should revise the stages of creative writing very well before the date of your final examination.

Tutors and Tutorials

There are 10 tutorial hours for this course. The dates, time, location, name and phone number of your tutorial facilitator and your tutorial group will be communicated to you. Feel free to relate with your tutorial facilitator who will mark, correct your assignments, and monitor your attendance/performance in tutorial-marked assignments. You should always contact your tutorial facilitator by phone or e-mail if you have any problem with the contents of any of the study units.

Summary

ENG416 is specifically designed to introduce you to the processes involved in creative writing. The processes have been arranged in a chronological order that will enable you to follow the procedure easily. It is meant to test you on the skills required of you when you are face to face with the creative writing task. What we have provided you here is like the way you read your A B C or climb a ladder, beginning with the first letter 'A' or the first step of a ladder. The course introduces you to creative writing from 'why we write', through 'the writing process', 'how to write a draft', 'writing in any of the genres of literature' (i.e. drama, prose and poetry). These will equip you with the skills necessary for creativity – and change, forever, your 'old ways of creating writing' when you are faced with the writing task. While I wish you the best as you read this course, I hope that you will begin to do wonderful things with the pen and paper – things you never imagined you could do. Give it a trial and you will like it.

Also, at the end of the course, you will be able to answer such questions as:

- 1) What is Creative Writing?
- 2) Why do we write?
- 3) What factors determine the interest if a reader?
- 4) What are the qualities of a good writer?
- 5) How can I be able to write a good prose, play and poetry?

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CONTENTS		PAGE
Module 1.....		1
Unit 1	Why We Write.....	1
Unit 2	Determining Reader’s Interests in Writing.....	8
Unit 3	Qualities of a Good Writer.....	17
Unit 4	The Paragraph and Its Structure.....	24
Unit 5	The Writing Process I.....	33
Module 2.....		40
Unit 1	The Writing Process II.....	40
Unit 2	The Writing Process III.....	46
Unit 3	Writing a Draft I.....	56
Unit 4	Writing a Draft II.....	60
Module 3.....		69
Unit 1	The Descriptive and Narrative Essay.....	69
Unit 2	The Expository and Argumentative Essay.....	74
Unit 3	Prose Writing.....	79
Unit 4	Poetry Writing.....	93
Unit 5	Play Writing.....	107

MODULE 1

Unit 1	Why We Write
Unit 2	Determining Reader's Interests in Writing
Unit 3	Qualities of a Good Writer
Unit 4	The Paragraph and Its Structure
Unit 5	The Writing Process I

UNIT 1 Why We Write**CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Why We Write
3.1.1	Communication of Ideas
3.1.2	We Keep Diaries through Writing
3.1.3	Development of Talent
3.1.4	For the Records
3.1.5	Writing as a Profession
3.2	The Writing Situation
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit is designed to take you through the reasons why we write. The art of writing, you should not forget is a practice or skill that no one should embark upon without knowing why he would like to do so. It is not every writer who knows why they do so. It is also possible for you to know the principles of writing without knowing why you wish to be engaged in the art. This unit will take you through a number of reasons why you write. The writing situation is also another aspect of writing, which this unit treats. Many textbooks, we have found out, ignore/refrain from discussing the writing situation and why people write. It could be because the writers of such textbooks assume that it is insignificant. Whereas, no concept that relates to creative writing is too unimportant to be discussed.

As a creative writer, you should be able to determine the best conditions under which you can write. Are you more comfortable writing on the bus, in the garden, in a mountainous area or at the seashore? You should

be able to determine the place, time, as well as tools that will give you the best support as a creative writer. Part of the creative writing exercise is to expose the student to the various conditions under which he may prefer to write. We are normally expected to have reasons why we wish to do something. For instance, a student who prefers to be a medical doctor, rather than a teacher must have his reasons. Similarly, for any writer to excel, he/she must know the reasons why he/she intends to undertake the task of writing either in the midnight or early in the morning, by the seashore or the hill. You must be able to answer the questions of why you write and under what conditions? Below are some of the objectives of this Unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- outline three reasons why you write
- determine the place, time and tools suitable for your creative writing
- equip yourself with other writer's advice on writing
- state some possible distractions to effective creative writing.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Why We Write

Creative writing is considered to be any writing, fiction, or non-fiction that goes outside the bounds of normal professional, journalistic, academic, and fictional forms of literature. Works which fall into this category include most novels and epics, as well as many short stories and poems. Writing for the screen and stage, screen writing and play writing respectively; typically have their own programmes of study, but fit under the creative writing category as well (The Free Encyclopedia, Wikipedia). In addition, creative writing is anything where the purpose is to express thoughts, feelings and emotions rather than to simply convey information. It involves the skillful and imaginative production of something original (e.g. a work of art) (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English, 1995, The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners 2007).

Writing is like a journey that you cannot just set out on aimlessly. You cannot just write without having a good reason why you would like to do so. Below are some of the reasons why you may want to write.

3.1.1 Communication of Ideas

One of the reasons why you write is to be able to transmit your own thoughts or ideas to other peoples across cultures, time and age. That you live and write in Nigeria does not mean that you write for the Nigerian peoples alone. Your writing will go places, it could even outlive you the same way the works of William Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, Philip Sydney, John Dryden, Scot Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Chinua Achebe, Zulu Sofola, Christopher Okigbo, Ola Rotimi, outlived them. Up to now, their positions, feelings and ideas about life generally are still being read in their works.

3.1.2 We Keep Diaries through Writing

You may decide to keep a record of some of the important events or things that have happened to you in writing. When you do this, you are keeping a record through writing. Sometime in life, and as you go into the world of work, you may want to keep the date and time of some experiences, where you meet some peoples who are important to you.

This type of writing, depending on the writer does not require a very elaborate composition like the novel. You must not forget that there are some functional diaries that involve an elaborate or serious writing. You may need to visit a bookshop, your University or the public library where you will get a copy of novels written in the forms of a diary. You may also ask a friend or your facilitator for a copy of the following fictional diaries: Wole Soyinka's *The Man Died*, Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Detained*, *A Writer's Prison Diary*, Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy*, George and Weedon Grossmith's *The Diary of a Nobody*, Nelson Mandela's *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, and Kenneth Kaunda's *Zambia Shall be Free*.

3.1.3 Development of Talent

You may have the natural gift to create and communicate ideas. If you do not have it, you may also acquire the skills of writing through training and practice. The type of practice we are gradually putting you through could make you a good creative writer. That is why it is important for you to know whom you are. You must also know your creative ability. You should know that your creative ability can open doors of success for you. In the end, you will feel fulfilled if you are able to create what is good. All you should do when you discover the creative gift in you is to do all you can to develop it. You may develop it by reading more creative works or by asking the right questions from experienced creative writers. And, if you do not have it, start now to seek, to learn, and in no time, you will acquire the technique. This may be the reason why Covey (1990) insists that "what lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters, compared with what lies within us".

The truth is, you will naturally be at ease if you are a gifted writer, but you can acquire the skills for writing, the way you can be taught to know a trade or how to play a game.

3.1.4 For the Records

You may decide to write, to document issues/history/things which account might have been given through oral information. Your aim to keep a concrete reference material for other people to consult/read may inform this type of writing. Such oral records may be about the culture, religion and traditions of your people. This is what makes writing a form of documentation.

3.1.5 Writing as a Profession

You may write because it is your vocation or for the reason that you want to make it a profession. You could put your ideas down for others to read. In this case you may also decide in which of the genres (i.e. prose, play or poetry), you want to write for people to read. This also depends on the type of people (audience) you hope should read your work. You will also determine how much it would cost you to get the work published. If you wish to treat your writing this way, it has become a business. You should think of the reason why you want to be a creative writer.

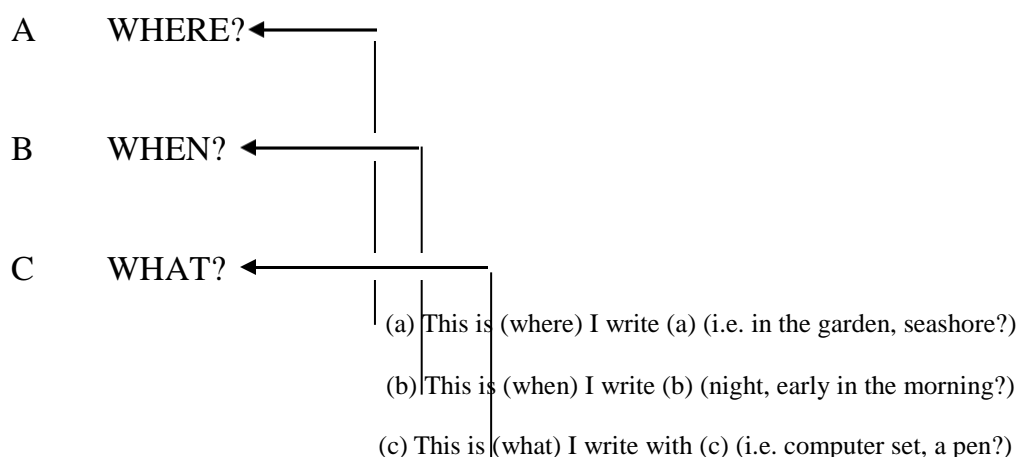
SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give at least three reasons why you wish to be a creative writer?

3.2 The Writing Situation

You may be wondering about the need for the writing situation. You will soon realise that it is as important to you as other areas of writing. You should know the best place for you to write, the time and the tool you prefer to write with. Writing situations help you to determine a convenient take off ground for your writing. It will help you answer the helpful questions of the three Ws of creative writing. Below is a diagrammatic representation of the Ws.

Fig. 1 Three W's of creative writing (situation questions)



Source: Adapted from Reid (2002)

As you read through this part of the Unit, try to identify and choose your own *three W's* or answer the three writing situation questions. If you are able to do so, you have just created a takeoff ground for your writing.

Time

You may prefer to write early in the morning. Some other people may like to write in the night. Others like to write in the evening; after their class work. The time you choose to write can affect your attitude and efficiency in writing. That is why you must know yourself and the time that is suitable for your writing. And when you have found that a particular time is suitable for your writing, you should try to practice always. Like an exercise that requires a regular practice, a repeated pattern of behaviour will provide a sense of progress for your creative work. Also, if a medical doctor places you on a diet, you must keep to it always so that it can have the expected results on you. The same way, you must always write at a time suitable for you so that you can have a mastery of the art.

Place

The place where you write is also important. If you are writing in a computer laboratory, you have to adapt to that place. If you write in long hand, you can decide to choose the place yourself. But as you do this, keep distractions at a minimum. You may not like to write where there are distractions like a television set, refrigerator, or in the cafeteria and other noisy environments. If you know this about yourself, you will avoid such places so that you can make progress in your writing. As a writer, you are not different from a song writer or a musician who may

decide to write or compose his songs or rehearse by the seashore, forest, garden or a mountainous area.

Tools/materials

You will need writing materials like pen, paper, pencil, writing pads, notebooks, computer sets. You can do your writing with all of these. Only that you need to know which of the writing materials you are more comfortable writing with. Do you like to make your draft with a computer set or scribble something on a jotter to enable you take off the actual writing? You must know how you feel writing with any of these before you can say you are comfortable or not or before you can engage in a regular practice (Reid, 2002).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- 1 (a) Do you have a writing situation?
- (b) Mention and discuss your own writing situation?
- (c) Why have you chosen your own three W's of creative writing?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed some of the reasons why you may wish to be a creative writer. We have also mentioned and discussed why the three W's or your own writing situation are very important to you.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- there are different reasons why people write
- it is important for you to know your own writing situations by answering the questions of the three W's in creative writing
- in the next Unit, you will learn how you will determine the interests of your readers.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Creative writing exists for certain reasons. Explain.
2. How is the keeping of diaries different from when you write as a professional?
3. How would you advice a young creative writer on the use of the three W's in creative writing?
4. Define the concepts, 'writing situation' and 'communication of ideas'

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 DETERMINING READER'S INTERESTS IN WRITING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Write in a New Way
 - 3.1.1 Evoke the Sympathy of your Readers
 - 3.1.2 Write about the Unusual
 - 3.1.3 Conflict
 - 3.1.4 Write about Histories or Biographies of other People
 - 3.1.5 Identify a New Problem in your Writing
 - 3.1.6 Suspense
 - 3.2 Your Readers
 - 3.2.1 A Specialised Reader
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit is written to take you through a necessary form of preliminary investigation before you start to write fully. Writing is a skill that should look interesting to your readers. But, it may not interest your readers if you do not know their interests before you begin to write. It is in knowing your reader's interests that will help your thinking, focus, style, language and techniques of writing. In this unit, you will be taken through some areas of interests of your readers.

One of the best ways to be successful as a writer is to know the interests of your readers. Are your readers interested in reading prose works? Are they more comfortable reading plays, poetry, letters or essays? When you ask yourself these questions, you will be relieved from the confusion or dilemma that keeps you on the stop line.

The questions which I have raised in this unit are important for you because they will give readers access to your essay and give you a sense of direction. At this point, you should imagine yourself a business man who asks questions about the needs of his customers. It is what your buyers need that you will sell in the market. In this case, your readers are your customers and you must satisfy their needs. So, the knowledge or what your audience (consumers) need will help you know what to

create for them, and in which form of language. The leading questions will also expose you to the type of audience/readers you are writing for. Are they the general reader or the specialised readers? Below are some of the objectives of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- determine the needs of your readers
- plan the type of genre (i.e. poetry, prose, drama) and essay that will suit your audience/reader
- write in a style that will appeal to the emotions, personality of your audience
- identify the types of audience you are (dealing with) writing for.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Write in a New Way

You should write in a style that will attract your readers. People like to associate themselves with new ideas, things and something that is better. If you can do this, your reader will believe in your uniqueness. He will be interested in reading your work. He may aspire to write like you if you write in a new way that is probably different from all the types of books he has read. Your writing should be able to arrest the attention of your reader.

3.1.1 Evoke the Sympathy of your Readers

You should write in a way that you will be able to evoke the sympathy of your readers. If your reader/audience likes to read children's story, or read about religion, games, people or poetry that talks about nature, you should write it. Man likes to preserve and reproduce himself. You may have read some novels, poems and plays. Which of them do you find interesting? Why? Are you in sympathy with your writer or not?

3.1.2 Write about the Unusual

Many people aspire to be different in many ways. As a result, you can gain the interests of your readers when you write about things that are extraordinary. Such a work that will take readers away from the things they do every day will appeal to a large population of readers. For example, when the English novelist, George Orwell wrote his allegorical fable, *Animal Farm* in the 20th century, the novel gained wide interest beyond Europe. This is because he made use of animal characters who

behave like the real political animal called man. This satire of the ugly relationships between the leaders of the time of Orwell and the people may not be its first type; but it was not so common in his time to write a novel using animal characters. The university and the unusual style in which many writers present their works may partly be responsible for the awards they receive. For example, Wole Soyinka was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1986 as a result of the triumphant affirmation of the universality of his novels, poems and plays. Added to this is his unique creative use of language. Toni Morrison, an African American also won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature in 1988 for being able to creatively challenge the Twentieth Century American myth and illusion as well as the social tragedy of the failure of the individual and the American society.

3.1.3 Conflict

Your writing should reflect some elements of conflict. Man is naturally interested in anything that generates conflicts and competition. When you write your drama or prose work, try to evoke conflict so that you can attract the interests of your readers. Already, as a writer you are in conflict with some things you cannot help. You are in conflict with people, disease, dreams, your ambition, your work, religion, culture and the law. You are even in conflict with your marriage and if you are a bachelor or spinster, you are in conflict with yourself. This may be the reason, Daniel (2007) argues that, “all novels and creative works built around conflicts are usually best sellers around the world”. He may have said this based on the belief that every man is interested in conflict.

3.1.4 Write about Histories or Biographies of other People

You as a writer should write about other people. This is because your existence in life has something to do with other people. This means if your work discusses other people, it will win over some curious audience to your side. The nature of the person you write about does not matter. What you must know is that some people are directly or indirectly interested in that person. You may write biographies of peoples and places to arouse the interests of your readers.

3.1.5 Identify a New Problem in your Writing

You may decide to write about a new problem. In your writing, you can also see an existing problem in a new and more interesting way. You may wish to share this discovery with other people through your writing. You may want to write an article or a short novel about the political problem of your country. For instance, say in prose form, you may decide to use animal characters from your communal pool of folktales to

behave like human beings as we have in *Farewell to Democracy* (Oriola, 1994). In the political fable story, the writer uses characters like the Tortoise, Lion, Lioness, Snake, Parrots, Horse, Eagle and so on. He adapts Orwell's experience to his African communal pool of folktale. You may write an article on "The tree of money in you" or on "The School of Money".

3.1.6 Suspense

You should write to keep your readers in suspense. This will arouse his curiosity and he will like his burning desire satisfied. For this reason, you should let the information you will give to your readers make him want to expect/anticipate more of it in the next page, chapter or paragraph. This is because human beings naturally have interest in the unknown. Why don't you try and write to determine your reader's interests now.

3.2 Your Readers

1. A Specialised Reader

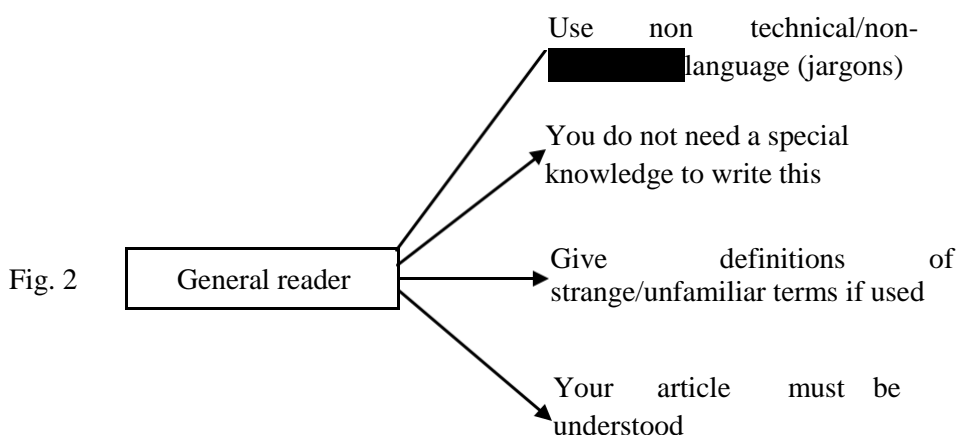
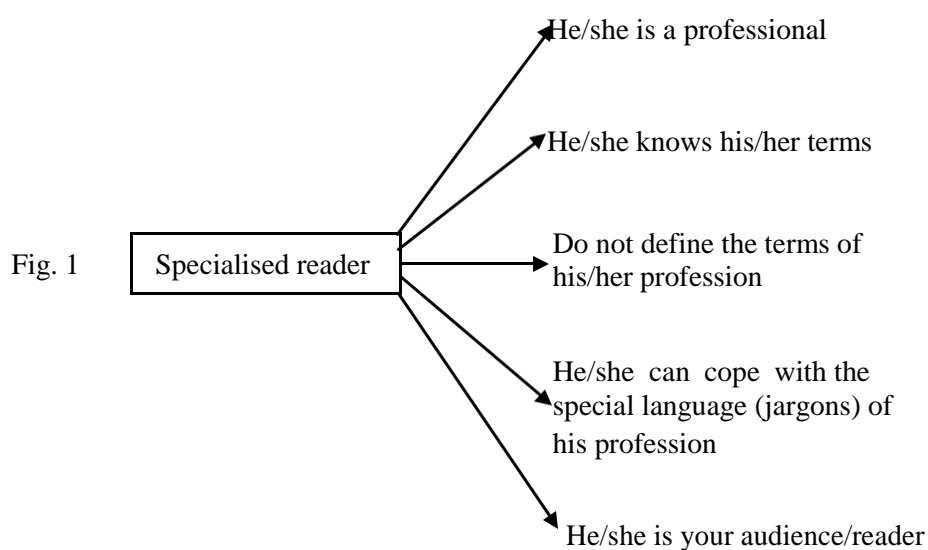
You may decide to write for a specialised reader. A specialised reader knows so much about his subject or profession. If you write an article for this kind of audience, you do not have to define the terms of his profession for him. This is because he already knows the terms that relate to his profession. For instance, if you decide to write an article for an academic institution, you do not have to define the education related terms you have used. Such readers in the discipline will already be familiar with words like school, auditorium, library, language lab, professor, and so on. There are many publications that exist today for readers who have diverse interests, so if you write for this kind of audience, you may not worry about the interest of the audience. This is because such an audience can cope with the (jargons) special language you would use.

The truth about specialised audience is also true about you. That is why your modules have been written in a simple, 'home style' that will see you through your formal training in creative writing. You should write for specialised readers in their own language. For example, a banker who is reading your enquiry or a medical doctor, have the expertise in the subject area you are writing to them about.

2. **General Reader**

When you write for the general reader, we expect you to use a standard format that embraces non-technical, non specialised language. Your article must be understood. Where you need to make reference to unfamiliar terms, give a definition. Your writing for this purpose must not require a special degree of knowledge about what you write on. Remember that your readers are like yourself. They want to read and understand you through what you have written.

3. Things you must know about the Categories of your Readers



Source: Adapted from Prentice-Hall Handbook for Writers (1988)

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

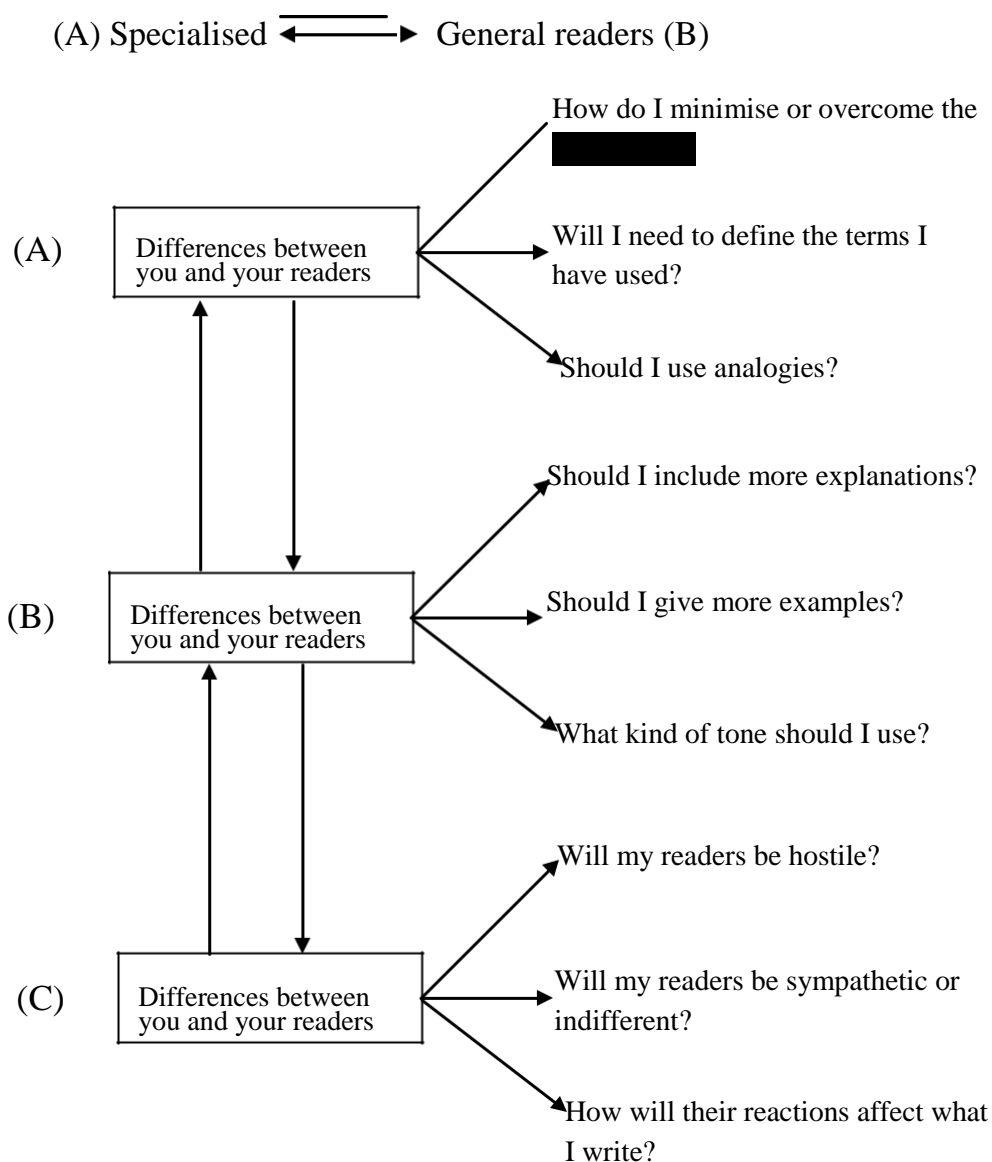
What are some of the ways you can make your writing interest your readers?

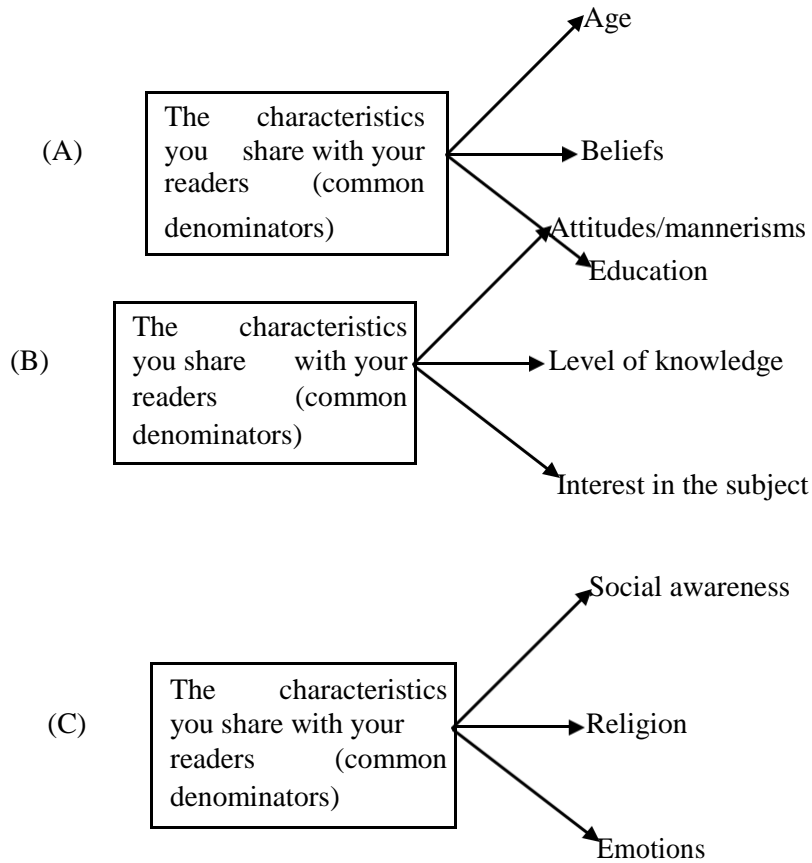
You may need to ask the following vital questions when writing for:

- a) Specialised readers and
- b) General readers

These questions/statements have been formed based on the obvious differences between you and your readers, as well as the common denominators of you as a personal individual and your readers.

Fig. 3: Questions/statements for your specialised and general readers





If you have been able to answer these questions in the boxes provided, you will not find it difficult to know the category of writing you will use in a particular article or essay. Now, as you think of writing an article, determine your audience as you go through the friendly questions in the boxes provided. Whichever way you may want to look at it, knowing the audience you are writing for is important.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

How is a specialised reader different from a general reader?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have mentioned some interests of your reader which you must take into consideration before and while writing. We have also talked about the need for you to identify the type of audience you are writing for. Some familiar statements and questions in the boxes have some characteristics that will help you determine and satisfy your readers. You may wish to go over your work again.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- it is good to know what interest your readers before you write
- when you write, you are necessarily writing for two categories of readers (specialised and general)
- some characteristics which are peculiar to specialised and general readers have also been mentioned in the form of questions/statements in the boxes provided.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Write short notes on 'biographies', 'the unusual', and 'conflict'.
2. With specific reference to your audience or reader, write two paragraphs on each of the essay questions below:
 - a) The midnight plane crash.
 - b) Abortion should not be legalised in Nigeria.
 - c) The road accident I witnessed.
3. List some of the things you should know about the categories of your readers.
4. Who is a specialised reader?

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UNIT 3 QUALITIES OF A GOOD WRITER

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Qualities of a Good Writer (Planning)
 - 3.1.1 Economy of Words
 - 3.1.2 Simplicity
 - 3.1.3 Clarity of Expression
 - 3.1.4 “Courtship” Devices
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit is designed to take you through some of the qualities which you must possess to be a good writer. The qualities which are expected of you will aid you in the mastery of the art of creative writing. As you go through some of the qualities in this unit, you will be taken through some of the things you have read in other creative writing related courses or in some textbooks in one way or the other. You may not be able to make a good writing out of your thought without understanding these qualities. This unit has been designed in such a way that you will find the facts about the qualities required of a good writer easy to learn.

One of the very important ways to be a successful writer is to know the rules of writing. You should also be able to make good use of the rules. In the knowledge of writing, there are many rules, all of which will help improve your writing. You may have been taught some of the rules of writing in your previous levels; you will still find out that you still have to continue to learn to be better writer, even when you are already familiar with the rules of writing. That is why you must always practice the art of writing so that you can get used to it.

Apart from the creative writing, there is no profession that does not have its own guiding principles. These principles to you are like the compass that shows the way to a sailor. Also, before a medical doctor can subject his patient to a surgical operation, he has to be conscious of the rules of the profession. That is when he will be able to do a successful work. You will come across situations in life that will require that you write or speak. If you do not already have the qualities of a good writer, you will

have no adequate skill/knowledge to demonstrate to your employer or reader.

The most important fact about you is that you are already a writer, at least, in the general sense of the word. You are a writer because you often write. A writer is not only someone who writes National Newspaper column, publishes a bestseller or wins a *Pulitzer Prize*. You only have to be an effective writer by practicing writing often enough by first learning to practise through writing. Below are some of the objectives of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- apply the qualities of a good writing to any type of writing
- identify the materials needed for any type of creative writing
- compose a creative work that is simple and meaningful
- provide a score card for your imaginative writing (self assessment of what you have written).

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Qualities of a Good Writer (Planning)

Planning is the ‘corner stone’ of most research or writing. Before one embarks on the imagination to boost one’s creative intention, one is expected to have decided on the general subject area one intends to explore in one’s writing. One can then think of a suitable topic, how you will organise your paragraphs, what your introduction will be and what your conclusion is likely to be.

3.1.1 Economy of Words

It is your responsibility to keep your creative work clear and meaningful. You must not forget that the reason why you write is to enable other people or your audience to understand you. You should speak to be heard through your writings. You may go into your University library or departmental library and read through the samples of good creative works. Check the writers’ choice of words. You may also ask for examples of creative works, books, and well written magazines from your lecturers. These materials will help you in your choice of words when you write. You must not be caught writing long and meaningless expressions. When you do this, your examiner or audience whom you have written for will not be able to understand what you have written. This is why your sentences should not contain

unnecessary words. As a writer, you do not need to make your writing unnecessarily difficult. Your writing should not be different from a machine which all parts combine to make a whole and work well. If a part of a machine is missing, it will either work and very badly or not work at all. When you write accurately and with precision, your writing will make a good reading.

3.1.2 Simplicity

Another quality that you must arm yourself with when you write is simplicity. This does not mean that you should reduce the grammatical beauty of your work to the bare bone. You must say exactly what you mean in the best manner you are familiar with and in the style others will understand. You should be yourself when you write. Whether you sit at the computer set or you use pen and paper, you must be direct and clear to the point. This is the essence of the contemporary style of creative writing. In the table below are some examples of the simple and clear use of language by some popular writers. You will find the passages from their works accessible, knowledgeable and interesting. I have also provided a simple, score card chart to assess the works. You can also use the same to assess your own writing. Study the examples below.

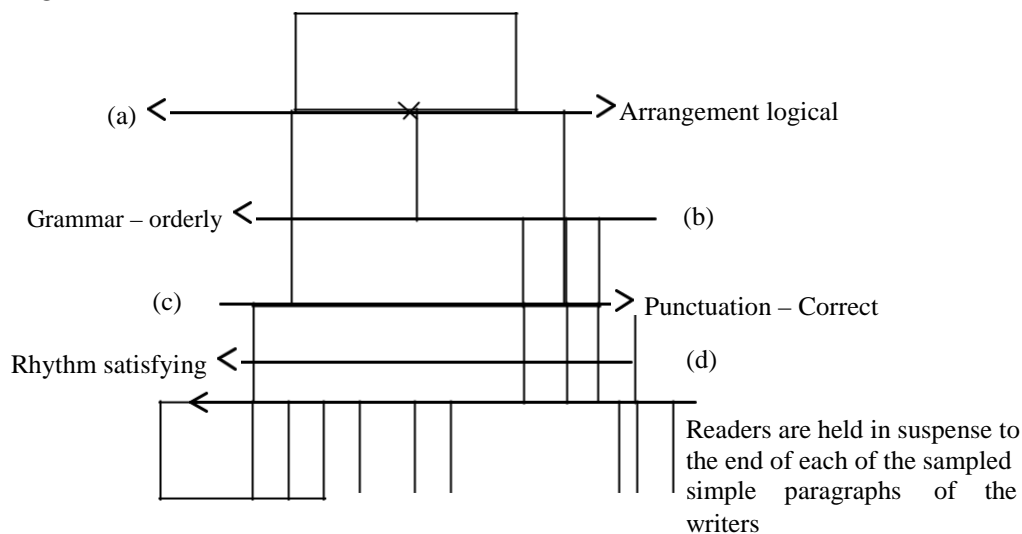
Fig. 1: Examples of simple styles of creative writing from texts

- (a) *Zambia shall be Free* (Kaunda 1962)
My father died when I was eight years old and I cried bitterly when I heard of his death, for I loved him and all my memories of him are sweet ones (5)
- (b) *Songs of the Season* (Oriola 2002)
A parrot flew in and perched on a dry branch of a tree nearby. The branch of the tree broke and he lost his grip. He flew again and reperched on another. He asked questions on behalf of the gathering of the birds' race (60)
- (c) *The Old Man and the Sea* (Hemingway 1952)
He was an Old Man who fished alone in skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish (5)
- (d) Native Voices - A Collection of Essays (Brodkin and Pearson 1971)
You have to smile twenty-four hours a day, Momma would say. If you walk through life showing aggravation you've gone through, people will feel sorry for you, and they'll never respect you. She taught us that man has two ways out in life-laughing or crying. There's more hope in laughing (1)
- (e) *Houseboy* (Oyono 1960)
Father Gilbert says I can read and write fluently. Now I can keep a diary like he does. Keeping a diary is a white man's custom and what pleasure there is in it I do not know (9).
- (f) *Weep Not, Child* (Wa Thiong'o 1964)
Nyokabi called him. She was a small, black woman, with a bold but grave face. One could tell by her small eyes full of life and warmth that she had once been beautiful. But time and bad conditions do not favour beauty (3)

The above are examples of the imaginative accounts of some writers. Take a look closely at each of the reproduced textual paragraphs. What can you see or feel after reading them. What is your impression of the authors' arrangement and use of language? How about use of punctuation marks? Certainly, the paragraphs have all been written in simple, grammatical, accessible and expressive language. You can also

write as beautiful as these writers or better than them in some cases. We will use a score card for all the extracts.

Fig. 2: Score Card



Source: Oriola (2008)

The score cards will enable you to evaluate your piece of writing, be it speech, letters or short stories.

3.1.3 Clarity of Expression

You can make yourself clear or difficult through your writing. You have a choice, but the better choice is to avoid being unnecessarily difficult. You should convey your ideas in clear, readable prose. There may be the technical needs for one to be a bit complex in one’s writing, but one can still maintain coherence and give readers access to one’s work. You may be wondering if it is possible for one to be clear. But you will agree with me that since writing is like speaking, it should not add to or increase the difficulty of your readers. Whether the form you have chosen to write on is an essay, letter, poetry, drama or prose, you must see your reader as your next good neighbour who must not be hurt. You should not forget that the ability to communicate (language) is the essential quality that distinguishes man from other animals. Your ability to use language to be understood by other people makes you a human being.

3.1.4 “Courtship” Devices

You should write in a way that you will be able to (sustain) keep the interest of your readers to the end. That is why interesting form of writing is seen to be synonymous to “wooing” the reader so as to be able to establish/personalise a relationship (courtship) with him/her. It is

when you have established an expected cordial relationship with your readers through your writing that you could be said to have conquered the fear that separates your printed page from readers.

It is not only by physical contacts or face to face discussions that you can personalise a relationship with your readers. Your friendly voice and a broad sense of personality can build a relationship for you.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the importance of the economy of words and courtship devices in writing?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have treated some of the qualities you need so that your writing can be well focused. We have also given some examples of writings and provided a 'score card' in the form of self evaluation to help you. Take note of them all and put them to practise so that your work can look good before you submit to your facilitator.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- you must practice writing very often
- you must write in a simple and meaningful language
- your writing must be well arranged and coherent
- your writing must be expressive and balanced
- you should study the creative works of other good writers to improve on your own
- you should assess your writing through a simple score card.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. A budding (learner) writer just asked for your advice on how he can be a good creative writer, in not more than four paragraphs give your advice.
2. Show the use of courtship devices in any essay topic of your choice.
3. Explain the problems which the lack of clarity of expression and economy of words will create for readers.
4. Write a short essay paragraph using the score card below:
 - (i) arrangement
 - (ii) grammar
 - (iii) simplicity
 - (iv) punctuation

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UNIT 4 THE PARAGRAPH AND ITS STRUCTURE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Characteristics of Paragraphs
 - 3.2 Types of Paragraphs
 - 3.3 Transitional Devices in Writing
 - 3.3.1 Parts of an Essay
 - 3.3.2 The Body of the Essay
 - 3.3.3 The Conclusion (End of the Essay)
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit is designed to take you through how you will structure your paragraphs. This is important for you as a creative writer so that you can know how to develop a single idea to a reasonable length of a paragraph. This unit will take you through a number of things you are already familiar with. The repetition of this will refresh your memory about some of the things you may no longer remember.

An important way to keep your memory alive is to continue to do what you have often done. You can do this by reading a novel or play, poetry or even studying or revising a lecture note of what you had been taught by your lecturer. This unit is to take you through the characteristics of a paragraph and its types and functions. You may have been taught about the paragraph in ENG 223, ENG 224 and ENG 212. You still need to be taken through its structure again so that your ideas can be controlled. You have spent a good deal of your studying years reading paragraphs. You still need to study it more until you have reached the height of expectation about what we want paragraphing to do in your writing life. You will continue to encounter situations that will require you to write in paragraphs all your life. Below are some of the objectives of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define a paragraph
- describe the structural features of a paragraph
- identify the kinds of paragraphs
- reduce essays to paragraphs
- use appropriate linking devices that make for smooth reading and good flow of information
- construct paragraphs with different expository patterns.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Characteristics of Paragraphs

A paragraph may be described as a group of related sentences that develops a unit of thought within an essay. It is the concept that underlies the act of structuring writing into paragraphs. It is a form of prose composition that comprises a group of related sentences developing a single central idea. A paragraph may be short or lengthy. You need to learn to practise the proper application of paragraph to a piece of essays or letters. You must be able to develop/divide your writing into paragraphs. First, below are the features/characteristics of a paragraph:

1. Topic sentence
2. Unity
3. Coherence
4. Clarity
5. Emphasis

1. Topic sentence

The topic sentence of your paragraph should be the first sentence of the paragraph. It contains the fact that you will explain to make up the whole paragraph. It holds the key to the expressions in your paragraph. You can also make your topic sentence to come anywhere in the paragraph (beginning, middle or end). This depends on your aim as a writer.

2. Unity

All other sentences in the paragraph must have something to do with the main idea expressed. Other sentences which you have used must contribute to the central idea. This will make the issues

in the work relate to the main idea of your paragraph and you will achieve unity if you recognise the thrust of your own idea.

3. Coherence

Your thought must lead one to another in a consistent and sequential order. You will achieve coherence by using linkages or transitional words or phrases to connect sentences. You will be taught the transitional words/phrases later in this unit. You must write to connect the individual words, phrases and sentences so that a clear pattern of thought can emerge. You must let all parts of your writing stick together or cohere.

4. You can achieve coherence in the following ways:

- by arranging your materials in an appropriate sequence
- by providing transition from one idea to another
- by maintaining a consistent tone and point of view

5. Clarity

You must be exact or precise in your discussions. The themes in your paragraph must be presented in a way that will make your reader understand you. A paragraph should be written in short and accessible language. If you write otherwise, you are likely to confuse your readers.

6. Emphasis

This is where the relevance of the main idea in a paragraph becomes noticeable. You will use expressions that highlight the topic. You will achieve this when you repeat certain key words in the paragraph to reveal the recurrence of the topic sentence.

3.2 Types of Paragraphs

Paragraphs are categorised by their functions. According to Paul (2004) seven types of paragraphs are identified by this categorisation. They are:

1. introductory
2. defining
3. descriptive
4. narrative
5. explanatory
6. transitional
7. concluding

1. **Introductory**

An introductory paragraph introduces the subject of discussion. It is usually the first part of your writing. It gives an idea into what will happen in the other paragraphs.

2. **Defining**

This type of paragraph tells us the meaning of the concept in question. For instance, if you were to write on *culture*, you may define it so that your readers will know its meaning and why it is used in the context.

3. **Descriptive**

This is a description of a subject, real or imagined (concrete or abstract) thoroughly. The type of paragraph happens in expository writing in which you may need to describe concepts or how things work. In doing this, you are expected to be imagistic and picturesque.

4. **Narrative**

We use narrative paragraph more in Literature (play or prose) because it tells stories to keep readers interest. If you must use this style, it must be clear and vivid.

5. **Explanatory**

This explains concepts with detailed examples and it is often very informative in nature. It often explains concepts, and does not rely on mere definitions.

6. **Transitional**

This is also called a linking paragraph. It is called connective paragraph as it reviews or summarises issues already explained. Also it reminds readers of previous discussions, and prepares him for the next.

7. **Concluding**

This normally ends a piece of writing. It reviews all that have been discussed, bringing out the main points. This ensures that the reader does not forget the main facts as the highlights of the writing are provided.

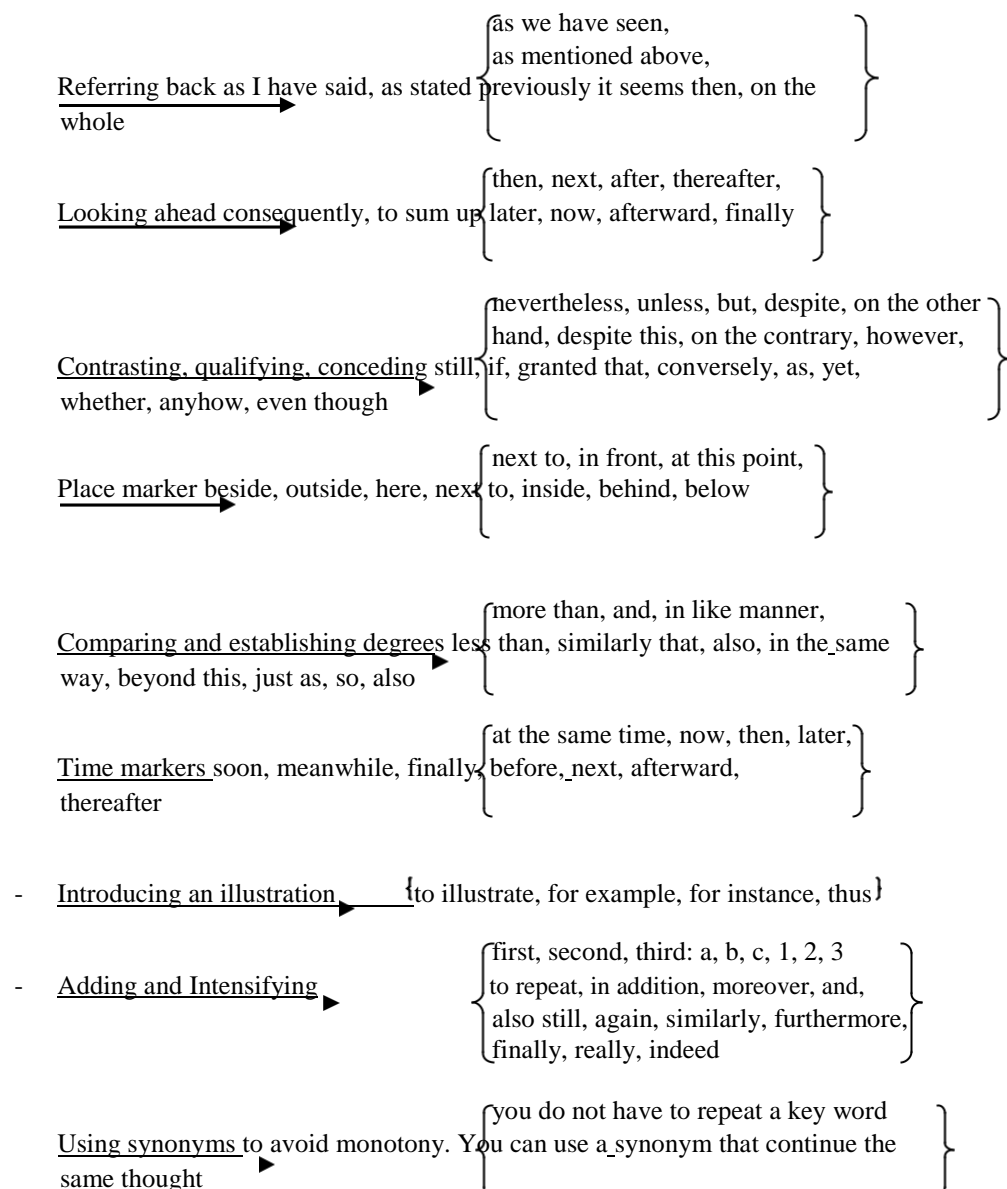
SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- 1 (a) What are the features of a paragraph?
- (b) Write short notes on *three* types of paragraphs.

3.3 Transitional Devices in Writing

You have the categories of transitional words or linkages/connectives that make your idea as a writer to move smoothly from one stage to the other. When you write, readers expect you to *refer to what* you have already said and also to *look ahead* to what you will say. In your writing, you should be able to *refer to the present, compare and contrast issues/concepts*. You will find these transitional words interesting to use.

Fig. 1: Transitional devices in writing



3.3.1 Parts of an Essay

You will begin a paragraph by indenting the first line. The next line begins at the margin. The topic sentence in the paragraph reveals the main idea. A paragraph ranges from a single sentence to between eight and or more sentences.

Now read the following paragraph, and note the *topic sentence* at the initial position/beginning of the paragraph.

Let us consider this topic sentence of the first paragraph of an essay entitled ‘A first visit to Oshodi market in Lagos’.

Topic Sentence { My first visit to Oshodi Market in Lagos was hectic. At first, we had a smooth ride half way through the Mile 2-Oshodi highway. Suddenly, our bus ran into a terrible traffic that held us down for about an hour. Our driver tuned up the bus stereo; and its wave sounds assault our ears, engaging our auditory organs like the noise from a locomotive engine. The heat from the bus was also unbearable. We were already in sweats, just as our momourings against the general uneasyness gradually became louder. But, our bus conductor who smelled faintly of cigarettes and local gin showed excitement, as he shouted orders at the driver to force his way through the long queue of the vehicular traffic. We had hardly gone a quarter of a kilometer when a police officer ordered our driver to stop. He requested for his driving license for willfully contravening traffic rules. But, our driver had none; instead, he offered a bribe to the police officer who rejected it. That was how we were delayed for an hour. So, we spent about two hours on a rather short journey from Mile 2 to Oshodi.

3.3.2 The Body of the Essay (Middle)

The body of the essay comprises the main issues or points raised in the essay. There is the use of appropriate transitions to show that you are moving from one point to another. For example, in an essay that has the title ‘The Role of Literature in the Development of Nigeria’, the body paragraphs may be introduced as follows:

The problem of reading culture affects the growth of the individual and the Nigeria nation in a number of ways.

First ...	}
Secondly ...	
Another point is ...	
Again ...	
Lastly ...	

3.3.3 The Conclusion (End of the Essay)

The last part of the essay is as important as the first. While the first introduces your topic, the last expresses the point which has been made in the preceding paragraphs. You have to use transitional devices here to enable your reader know that you have come to the end of the essay.

You may conclude your essay in a manner appropriate/suitable to the topic and method used. You can use any of the forms below:

- You can use a quotation to support or end your discussion
- You can be prophetic or look ahead in your conclusion
- You could reach a climax or a kind of resolution (denouement) at the end
- You may end the essay by summarising all the whole points in the paragraphs as your conclusion
- You may evaluate the main points discussed so as to state how irrelevant or important they are.

Examples of transitional devices have been given in this unit. You may however use some of these to conclude your essay topic such as ‘A first visit to Oshodi Market in Lagos’.

- Finally ...
- In conclusion ...
- To end my discussion ...
- To summarise ...
- Lastly ...

In conclusion, I had spent a whole year in the city of Lagos before I got used to the swift movement, sounds of horns, and other conflicts of city life. But, I have never stopped to wander where all the people stop at nights and where the busy bus stops and markets go to sleep as well.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Write two paragraphs on any subject of your choice showing clearly the use of transitional devices.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have mentioned and discussed some features of the paragraph. We have also talked about the types of paragraph and the conditions under which you can use transitional devices to make your writing flow and easy to read for your readers.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- the features of a paragraph
- the different types of paragraph
- how appropriate linkages smoothen reading/writing
- that paragraphs are categorised by their functions

In the next unit, you will be introduced to the writing process, leading to a more practical aspect of creative writing. This will include how you can avoid (plagiarism), the bad habit of copying another person's work. The writing process in the next unit reveals how you can make your thoughts germinate (form), through a (step by step) simple progression.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Briefly explain the features of a paragraph.
2. Paragraphs are categorised according to the functions they perform. Explain.
3. Write two essays, showing examples of (a) Narrative and (b) Descriptive types.
4. Using any essay topics, write at least two essays, showing the correct use of transitional devices.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 THE WRITING PROCESS I

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Sharpening your Power of Imagination
 - 3.1.1 Thought Progression Chart
 - 3.1.2 Plagiarism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit is planned to take you through some of the things you need to know before and while you do your writing. Your ability to sharpen your power of imagination will help your writing process. If you can learn the chain of thought progression, you know the category you belong. You will also know how to take a look at the things you wish to address in your work creatively. As you read this unit, you will find it educative.

Another important way by which you can present a well written account of the things you know is to write about what you have heard and improve upon it. At times you listen to lectures on a topic and you think that is the only approach to the topic. You soon discover that there are even simpler and more creative ways you could approach such topics when you listen or read about them from other writers. That is why it is important to read different books and approaches on creative writing.

Since creative writing is a continuous practice for you in life, you have to continue to learn how you can improve on it daily. You should not hesitate to read and reread even those topics you are already familiar with. This will make you to understand the subject more. As a result, it will make you stand out from the crowd of 'schooling writers'. Some learners look vaguely into the blank space when they hold their pens to write or when they sit by their laptops. They could not find any idea to put down on paper or they put down ideas that are without focus and meaningless, in disjointed/incoherent and skewed language. This shows to a great extent the incompetence of such learners who probably were not used to writing. This is often the reason why some writers in examinations go ahead to copy other people's works (plagiarism). And such is a serious crime in creative writing.

You must sharpen your thought progression chain for your vision/imagination to complement your pen. This is because, naturally ideas flow from up, in the head to down on the paper. Below are some of the objectives of this Unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- create something out of nothing by your powers of imagination
- illustrate your own type of creative writing
- avoid copying other people's work (plagiarism)
- create your own table and identify your creative power by applying some of the levels in the "thought progression" table.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Sharpening your Power of Imagination

Your ability to imagine deeply and thoroughly the subject you intend to write on/about is a very important factor in your writing process. Some students in public examinations could hardly write a line without steering at the ceiling. Some of them may hiss even kick, and curse, apparently showing their discomfort.

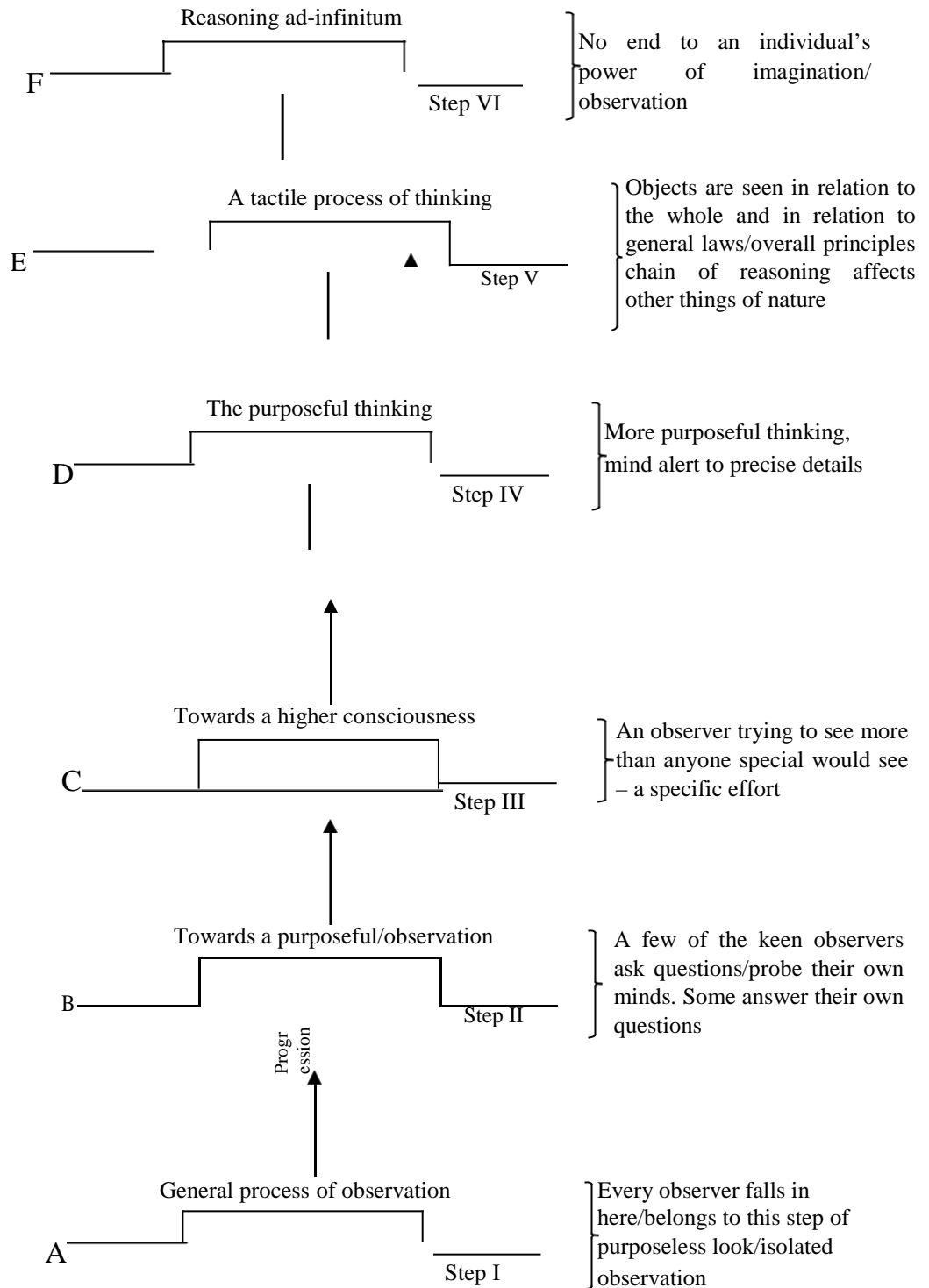
At the same time, some other students are versed in the imaginative thinking on whichever topic and are already scribbling away or jotting down points on how to go about their essays. This is the difference between the ability of the individual's imaginative process. You have to probe your memory. You should make a deliberate effort. You must see things beyond the ordinary way other people will see it. You should see things beyond the general impressions people have about it. The way you look at things must be purposeful and deeply philosophical. You should let your consciousness grow and be realistic about the things you want to write. To be able to describe things/events differently requires a special effort. You may have been passing by an abandoned structure on your way daily and may not notice anything about it. The day you will really notice it keenly, you will know you have just seen it because your new apprehension and description will be completely different from others.

In addition, this reminds me of a similar experience I had with my creative class at Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo in the year 2009. I had made up my mind for a practical class for ENG 2104 - *Creative Writing* that year, so that my students could develop their creative potentials beyond the classroom as well as put their mastery of the English Language to the test. So, I asked them to walk around the different statues in our Campus - the old St. Andrew's Teachers' Training College, Oyo. The statues were the Fine Arts practical works of the Old Students of the College. I asked them to observe a particular female statue in her sitting position. My students gave their different observations in writing about the female statue. Because I had warned them against seeing the statue from a general/common perceptive, a few of them were able to say something extraordinary about the statue. Some of their ways of seeing it were really shocking and beautiful.

You can also do something powerful with the way you see things. Now walk around/take a look at your surroundings. See if you can create a fresh thing from what is physically before you. The object could be something you've always seen. Are you ready? Then, start seeing things with your inner consciousness, only then you will realise you've never seen those things. The simple chains of reasoning below will help your creative power.

3.1.1 Thought Progression Chart

Fig. 1: A simple chain of reasoning (thought progression)



The level of fact

Key to the simple thought progression table

- (A) → Step (I) **General process of observation** - This happens when your creative/imaginative thought is at a common (narrow) level (i.e. when you see a bleating sheep as everyone else does).
- (B) → Step (II)— **Towards a purposeful observation** - This is a creative stage in which you observe and ask questions on your own or ask from other people about an object and or a creative work.
- (C) → Step (III)— **Towards a higher consciousness** - When you make a special effort to see more than anyone else would see (i.e. you may see the wheels of a bicycle as the two wheels of the society, that is, the rich and the poor).
- (D) → Step (IV)— **Purposeful thinking** - This occurs when your creative power becomes more purposeful. Your mind is alert to some precise details of what you are about to discuss.
- (E) → Step (V) — **A tactile process of thinking** - The way you think here becomes broad. You see the object you are trying to create in relation to your environment/overall principles or laws.
- (F) → Step (VI)— **Reasoning ad-infinitum** - There is no end in sight as to your power of reasoning. People invented the aeroplane, submarine, and so on. These are their levels of creative imagination. (i.e. for instance, in 1958, Chinua Achebe imagined a world of Umuofia, created his tragic hero, Okonkwo and created conflicts of culture between the whites and African culture. Achebe reduced the contacts of Nigeria/Africa in colonial situation into a fictional world).

Explanation

Study the above levels of how to sharpen your powers of imagination (creative progression table). Which step do you belong to? You can also put your level/power of reasoning to practice now by trying to create something out of nothing or something special out of that which is seen the same way by other people.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Write at least two essay paragraphs to determine your own level of creativity.

3.1.2 Plagiarism

In your pre-University days, you must have been cautioned by your teachers against copying the works of other people and say it is yours. You must also avoid it now, and as you continue to write later in life. This is because it is criminal and punishable by law to copy the works of other people without permission from the author or publisher. Even then, when you use a work of another person, you have to acknowledge the writer. Plagiarism is what you must try to avoid because it is theft. And, if you must use the idea of another writer, you owe the writer a credit line, even when you have not used his exact words.

You do not have to even think of slightly changing another writer's statement. If you pick a single quote from someone else's statement, or a phrase, you should put in quotes. For instance, if you are to take the description of "language as God's gift of social linguistically painful measure" from an article by Adegunle Adeniran titled, "Nigeria as Babel – the Paradox of a sociolinguistic Blessing", you must indicate your source (i.e. Adeniran 2008:7). You cannot claim not to know who the writer is.

We expect you to have read the works of other people on your chosen subject or area of discourse before you write.

In fact, it does not mean that no one can write as Adegunle Adeniran because he has already done so. What it means is that anyone writing on a subject should know that Adegunle Adeniran said it at an earlier date you should give credit in the following instances:

- when you use someone else's ideas
- when you quote someone else directly
- when you use someone else's examples
- when your present evidence taken from someone else's argument
- when you use statistics someone else gathered.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

State the condition under which you should give credit to a writer whose work you have used.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed how you can put your imagination into use creatively. We have also talked about the stages of creative consciousness that we expect from every writer. We have provided the explanation (key) to the thought progression table. We have discussed how you can avoid copying the works of other peoples.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- you need to be extraordinary in your sense of imagination
- it is important that you know your level of awareness
- it is important to avoid copying other people's works (plagiarism).

In Module 2, Unit 1, you will learn other skills that are necessary for a good creative writer, and why you should also read bad writers.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Why do you need to develop a keen sense of imagination as a writer?
2. Write *three* different paragraphs of prose, poetry and drama to put to the test your own simple chain of creativity. Your tutor will mark, grade and return to you.
3. Write a short note on plagiarism.
4. Draw a full diagram of the imaginative progression.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Adeniran, Adekunle (2008). *Nigeria as Babel – The Paradox of a Sociolinguistic Blessing*. Ibadan: Constellation Nigeria Publishers.

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MODULE 2

Unit 1	The Writing Process II
Unit 2	The Writing Process III
Unit 3	Writing a Draft I
Unit 4	Writing a Draft II

UNIT 1 The Writing Process II

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Other Skills Necessary for a Creative Writer
3.1.1	Read Other Things
3.1.2	Read Bad Writers
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit is written to take you through how you can measure your acceptability or rejection in order to prepare yourself adequately for a successful creative writing. You may say that you had been taken through some aspects that relate to creative writing in some of your previous English courses and in parts of this unit. You still need to be taken through some other relevant, related aspects so that you can be well grounded on the course.

In the previous units, you were taken through the various aspects of creative writing. You have also been taken through the qualities expected of a good writer, and other related/helpful topics. This Creative Writing III is designed to help you prepare better for any serious writing in the future. You can be a better writer when you combine all the writing processes that are complementary to the others. If you know all the rules, the better it is for you.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- produce “self-planning” for any creative writing
- determine your emotional suitability for a creative writing
- demonstrate some other skills necessary for a creative writing
- differentiate between a good and bad writing
- predetermine how your work will look/sound to your readers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Other Skills Necessary for a Creative Writer

1. Mental

You must be able to think deeply for you to be able to write well. The way you reason has so much to do with how well you write. This is because everything about your writing, your thinking, your planning begins from your head before it gets to the paper or laptop in front of you.

2. Psychological

Your emotional stability is also very important for your creative power. You will be able to do a better and well organised writing if you are emotionally stable. Your emotions will make ideas to move freely within the senses without any interference. This is because when you write, the five senses are involved for a coordinated working.

3. Rhetorical

You need to be aware of the rules that guide your craft. There are rules that guide every profession in life. Writing as a practice has its own guiding principles. When you fail to write within the rules expected of your creative practice, you will miss the semantic, aesthetic qualities and the depths of teaching the people expect from your work. When this happens, it may result in expressions that are linguistically awkward or syntactically odd. A good writing must flow smoothly and lend itself to a fluid reading.

4. Critical

As a writer, you should learn to reread a piece of work which you have completed at least three or more times. This will enable you to do a thorough critique of your writing. You must be your own judge after every form of writing. As you read the work, you will be able to ask questions that will compel you to make the work read better than it has been. Some of such questions are: have I used my punctuation marks correctly? Is my writing really mindful of my audience? What about my transitional words/phrases? Will my use of language appeal to my audience? What about clarity? Is there a chronological sense in my work? Have I presented my work in a form that is accessible and meaningful to readers? Are my paragraphs well arranged? The above and all other questions must be asked by you.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the effects of being critical, rhetorical and psychological in writing?

3.1.1 Read Other Things

Read your own voice in your work. When you have completed a piece of writing, you should read your own voice through the work. You should think of how you will sound to your reader. The way you sound to yourself while reading is the same way your work will sound to your readers. While you do this, you are not different from a man or woman who undergoes a speech training exercise in the language lab or a songster who is being trained in the music studio and listens to how his own voice will sound to his audience. In the case of a writer, you will know if your sentences are too long, so you can shorten their length. You will know if you are really passing a message across to your readers. You will also know if readers can feel your presence. Your readers will feel your presence if you have used the first person pronoun “I”, “You” and so on. So when you write now, make sure that you use the suitable authorial voice for your draft.

Why you must read your own voice

- to know how you sound to your readers
- to know if you should rewrite some or all the aspects of your work
- it is a fast way to detect errors in writing
- it will enable you compare your ideas with any other existing ideas.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

How are your mental and psychological states helpful to your writing?

3.1.2 Read Bad Writers

You should not concentrate on reading only the good writers. You are encouraged to read writers who are not really good. Sometimes, in the past, you may have read some very bad works without knowing that the works are really bad. It is the same way you listen to music that you don't really like. But, we do not want your own work to get outside to your readers as some musicians or writers allow their own works to go far and return with bad comments. When you read works that you feel are not really well written you will know. Only try and take note of the grey areas of such prose, play, poems or essays/letters. You may prefer to jot down three or more areas that put you off in a creative work. When you have done this, you will be able to compare the work with some other good books you have read. The whole purpose is to make you a better writer.

For instance, if you have two cups of tea on a table in front of you and you are asked to taste the contents in the two cups, you will know which one has sugar and the one that does not have. The same way is how you can differentiate between a good and bad sentence, wrongly punctuated sentences, and so on in a creative work. There are good lessons to learn by reading bad writings.

For the purpose of clarity, we may also add the examples/critique by the English novelist, George Orwell, on good and bad writings. In his essay "politics and the English Language", Orwell reproduces the writing of the unknown author of Ecclesiastes:

Passage A { I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is
not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither
yet bread to the wise, not yet riches to men of
understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but
time and chance happeneth to them all.

Orwell says the above passage is an example of "good English" because its writer uses simple, direct, smoothly flowing, and harmonious expressions. He therefore offers a contrastive view of the above, passage, this time written by an imaginary bad writer. The passage reads:

Passage B { Objective considerations of contemporary phenomena compel the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.

Source: Berke (2000)

In his critique, Orwell explains why Ecclesiastes is preferable. According to the English novelist, passage A contains words that are of everyday life. Passage B has words from Latin and Greek. The first sentence of the second passage contains vivid images, phrases like “objective consideration of contemporary phenomenon” or “with innate capacity” or “considerable element of the unpredictable”. The use of long, phrases, Greek and Latinate expressions in the passage bore readers, and deny him ‘access’ to the meaning of the passage. From the above passage B qualifies to be a good example of a bad writing.

Why you must read a bad work

- to teach you how not to be a bad writer
- to differentiate between bad and good writing
- to help you probe your own mind better when you write
- it helps you to plan your work better

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

No books are entirely good, and none are entirely bad. Explain.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have mentioned some skills that are necessary for creative writing so that you can do better as a writer. We have also discussed to what extent you can determine how your readers would accept your work in the form of voice reading. You have also been exposed to the lessons you will learn from reading both good and bad writers.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- knowing your (mental, psychological, rhetorical, and critical) states of being are necessary for a good writing
- you can read your own voice to know how you will sound to your readers
- there are advantages in reading bad books too.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain why as a writer you should be psychological and critical.
2. Read your own voice in an essay of not more than a page and state objectively how you will sound to your reader (give your voice comment at end of the page).
3. Creative works that are not well written are not really bad. Discuss.
4. Read any piece of writing, prose, play, poetry, or essay you consider a bad work and give reasons.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 WRITING PROCESS III

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Free Writing (Automatic Writing)
 - 3.1.1 Idea Generating Tree
 - 3.1.2 Brainstorming
 - 3.1.3 Mind Mapping or Clustering
 - 3.1.4 Talking to Other People
 - 3.1.5 Cubing
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to take you to another stage of the writing process. The skill that is required in this type of writing process is a little bit advanced and more practical than for the previous units. More practical because in your final year in the University, you should be able to put all that you have been taught in creative writing to meaningful and acceptable practice.

You should learn how not to approach your subject cold. This Unit is essentially on the variety of exercises you should do before you begin to write. This Unit has used a variety of examples and very interesting formats that you will find easy and quick to learn on how to set out on your writing.

You are quite familiar with some of these examples, but we have used local examples. In fact, we have used examples from some of the programmes at National Open University of Nigeria. This will simplify the work of creativity and make you learn with ease. Just read on and you will find a number of interesting examples that are play-like but exciting.

One of the very good ways to develop your writing skills is to know what you should do first before you start to write. You may have been taught some of these things by your lecturers. At first, it may appear very clear to you, but there may be some difficulties when you are asked to write. That is why you should put these things into practice. We are considering a more practical example that will improve your writing.

Creative writing is meant to test how well you could practice some of these things that you have learnt. By writing, you should be able to express yourself with clarity and sometime with a sense of humour. This is to make your work appeal to your audience and achieve its purpose. Below are some of the objectives of this Unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- apply all that your lecturer has taught you about practical writing
- identify what you should do first before you start to write
- practice different types of the writing process
- explain the meaning of free writing using an example from your programme at NOUN.

4.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Free Writing (Automatic Writing)

It was (Elbow 1973) who suggested a form of preparatory exercise, “self-confrontation” for a writer. He says this must be done three times a week. When you do things, the wheels of your mind are set turning. “Jabbering” or “babbling exercise” will help you to generate ideas. You should first write, write anything on paper. Type anything that comes to your mind on your laptop or computer. Feel relaxed as you do this. You should not worry yourself about errors, about grading because what you are writing is not gradable at that stage. It is like a footballer who does some approved field exercises like running or jumping or stretching before he goes into the field of play for the actual game. Just allow your mind to go blank. Don’t stop; don’t pause for spellings, just write, write and write. It is this free and uncoordinated type of writing that you will later develop into a serious/good writing

An example of free writing is given with the title below:

NOUN: A University in the Universe

- *The year it flung its doors open for admission the NOUN was met with mixed feelings. Later it assumed the position of the great eagle which spreads its wings covering the Kilimanjaro Mountain and stretching over the Nile river. It spreads northwest, southeast, and everywhere it is like a storm that rolls shoreward even when the University admitted her first set of students, it still echoes in peoples ears like the endless wait for the reality of a dream or like Becketts Waiting for Godot but when it finally took*

off different opinions went into conflicts as some people described it as the hull of a ship escaping the foundering embrace of the aggressive but retreating storm while to some people it was like a prancy horse and to some a hall of fame whether an eagle a ship or a horse the National Open University of Nigeria has finally taken a front sit in the universe of Universities so its Uhuru do we say that.

In the above example of a free writing passage, you will notice the followings:

- the passage does not have paragraphs
- it does not have punctuations/badly punctuated
- its sentences or phrases are mangled/mixed up
- it does not have structure
- its linkages are not well handled/used
- spellings and use of language are not chronological and correct
- there is the use of jargon in the passage.

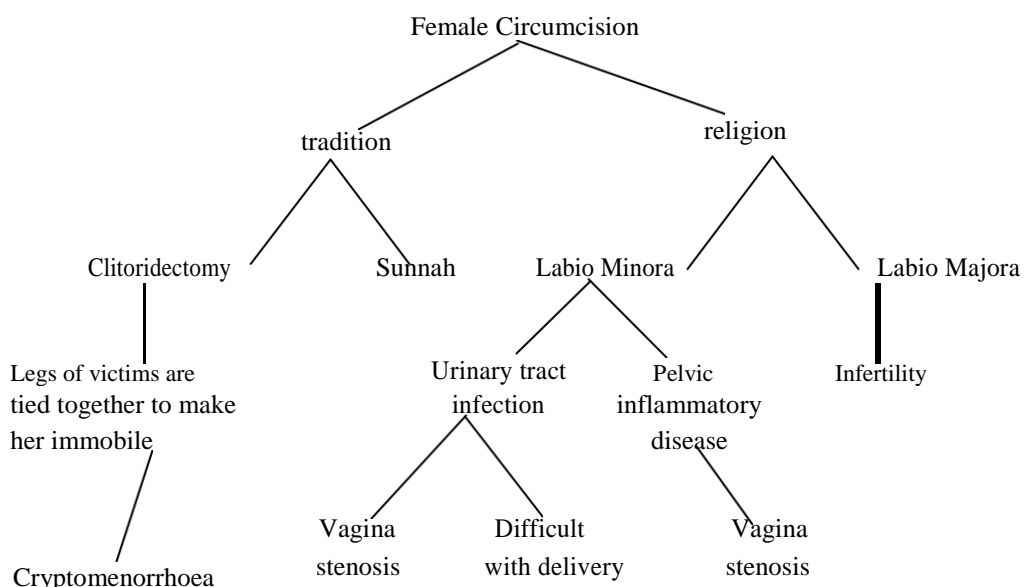
You can also draft your own free writing on a subject of your choice. I have used the National Open University for my own free writing. You may decide on any subject of your choice.

All of the above do not matter. They are the features we expect to see in your own free writing. It is usually a form of writing that is often not planned. It is like an exercise before the real task is done. It is a way by which a writer first speaks to himself. You should practise your own free writing now and always.

3.1.1 Idea Generating Tree

You should arrange your ideas about a subject of your choice from general to specific. Ideas can also be arranged from greater to lesser or the main to supporting ideas. This is another method that you can use to organise and present your ideas. If you want to write on say “female circumcision”, your idea generating tree can take the following form.

Fig. 1: Example of idea generating tree



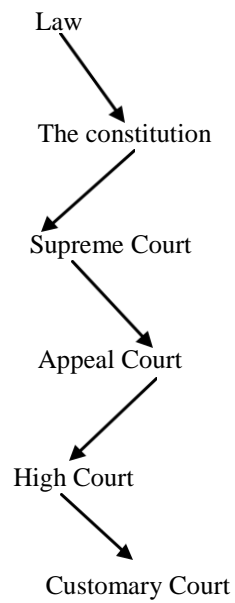
Source: Oriola (2000)

In our idea tree above, you will see that the main subject is Female Circumcision. This is followed by the situations under which circumcision occurs in the traditional African societies. The health implication of circumcision follows. The words are arranged in an orderly or hierarchical form.

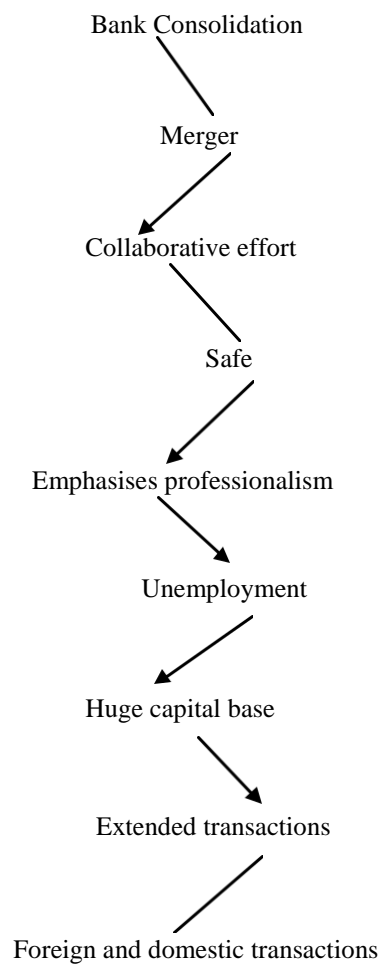
3.1.2 Brainstorming

When your mind generates useful ideas on a subject, you should be more focused while you write down your mental information. Your jottings could be in the form of an outline or an idea tree. When you brainstorm, you do not write sentences. Only that the words follow one another; with a key word starting as the key point or starting point. A word serves as the point of departure for other terms, and with the use of more words that are relevant to what you discuss, branches are maintained in other directions. Corporate organisations often use the brainstorm exercise to solve problems in their boardrooms. The key words/phrases that will form our examples will be taken from some programmes of the National Open University of Nigeria. Our first example is Law

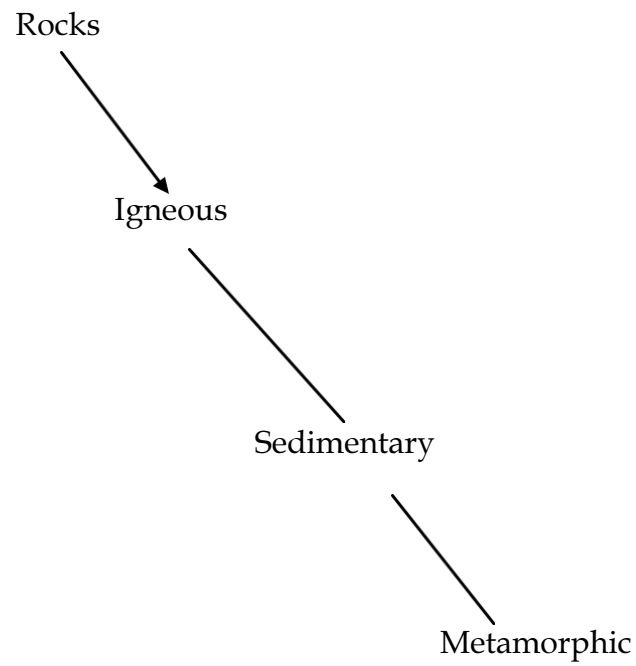
Fig. 2: Example of mind mapping



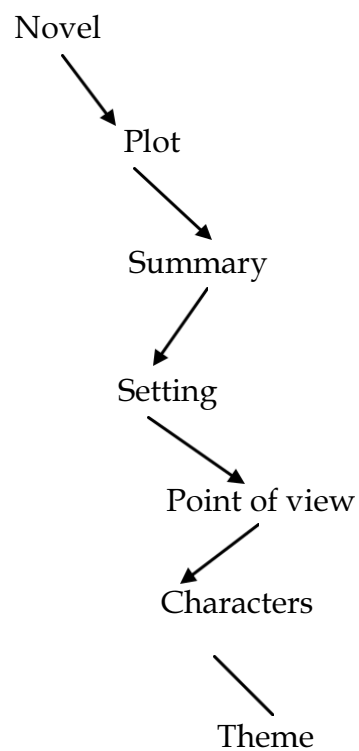
Our next example is 'Banking and Finance'. Our key word may be 'Banking Consolidation'.



Similarly from Physical Geography, we can also have the format below:

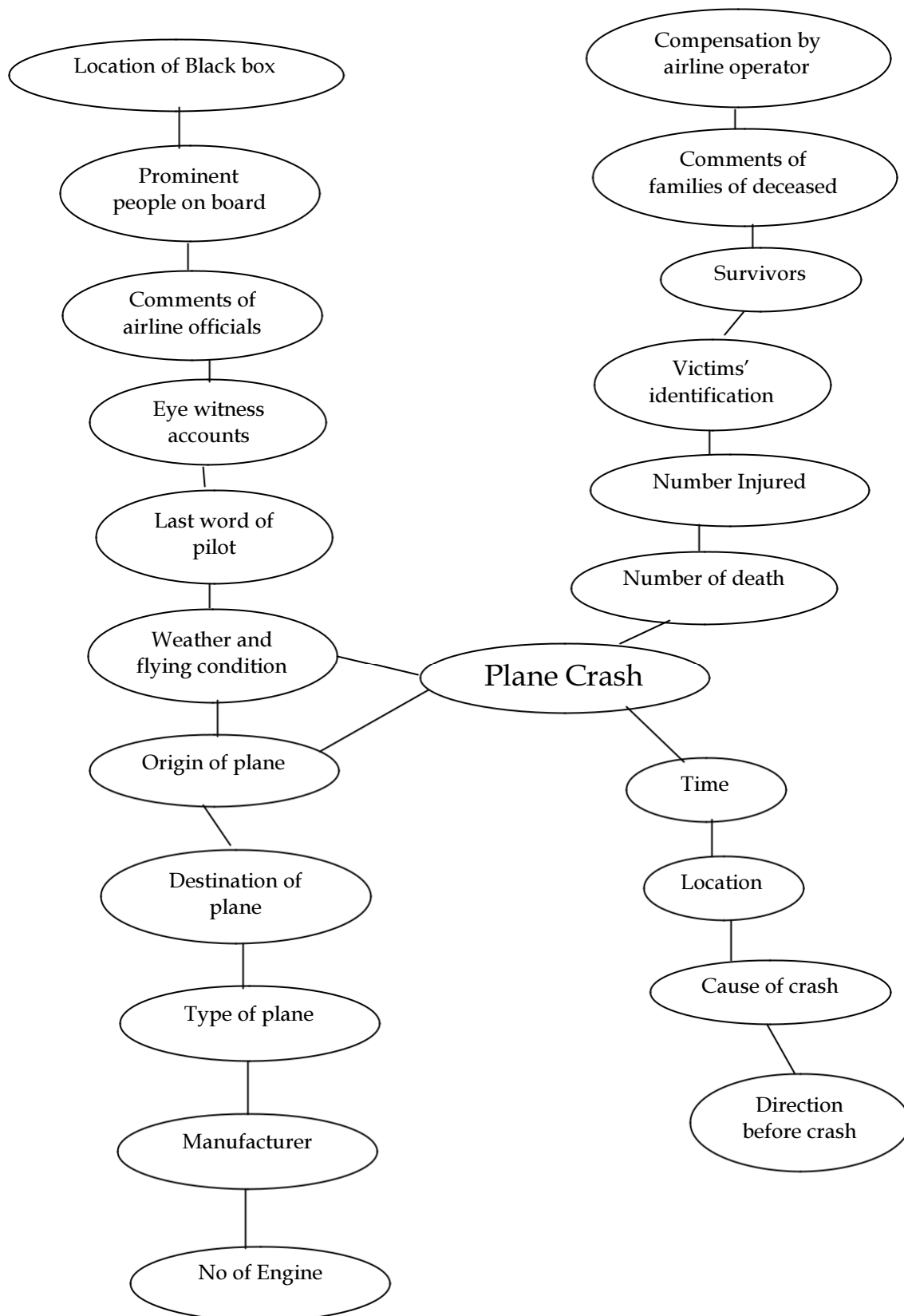


In English programme of National Open University of Nigeria too



3.1.3 Mind Mapping or Clustering

When you write, you move through stages of confusion and uncertainty to a point that you will have a clearer view of what you want to write. You should start with the main word usually circled in the centre of the page. You will then think of other related or similar ideas and add new circles, moving outward on the page away from the subject or main word into the various directions. The ideas that are similar or related are placed in overlapping circles, connected with lines to make up a clustering. You can also think of a word for your mind mapping. We may illustrate with the word “plane crash”.



3.1.4 Talking to Other People

You can talk to other people on your subject. You can make notes on their opinions on your work. This is good when your idea is in the germinating stage. This will make your work more original. Why don't you talk to other people today on that topic you have in mind?

3.1.5 Cubing

This type of writing considers your subject by:

- describing
- comparing
- associating
- analysing
- applying and
- arguing for or against it.

Let us use modern means of transportation for instance:

1. **Describe it:** Tell us what modern means of transportation is all about.
2. **Compare it:** Compare modern with traditional means of transportation.
3. **Associate it:** You can relate it with something you know/it reminds you of
4. **Argue it:** Which is better? You can take a position and give reasons (i.e.) modern means of transportation is faster and more reliable if compared with the traditional system of transportation.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Do a free writing of not more than ten lines and state what makes it different from the normal writing.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have mentioned some of the prewriting activities. We have also talked about how you can put them into practice by giving some practical examples of some of them.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt that:

- you need to do some warming up exercises before you write
- you can use any familiar topic for your prewriting processes
- prewriting activities take away the fear you normally have when you write

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Using adequate example, write a short note on free or automatic writing.
2. With the aid of key words in your area of study, explain the Idea generating tree.
3. (a) What is mind mapping or clustering?
(b) Why must you talk to others over your topic?
4. With the aid of relevant comparisons, define the term 'curbing'.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 WRITING A DRAFT I

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Reviewing
 - 3.1.1 How to Make your Work Better
 - 3.1.2 Rewriting
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to take you through another form you can use to start your creative writing. If you can take time to read through it, you will find yourself garnering further useful facts/details about how you can give your writing meaning. It is good to revise your work, review, evaluate and rewrite it. This Unit tells you that writing a draft practice is an art of creativity which you must learn sincerely.

Another very good way to show one's skills in creative writing is to see every activity involved in it in relation to the whole. Some of you may never have taken some simple things like revising, reviewing, and rewriting seriously even when you find yourself doing them. Some students do not even see why they must take the pain to rewrite any work they have written. They are even uninterested in reviewing or rewriting their works. It is certain that such students will have no business with evaluating the work. This is not a good practice for you if you are one of such students.

Creative writing is a course that to puts your sense of endurance to the test. You will see that it takes some endurance and patience to write, and then to revise what you have written, and finally to evaluate it. When you are able to engage in these acts yourself, it means you are growing and will soon become your own teacher.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- revise your work
- correct your work
- rewrite what you have written
- evaluate your work to see if it is good and if not to improve it.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Reviewing

While you are writing your essay, you can be doing the review during the writing process simultaneously. Many writers prefer to review when they finish their first drafts. When you do this, some changes may occur in the process of the review. The changes that occur from such a revision are of two different types. They are:

1. surface changes and
 2. meaning changes
1. **Surface changes:** This is also called editing and proofreading. You correct some errors; take another look at your own style to see if it fits into conventional (generally acceptable) usage. And, of course, you have to see if your style is good enough or within the suitable level of your audience/readers. You also have to check your grammar, sentences, punctuation and choice of words.
 2. **Meaning changes:** You may need to add some facts to the content. You do this by deleting the existing content and adding to it. In this type of review changes are often more serious because it involves major additions to the paragraph, sentence, the idea and in the reader/purpose and structural changes.

Characteristics of Surface Changes

- the choice of words, time, subject, purpose must fit the needs of the reader
- the paper should have a clearly stated/implied thesis
- all the paragraphs must support the thesis (i.e. paper must show unity, logical organisation and adequate development)
- the subject must be appropriately focused
- your paper must match your outline if used
- each paragraph must have a specific topic sentence

- all the sentences in each paragraph must relate logically to the paragraph topic
- all terms must be clearly defined
- the paper must have a reflective opening and a strong conclusion
- the paper must accomplish what you intend to achieve.

Characteristics of Meaning Changes

- each sentence must be grammatically correct
- sentences must be complete and well punctuated (i.e. comma, full stop, semicolon, colon, question exclamation marks, brackets)
- you must quote correctly
- choice of words must be appropriate, economical.

3.1.1 How to Make your Work Better

- keep away from your work for some time. It could be some hours or days before you return to review/evaluate the work
- give your work to your friends to read or if you are in groups, give your own to other members in the next group
- do not be so closely involved; detach yourself from the work so that you can do a better judgment
- try to see your paper again and again so that you can be more critical.

When you have reviewed your work, you need to arrive at a sense of self judgment. You may need to ask yourself some questions about the work. Is this paper well punctuated? Will this paper meet the demands of my readers? How about the grammatical and logical structuring? Your thought has become your torch to the tunnel of the reading minds of your audience. What is important is to do your evaluation sincerely. And you will arrive at if the work is good or bad. This takes us to rewriting.

3.1.2 Rewriting

You have to evaluate your work and find out if it will not meet the expectations of your readers expect you to give them. You should be prepared to rewrite all necessary part or the whole. You may decide to rewrite your work as many times as possible. This depends on when you are finally sure that the work has given you what you want to achieve after writing. The rewriting process is, to me, the most important part of any creative work. It is the stage that you will give your best to your readers. Do you wish to give to your readers what they will like to see? Or what they will look at and ignore. The choice is yours.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain why you must evaluate and rewrite your work.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have discussed the process of reviewing when you have completed the writing of your essay. We have also talked about the characteristics of evaluating and reviewing and how you can make your work better. You have to do all these so that your work can make a good reading.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this work, you have learnt that:

- as you write your essay, you can make some changes
- you can evaluate your work (i.e. is it good or bad?)
- you can rewrite your work as many times as possible for it to look better
- in the next Unit, you will be introduced to some related pressures associated with writing, things to look for when writing your draft. There are also some practical examples of drafts for you to study and you will also write your own.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

‘My belief in distance learning programme’.

1. Write your first and second drafts of a full essay on the above topic.
2. Write your final Draft of the essay topic in question (1) above.
3. Write the first, second and final drafts on the essay topic “Life is about Creativity”
4. Write a brief note on surface and meaning changes?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Benson, Davidson (2004). *Writing and Rewriting*. London: Hope.

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UNIT 4 WRITING A DRAFT II

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Writing and Its Related Pressures
 - 3.1.1 Increasing Information on a Subject
 - 3.1.2 Commitment to the Subject
 - 3.1.3 The Writer's Curiosity about his Readers
 - 3.1.4 Meeting the Deadline
 - 3.2 Things to Look for in a Draft
 - 3.2.1 Example of Draft A
 - 3.2.2 Example of Draft B
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to teach you how you can write an acceptable draft. The Unit is necessary so that you can know what you will do next after you have done all your normal thinking, prewriting – free writing, clustering, reading, researching and talking to people, establishing a relationship with your audience and getting yourself organised. You may wonder what else is left after you had gone through all these layers of the writing process.

There are still more to be done. They are normal exercises you already know. You will find reading this volume very interesting.

One important thing that you should know about writing is that it is a practice that requires you to continue to go back to revise your old rules. You need to always do this so that you will not forget them as you do your daily or periodic writing. You may think that you do not need to go back to read the writing rules again. You need to master the art of writing through serious writing exercises.

Creative writing has its own forces that are built to empower the writer. You need to know the stop sign as you write. This is to make sure that the powerful current of writing does not sweep you away. You may come across situations in life that may compel you to write.

When such writing situations occur, you are expected to be able to demonstrate your fine skills in creative writing.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- plan for a successful writing
- identify point at which to stop the gathering of information on your writing or research
- write the drafts of your work.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Writing and Its Related Pressures

The time you submit your work or think that you are through with your stages of writing is not the end of it all. There are some other factors that you need to beware of as you write. These factors also have their own pressures or temptations. And, as a writer who is learning to be a professional, you must know about these “forces”. So, when you find yourself under pressure while writing, you will be able to cope. The forces are often positive with the exception of the negative one, but you need to treat them with care when they come closer. Blackson (2004) describes the four positive forces; these pressures act as positive, often urgent “forces for writing”, only one force that is negative is delay.

3.1.1 Increasing Information on a Subject

You will find yourself trying to collect information on a particular subject on which you are writing. This temptation is common to many writers. You will find yourself in the pushful urge to continue to do an endless consultation with people on a particular topic you are writing on.

3.1.2 Commitment to the Subject

You will find yourself becoming more interested in the subject. The more you make some findings about your subject, the more you find yourself involved/committed to it. You will also be readily eager to tell others who may not be aware of the subject about it.

3.1.3 The Writer’s Curiosity about his Readers

As a writer, you will become worried by how your readers will accept your work. You are bothered about the message that your work will pass to your readers. How will your readers react to your work? Will they be

sympathetic to your finished work?, will your style be acceptable to them?, will they show indifference to it? Will your work get the support of your readers? How will they receive it? When you are through with a piece of writing, the above and many other questions jostle for attention in you out of curiosity.

3.1.4 Meeting the Deadline

When you write, you should give yourself a deadline within which you must finish the work. You may not be able to finish writing a book without a deadline. As you write with a deadline in mind, the time you are expected to finish your work, you find your time reduced to the experience you will have when you travel in a moving train – you see all the poles, mountains, hills and forests retreating fast as the train in which you are penetrates the empty space. A creative piece is not supposed to be abandoned or left uncompleted.

3.2 Things to Look for in a Draft

When you write a draft, you will have the chance to examine your own ideas more seriously. You will be able to do a more respectful critique of your work. You should take note of the facts when you write a draft.

Content

You should be able to present facts in your work with facts. You will achieve this by looking at your topic from different angles/perspectives. You must be realistic in your essay. You must also avoid contradictions. Your point of view should show some candidness.

Organisation

You should try to be detailed and focused in your writing. You should be careful so that your organisational structure should indicate that you can shape your materials meaningfully. What you have written should have a 'human face', that is, one fact should lead to another in a way that it will give your work a sense of direction. Your time should reflect your subject.

Coherence

This means that the order in which you have arranged your facts/details should have a traceable pattern. You must use suitable transitional words like therefore, also, but, again, and so on. Transitions serve as chains that connect your facts/paragraphs together.

Style

Your choice of word, expressions, tones, language and so on constitutes your style. You can achieve this by being thorough, careful, precise, and giving attention to details as you do your writing.

Mechanics

Your essay must not contain spelling errors, badly punctuated paragraphs, or violate any grammatical rules.

3.2.1 Example of Draft A

As an example, study the three drafts of the introductory paragraphs entitled “*My Life without a Father*”. The work has been revised in three stages for clarity purpose.

Stanley Adelodun Oriola - Draft I (Rough Draft)

- I hardly remember the man who gave me life except for the old-fashioned faded picture which my mother handed over to me. I was only five years old when he died. His face is a retreating image in my mind.

} Is this topic sentence/thesis statement correct?
- I remember my Uncle told me how he led a careless life. That was when I had asked him, how did my father die? He was hesitant as he mumbled, ‘Stanley, your father was a brilliant and respected man’. His car ran into a ditch in an afternoon he was drunk! And, I hung my head in despair. His shrill voice added, anyway, your father tried his best when he was alive ...

↑
(b) does the sentence convey adequate meaning or give us a complete information about Stanley’s father?

Comments

What can you see in this first draft? What is your comment on its contents, organisation, coherence, style and mechanics? If not good enough, then see this next draft.

Stanley Adelodun Oriola - Draft 2 (Rough Draft)

My Life without a Father

- I hardly remember my father except for the old-fashioned faded picture which my mother gave me when I cried for the absence of the man who gave me life. I was only five years old when he died; his face is a retreating image in my mind. (a) This topic sentence / this statement is better
- But, it was Uncle Joe who told me how my father died. Through a respected and brilliant man, but he was a drunkard. His car ran into a ditch in an afternoon. I hung my head in despair. I thought of the shameful life that my father lived. My Uncle consoled me in a shrill voice, “anyway your father tried his best, but I think he died so that you could achieve all that he never achieved.
- a) In paragraph one of the second draft ... “my father” ... replaces “the man who gave me life” in paragraph one.
- b) Paragraph two of the second draft introduces the transition “But” to connect the ideas in paragraph one with that in paragraph two.
- c) The first line in paragraph two is more specific on Stanley’s father. Other lines of the paragraph give details of the writer’s father. The draft 2 is better punctuated than draft 1.

Stanley Adelodun Oriola - Draft 3 (Final Draft)

My Life without a Father

- I hardly remember my father. The old-fashioned faded picture which my mother threw at me when I cried for his absence was my only memory of him.
- But, it was Uncle Joe who told me so much about the man who gave me life. Though, brilliant but my father was a drunkard. He was killed by his own car which ran into a ditch in an afternoon that he was drunk. When I heard this, something pricked in me. I thought of the careless life that my father lived and hung my head in despair. But, my Uncle consoled me, “any way, Stanley, your father tried his best.” He adds “I

Mask on the Face of Death

I may not be correct if the way I think about dying

is real. This is because I do not have the ^(a) notice the changes made here and in
experience of dying. Only that my imagination the first sentence
 seems to take me to the land of the dead.

But, people have different experiences about death

and dying. About death, some people believe that ^{repeated (b)}
^{repeated (b)} a force too powerful to control closes one's eyes

in progression. The force makes it seem as if one

is deeply asleep or falling into a deep dungeon. As

^{repetition (c)} death ^{repetition (c)} is compared to a deep sleep and a sweet one. ^{incomplete sentence (e)}

Also, apart from seeing death as a form of sleep, it

is as well seen as a dream. Not just the common

^{repetition (d)} dreams but the gentle, and quiet type. The type of

dream in which you may never be awakened to see

^{repetition (d)} your friends, relations and loved ones again.

Comments

Study the second draft of the essay above, what do you think is wrong with it? Can you see that some words have been unnecessarily repeated in the paragraphs? Can you notice some improvements from the first and this second draft? Can you notice the aspects where this draft makes a significant improvement over the first draft?

Note that the reason for rewriting a work (draft) is to make the present draft better than the earlier one. You may decide to change its title, restructure the ideas, paragraphs and so on. Your drafts can be as many as possible.

Stanley Adelodun Oriola - Draft 3 (Final Draft)

Mask on the Face of Death

- I have not stopped wondering if the way I think about the experience of dying is exactly how it is.

- Indeed, I have often bothered about what it looks like to die. One need not be scared of discussing one's end. My mother had told me that "nothing is as sure as death". So, since age ten, the idea of one dying has puzzled me.
- However, people have often discussed death as a form of sleep from which one will never wake up. One's eyes, people say close in forceful progression. It often begins, first as a form of sleep and then a dream. Others have described it as a sweet sleep or sweet dream. It is not the common type of sleep I had thought it to be when I was a boy. In this type, one may never see one's friends, relations and loved ones again.

Comments

Study this final draft of the essay. How does it improve on drafts 1 and 2? Can you see the topic sentence of the first paragraph? What about the ideas in the paragraphs? What impression about its punctuations and arrangements of thoughts (chronology). You can write better than this. So, try your hands on one or more drafts of an essay topic of your choice. Before you do that, try and compare the contents, organisation, coherence, style and mechanics of the three drafts.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Write an essay and show in two similar drafts how you can improve upon it.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have discussed the pressures you will encounter as a writer. We have also discussed the things you should look for when you write a draft of your essays. Now that I have given you the examples of how to write a draft, you can now try your hands on the writing of a draft, taking note of content, coherence, organisation and style.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- there are good pressures you must cope with in your prewriting activities
- some of the things to look for in a draft are content, organisation, coherence and style
- in the next Unit, you will be introduced to how to write an outline for your essays (descriptive and narrative essays).

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What are the positive pressures associated with writing?
2. Explain the factors that make a good draft.
3. Write the first draft of any essay topic of your choice taking note of the essential factors in writing.
4. Write the first, second and final drafts of any essay topic of your choice.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3

Unit 1	The Descriptive and Narrative Essay
Unit 2	The Expository and Argumentative Essay
Unit 3	Prose Writing
Unit 4	Poetry Writing
Unit 5	Play Writing

UNIT 1 THE DESCRIPTIVE AND NARRATIVE ESSAY

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
	3.1 Introduction to Essay Writing
	3.1.1 Types of Essay
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to help you present good descriptive and narrative essays when you decide to write one. The art of writing demands some familiar skills some of which we have always engaged in our everyday practices.

In this Unit, you will be going through the descriptive and narrative kinds of creative writing. Going through this type of writing again will help you not to forget some of the tips you were taught in some of the English courses you undertook before your 400 level.

One of the best ways for you to build up your confidence as a writer is to continue to write. You should learn to write all the time so that you will not find creative writing too difficult in the future. You may have thought of writing as a difficult thing to do. Writing is not a difficult practice; it only needs determination, commitment and fortitude on the part of the learner.

Through creative writing, you will also be able to write for specific situations. It will teach you how to do it and the purpose for which you must have your pen and paper by you always. This is because; writing is usually exciting, depending on how you see it.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- plan for a good essay writing
- determine the materials for your essay
- outline your essay structure
- write different types of essay.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Introduction to Essay Writing

Before you decide to write an essay, you should first make up your mind on the type of essay you want to write. This will help you to have an idea on how to go about the writing of such an essay.

The topic/type of an essay will determine the type of steps that you will take. The outlines below are some of the steps you can take before you write an essay.

- have an outline for your essay
- your outline should be in a form that will enable you develop your points
- the first sentence of your essay should be the thesis statement, your opinion on the subject you are writing on
- let your thesis form the contents of your paragraph of an extended length
- begin your essay in an interesting manner (i.e. use quotations, questions, a normal definition, idiom, and so on)
- the main body of your essay should contain the texts of your discussion
- you should conclude your essay using a beautiful paragraph
- punctuate your essays correctly
- use transitional devices such as ‘furthermore’, ‘however’, ‘again’, and so on in your essays.

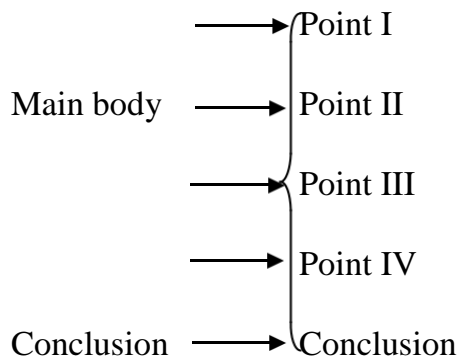
An Essay Outline

When you complete the outline of your essay, it should be in this format.

Topic of the essay (i.e. My first experience as a distance learning student)

Essay → Outline

Introduction of your essay Use thesis statement or topic sentence



3.1.1 Types of Essay

The two types of essays that will be discussed in this Unit are:

- (a) Descriptive and
- (b) Narrative

(a) **Descriptive Essay**

You should be able to explain what something looks like. You can also use descriptive style to discuss how a person looks like or, tell a story. Your choice of words will help to effectively describe your subject.

How to Describe your Subject

- You must be detailed in your description.
- You must describe in picturesque detail (i.e. your description should be able to trigger the imagination of your readers).
- Use suitable adjectives to describe your subject.
- Let your details be in a logical and orderly manner (i.e. if you want to describe how to ride a bicycle, we expect you to start from how you would mount a bicycle, place your left leg on its left pedal, leaving your right leg to have a grip of the ground for stability, as you hold on firmly to its handles, look straight forward ahead of you and so on).
- Let the characters in your narration be life like (i.e. let them represent human/animal values).
- Make use of surprise/suspense in your narration to arouse curiosity of your reader.
- Let your narration have a time frame (i.e. the duration of event(s) narrated).

- Your narration should have a particular location of where it happened.
- Your narration should have a plot (i.e. linking story line different in the whole story).
- Let your story have a central idea.

(b) **Narrative Essay**

You may be asked to tell a story of what has happened in your life. When you do this you are telling us about your true life experience. Your own narrative essay must be very descriptive. It should reveal how something has happened and in the order in which it happened. For example, you can use the narrative when you write reports, a short story, novel, biographies. Your narration may be real (factual) or fictional. What matters to you is to make your story believable and interesting.

Things to do when writing a narrative essay are:

- your essay must grip the attention of your reader through an interesting introductory paragraph
- create your story around a real life occurrence
- let your description evoke true life picture of your setting
- you should follow a logical/sequence of how the event occur
- you should avoid unnecessary/impossible exaggerations in your essays.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Describe the structure of a narrative or descriptive essay.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have discussed some important steps that will make your essays interesting. We have also talked about making an outline and some things you must avoid when you write.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- there are some steps you are expected to take before you write an essay
- it is good to make an outline
- outline some things you must do before you write a descriptive essay

- how you can describe your subjects in narrative and descriptive essays
- your essays must have setting, plot, themes, characters and time frame.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Outline the steps you should take before you set out to write any kind of essay.
2. Write an *introduction* and *one paragraph* and *conclusion* to all the essay topics below.
 - (i) My encounter with the Nigerian policemen at a road block.
 - (ii) The first wedding ceremony I witnessed.
 - (iii) The day I took uniformed armed robbers for policemen.
3. Write a short note on narrative essay?
4. (a) Write a one-page essay on 'How to ride a bicycle'.
 (b) What are the steps you should take in describing your subjects in a descriptive essay?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 THE EXPOSITORY AND AUGMENTATIVE ESSAYS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Expository Essay
 - 3.2 Argumentative Essay
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is a continuation of Unit I. It is designed to prepare to become effective writers of the different types of essays. It take through the skills that will enable you write the correct essays. You need to master the skills that will make your essays a readable, suitable and organised. The techniques that are required for writing the essays are different. That is why you should take note of every detail that is required for a successful writing of these essays. You are encouraged to read through the subheadings under this Unit and you will be glad you did.

One of the best methods by which you can write effectively is to identify the characteristics of one particular essay from the other. It is for this reason that this Unit treats the different types of essay as a follow up to the first Unit of Module 3 which you have just read. We do not expect you to write descriptive essay the way you will write a narrative expository or argumentative types. Understanding the different styles and modes of creative composition will help you out of the possible embarrassment of writing any of the essays the wrong way. To enable you achieve this you should be able to express yourself with clarity, using the appropriate requirements. The purpose is to be able to satisfy your audience, or convince your teacher.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list steps/qualities necessary for writing convincing, expository and argumentative essays
- outline your essay topics
- discuss the methods of writing an expository essay
- write effective argumentative essays.

5.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Expository Essay

This type of essay informs a process or the how of a process or series of processes. It explains different things in the world. Examples of this type of essay are encyclopedias, students' handbooks, academic articles. The expository type of writing is often more reliable.

Methods of Expository Writing

Expository writing can be done through the following methods.

Enumeration Method

Here, you present details sequentially (i.e. expository method) explain possibly by comparison or show the difference between one or more things, or parts of a thing. You could do this by *classification* and *partitioning*.

Fig. 1 Comparison by Classification

You can use classification to group items according to their related parts. This outline will help you.

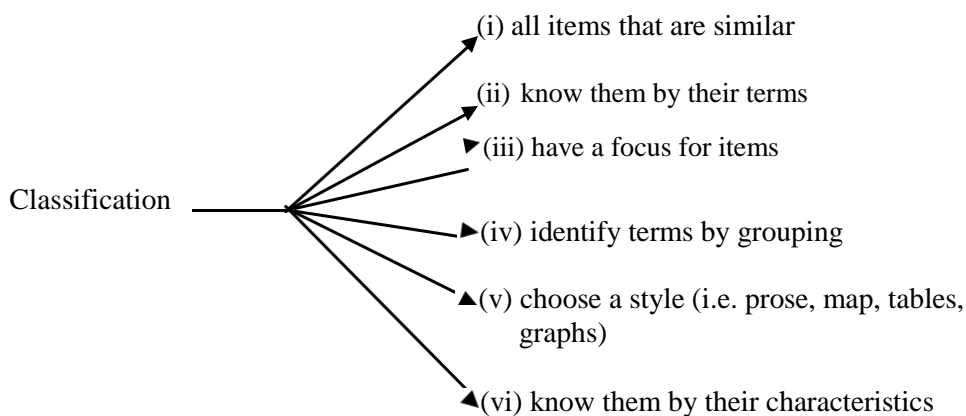
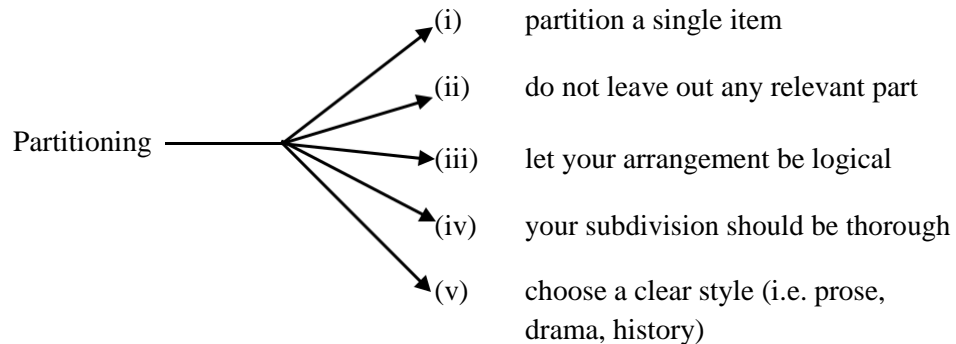


Fig. 2 Comparison by Partitioning

Partitioning

You partition when you divide a thing into its parts so that it can make sense in relation to the whole. This outline will help you.



Definition Method

Give a clear and precise definition of the issue you are explaining. Your definition should be rich and a little flowery for it to appear attractive to your readers.

Cause and Effect Method of Exposition

This type of writing is also achieved by developing and explaining the causes and effects of certain issues. This should include immediate and remote causes. There is cause and effect relationship between the subjects that are being discussed.

Illustration as a style of exposition

- It explains a general statement and gives specific examples.
- Writing should be clear.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the methods of writing expository essay?

3.2 Argumentative Essay

In this type of writing you attempt to prove a point with convincing reasons and good conclusions. You should, as a writer, be objective and candid in your presentation and view. When you put forward a very strong argument, you will be able to make a change. Your argument cannot be effective unless you are logical and objective.

How to Achieve Effective Argument

You should bear the following points in mind when you write an argumentative essay.

- take a position right from the introduction
- outline the points coherently
- present each point as a Unit of expression
- use linkages to connect your paragraphs (i.e. moreover, however, therefore and so on)
- pick some of the points raised by your opponent and prove them to be wrong
- give a summary of your points and disprove some of them by using stronger facts.

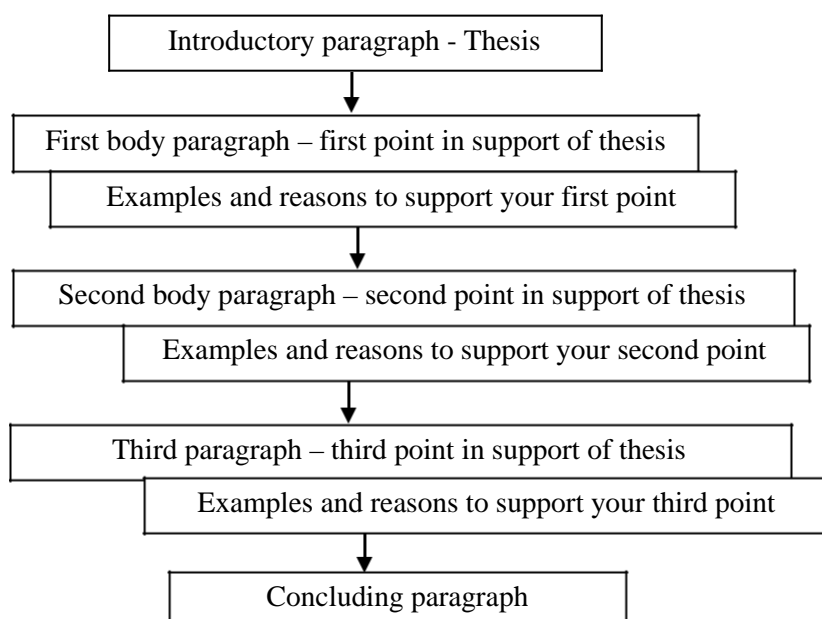
Organiser

The organiser is made up of the following:

- introduction
- the body of your essay
- concluding part of the essay

These have been treated in Unit 1 of the Module. You should use the organiser below as your guide to writing any of the essays.

Fig. 3 paragraphing organiser



SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

In which way is Expository essay different from Argumentative?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have discussed some of the things you could do before you can successfully write an expository essay. The various methods of detailed presentation of exposition have been presented. It also includes how you can present an effective argument in writing.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt that:

- you can plan, collect information on the object, process/processes to be explained, reported informed about expository essay
- you could present your expository essay by classification and partitioning
- use the cause and effect method of exposition
- in argumentative essay, you can take a position and disprove the points raised by your opponent.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. List and explain the various methods you can use in expository writing.
2. How is the expository different from the argumentative essay? Illustrate with any topic(s) of your choice using introductory paragraph, a paragraph for its body and conclusion.
3. What is an argumentative essay?
4. Write for or against the topic:

The distance learning programme is preferable to face to face conventional learning mode/method.

You should give your answer in a full essay with good paragraphs, introduction, a well developed body, good grammar and concluding paragraph.

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UNIT 3 PROSE WRITING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Setting
 - 3.1.1 Plot Structure
 - 3.1.2 Characters
 - 3.1.3 Principles of Characterisation
 - 3.1.4 Types of Characters
 - 3.2 Types of Novel
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to take you through how to become a good prose writer. You need to have a clear knowledge of the principles underlining the writing of prose.

You may have read some novels, and the knowledge of some of the things which your lecturer has taught you will be useful for you when you want to try your hands on creating a prose fiction.

One of the best ways to be a good prose fiction writer is to make sure you read some very interesting novels.

As you enjoy the pleasure of reading the writer's world, you will also become familiar with how the writer's fictional world interacts with reality. It is not enough for you to be charmed by how your lecturer has been able to present/explain a novel, say Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Wole Soyinka's *The Interpreters*, or George Orwell's *1984*, Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*, George Lamming's *In the Castle of my Skin*, Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy*, Yetunde Akorede's *Fighting the gods* or Stanley Oriola's *Songs of the Season*. What is also important to you as a (budding) learner creative writer is to learn to teach others through your creative works. You have to take a trip around the writer's styles of presentation of characters. You must think, look and learn beyond the fascinating and emotionally satisfying world of the writer.

Novels writings are meant to make you skillful in the art of writing. You have to read the writer beyond his novel so that you can have knowledge

of how he creates his characters, sets his plots, uses his language, weaves his themes around each of his characters, what the writer has done to help his character develop. When the need for you to write a novel arises, we expect you to be able to demonstrate what you have learnt.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- write a short story
- create a fictional world that will be life like
- write a prose fiction in a language that will be suitable to each of the characters that populate your imaginative world
- trace the plot of your story from the beginning to end of the novel
- write a readable prose fiction.

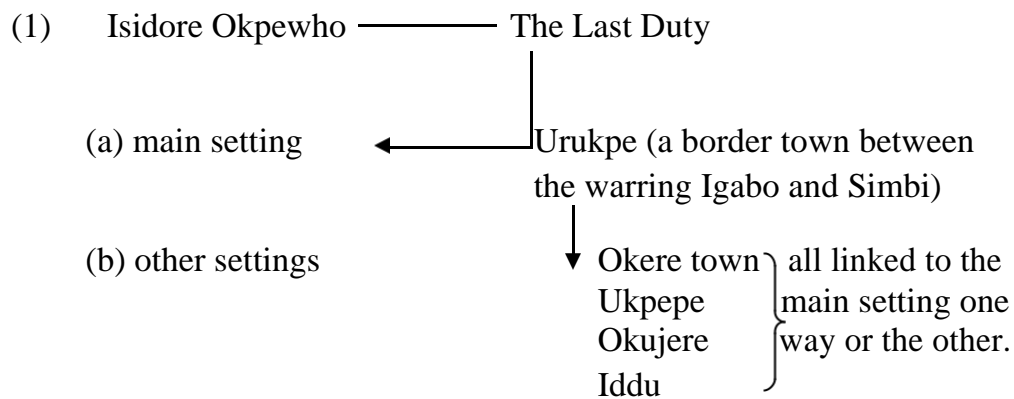
3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Setting

Your story should reflect a geographical location. It could be set in any fictional or real locale of your choice. It could be the contemporary or ancient. It could also be in the jungle, forest, ocean, mountain, a nameless town, or world in the outer space, anywhere. It could be in an environment populated by human beings, ants, animals or a slum, or a combination of all these in which the characters, think and behave in a particular way. You could describe the environment of the characters. The setting often includes the time of the story, for example, Umuofia in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a typical Igbo Village in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The concept of a setting includes:

- Specific time, and place in history and how they affect the plot.
- Environment of character (i.e. social, economic, religious background).

Fig. 1 The setting of a novel



3.1.1 Plot Structure

This is a narration/ the arrangement of events in the chronological order of their actual occurrence. You could do an artistic reorganisation of the order of events to achieve special effect. The plot could move forward and backward in time depending on the purpose the writer has in mind for arranging the events,

A plot could be chronological in nature. Plot is not the story of a novel or a play, but a logical movement of incidents in a story - the story line. Stories can also begin in the middle (imitating the classical Latin in medias res). Story is made up of events arranged in a particular order. It is the artistic arrangement of events. A writer may tell his story in a chronological order, beginning with the earlier, or begin with the last event and tell readers what led to it, or begin in the middle (medias res).

The way a writer relates events in his novel grows out of the forces outside the characters. This is called external conflicts. The internal conflicts are the struggles between forces within the characters.

Consider the following ways you can order your events in a story.

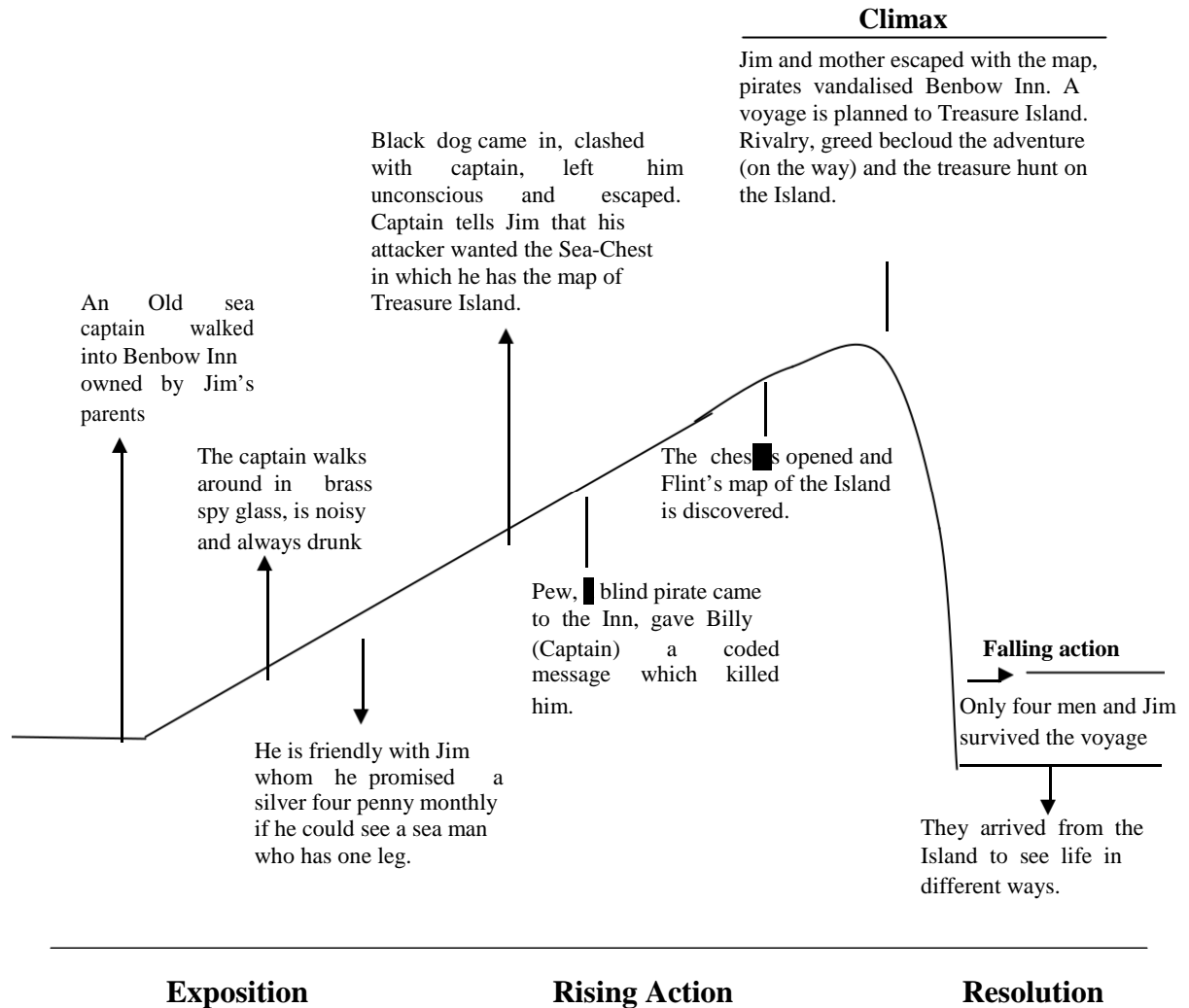
- story is arranged in follow up/causal order
- story could start in medias res i.e. from the middle
- you could use a flash back in your plot (i.e. to tell us what happened before the opening scene of the work).

Most plots of a story are known to develop in five stages:

- Exposition: the author introduces the characters and setting to get ready for the conflict.
- The conflict develops in the rising action stage.
- The high point of the story is its climax.

- Falling action stage: the author explains the results of the climax, some stories may end after the climax.
- Resolution : this is the point at which the conflict is resolved.

Fig. 2: Stages in the development of a plot structure



Source: Adapted from Glencoe Literature, Texas Edition (2000)

3.1.2 Characters

You should create fictional characters in your prose fiction. There are usually more than one character in a novel.

The writer speaks through his characters. There is usually a major character who often dominates the story. Other characters exist to shed light on the main character. Without characters, a prose fiction will not exist.

The way you create your characters will help the reader to discover the meaning of a novel. Jack Myers and Michael Simms (1989) are of the opinion that characterisation exist through “the presentation in literature of fictitious people whose composite physical descriptions, attitudes, motives and actions are lifelike, enough for the readers to accept as representing real people”. The characters you present in a novel must be credible to the audience.

Writers can present characters using the following methods:

- Direct presentation

This tells us what the character is like by exposition or analysis. As a writer you could present your character by physical description, psychological, intellectual or moral attitude (e.g. in Festus Iyayi’s *Violence*, the author introduces Idemudia and his wife through their poor standard of living), “he and his wife, Adisa were tenants in one of the low mud hut sinced houses along Owode Street” (1).

A writer cannot use this direct method alone, or else the story would be reduced to an essay. The characters must be active and communicative. Although this method is often economical and clear, the characters must act for the story to be convincingly real. For a story to be active, a writer must also use the indirect method to present his characters in a novel.

- Indirect presentation

In this method, the writer does not present his characters directly to his readers. Some of the characters are introduced through the other characters in the form of a delayed emergence. From the beginning of the novel, *The Great Gatsby* we only heard rumours of Gatsby from those who never met him (i.e. Miss Baker, Jordan). It was in chapter three that the hero was first mentioned “At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough coloured lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby’s enormous garden” (26).

Also, in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, the writer introduces Heathcliff to readers indirectly:

{	I have just returned from a visit to my landlord - the solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with. This is certainly a beautiful country. In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed in a situation so completely removed from the stir of society. A perfect misanthropist's Heaven: and Mr. Heathcliff and I are such a suitable pair to divide the desolation between us (1).	}	Indirect presentation
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3.1.3 Principles of Characterisation

A writer should create his characters to reflect the following principles:

- Consistency

The characters must behave in a way suitable to their roles in a novel. Invariably, they must be firm and consistent with their behaviours, unless there is a clear reason for a change. We see the firmness of character in *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe. Ezeulu, is consistent in the way he tells us the story of the land dispute between Umuaro and Okperi. He also did not change his mind about his refusal to declare the date for New Yam Festival until he finishes the sacred yam as tradition demands.

- Plausibility

The characters must be life like. They must neither be paragons of virtues nor of evil and should be able to combine both good and bad virtues of life. In Mariam Ba's *So Long a Letter*, Ramatoulaye narrates her ordeal as a rejected wife, a widow, though strong willed as she is able to endure the pain of widowhood, the chastisement of religion and tradition, yet she survives through determination and fortitude.

- Motivation

The character must be clearly motivated in whatever he or she does, especially when there is a change in his or her behaviour. We must understand why such character behaves in a particular way. For instance, in Isidore Okpewho's *The Last Duty*, Odibo is an eunuch, but as soon as the cripple realised that he was still a 'complete man' after he had a relationship with Aku, he was motivated to confront Toje who had been hostile to him.

3.1.4 Types of Characters

E. M. Foster in his *Aspects of the Novel* (1949) describes two types of characters: flat characters and rounded or “three dimensional” characters.

Flat/static characters

They are not often given in detail in the novel. They are as important as the round characters because every character cannot be rounded. Their roles are often supportive in the novel (e.g. the two old sisters who live next to Obanua in Isidore Okpewho’s *The Victims* are examples of flat or static characters).

Rounded/dynamic characters

They are complex, and grow with the development of the novel. The events in the novel are built around them (e.g. Okonkwo in Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*). The events of the novel affect them in the narrative.

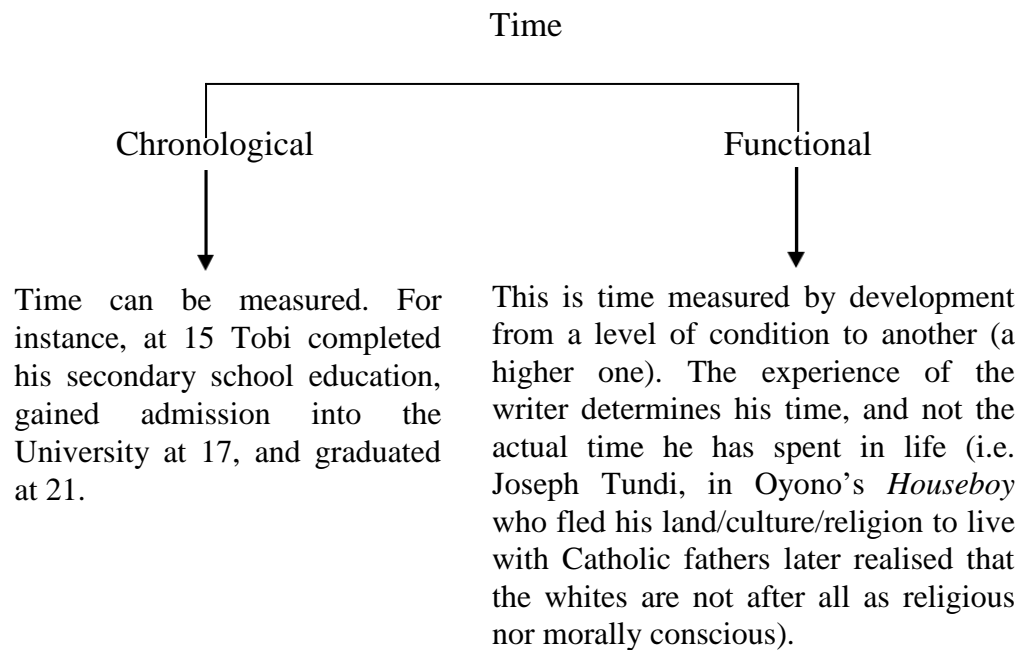
Things to consider when writing a good character sketch in a novel are:

- symbolic nature of the character (what it represents, e.g. Olu Obafemi’s *Wheels* represents the rich and the poor in the society)
- what he/she says about himself
- what the character says about other characters
- what the novelist says about him
- what other characters say about him (his behaviour, thought, feelings)
- what the reader thinks about the character
- the environment of the character says something about him
- other things that we may know about the character
- time and space (i.e. chronological time and functional time)

Time and space

Time and space in the novel are important because they record the passage of time in terms of age and growth in experience. The events in the novel are built around achievement and creation through time and space. Space is a period of time. Time can be chronological time and functional time.

Fig. 3 Time and Space in the Novel



Source: Adapted from Eseigbo (1998)

Point of view

This is the angle from which a writer tells his story. As the writer creates his story, he uses different characters as narrator. It is only in autobiographical novels like Camara Laye's *The African Child*, Kenneth Kaunda's *Zambia Shall Be Free* that the narrator can be distinguished from the writer. Often, the first person pronoun "I" is more consistently used. The writer may also use the third person narration such as 'he', 'she', 'they'.

Language

Language is the tool and the medium through which literature expresses itself. How the writer uses his words is vital in the realisation of the various elements of the novel - setting, theme, characterisation, narrative technique and so on. It is the use of language that distinguishes one character from another. For example, in Achebe's *A Man of the People*, Chief Nanga, the Minister of Culture is known through the ironical use of language. The social status of a character in a novel is also known through the use of language by the novelist. In *A Man of the People*, Dogo and the cook, who are semi-literates, speak the type of English that reflect their level of education. Also in *Things Fall Apart*, the use of language by the hero, Okonkwo is reinforced with proverbs, riddles and local idioms.

How a writer uses words enables him to realise the elements of the novel like theme, characterisation and narrative technique. Language is important to the novel.

Theme

This means a central idea or meaning of a story. It is the rallying point around which the plot, characters, point of view, setting and elements of a story are organised. Stating the theme makes you think about what you have read.

How to analyse theme:

- the title of a story provides a lead to its theme
- study the symbolic meaning of the story to lead you to its central meaning (i.e. names, object, characters, and places)
- what are the general comments of the hero about the events in the story?
- express the theme of the novel in your own words clearly
- what specific social problems are expressed?
- are the stylistic devices relevant to the meaning of the work?
- what is the relationship between the overall experience of the protagonist and the theme of the work?
- is the writer's narrative point of view important to the meaning of the work?

Narrative devices

The novel often uses irony, foreshadowing, flashback, myth, paradox, suspense to sustain the interest of the reader. This is common with a novel which action begins from the middle.

3.2 Types of Novel

You may wish to write your novel in any of the types.

- **Epistolary Novel**

You may write your novel in the form of a letter or letters. The word 'Epistola' is the Latin word for 'letter'. Examples are Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa* written in 1740, Mariama Ba's *So Long a Letter* (1980), Lekan Oyegoke's *Broken Ladders* (2003). You may also wish to let your characters communicate in the form of letters if you want your style to conform to the epistolary.

- **Magic/Marvellous Realism**

It was some Latin American writers who wrote their prose fiction in this style before other writers from the third world joined the league. Such works discuss the normal events, mythic, fantasy and fairy-tales (i.e. (Nigeria) Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991), (India) Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (1988) and, Gabriel Garcia Marques of Colombia's *One Hundred years of Solitude* (1967).

- **The Picaresque Novel**

It is the 16th Century Spanish style of the Novel genre called 'Picaro' which means 'rogue', 'beggar', 'rascal'. The hero of this type of novel is often queer, mischievous, crafty and adventurous. Examples are Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876).

- **Sociological Novel**

This type of novel discusses the impact of the socio-cultural conditions that surround a character. It also includes the social changes that occurred in the period. Examples are Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not Child* (1964), Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), Charles Dicken's *Oliver Twist* (1838), John Steinbeck's *The Grape of Wrath* (1939).

- **Bildungsroman**

This term is taken from the German. It means "a novel of education". It centres on the developmental stages in the positive growth of the hero from childhood to maturity. Examples are George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not Child* (1964), Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861).

- **Historical Novel**

This type of novel relies on the past experience of its characters. Its setting, characters, forms are taken from the past to justify its historical continuity. Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819) was the known great writer of historical novels in English tradition. Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869) is another good example of this novel type

- **Psychological Novel**

This novel concerns the inner workings of the minds of the characters and not the physical reality of the character. The role of the human mind in his life experience in the form of novel of that kind was popular in the 20th century. The psychology of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung imparted on and influenced many disciplines, including literature. In the 20th century, a new group of writers emerged, developed and popularised the “stream of consciousness” technique. This procession of thoughts passing through the human mind has been applied by modern writers to describe their characters. Examples of such writers are William Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922), Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* (1952).

- **Political Novel**

This type of novel deals with the tactics and art of governance, using deceit, intrigues, force, hatred and love to take over or remain in power. It also includes the strategy of business organisation. Examples are Joseph Conrad’s *Nostrono* (1904), Cyprian Ekwensi’s *Beautiful Feathers* (1963), Chinua Achebe’s *A Man of the People* (1966) and Timothy Aluko’s *Chief the Honourable Minister* (1970) and *A State of our Own* (1986). Stanley Oriola’s *Farewell to Democracy* (1994)

- **Novel of Ideas**

As the name suggests, this type of novel teach ideas, explores certain special teachings about life. Some time a novel of ideas may take a critical stand on an existing philosophy or make ideological enquiries into something. Examples are E. M. Forster’s *A Passage to India*, (1924) Albert Camus’ *The Fall* (1948), Ali Mazrui’s *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo* (1975).

Other types of the novel are Gothic, detective, science fiction, thrillers, romantic, spy novels. These novels have developed over time and are significant to the overall development of man.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What factors must we consider before we write a prose fiction?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have mentioned some of the ways you can write a short story, a novella or a full novel without difficulties. We have also discussed the elements and types of prose fiction.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this Unit you have learnt that:

- you can create a prose work using a suitable setting, language, plot, point of view, characters
- your story should have a plot
- characters are important to a well written prose work
- characters have their own principles
- types of characters
- the next Unit will introduce you to the elements of poetry writing.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Write a short note on setting and plot.
2. Write a short story of not more than five pages.
3. Write a short story of not more than five pages using animal characters, and with setting in the animal kingdom.
4. Write a short story of not more than ten pages using all that you have learnt about prose writing.

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UNIT 4 POETRY WRITING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Types of Poetry
 - 3.1.1 Techniques for Writing Poetry
 - 3.1.2 Figures of Speech
 - 3.2 Rhyme
 - 3.3 Rhythm
 - 3.4 Sound
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to take you through some facts that you need to know before you start to write poetry. The writing of poetry is a very exciting enterprise that requires deep and intellectually motivating skills. In this Unit, you will be taken through the techniques you need to write good poetry.

You have no doubt been taught poetry as aspect of creative writing by your lecturers. Even with the way you have been introduced to the elements and techniques of writing poetry, you may still find it difficult to create poetry. You could create good poetry if you engage in the practice all the time.

This aspect of creative writing is designed to put to the test, your ability to use the English Language imaginatively, emotionally, vividly, and rhythmically. This aspect is designed to make you express yourself with clarity, suspense, using the correct elements of poetry. You may encounter the need to write poetry or employ some poetic styles to make your writings sensuous, imagistic, and witty. When the situation occurs, you are expected to demonstrate your skill.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list the types of poetry
- plan how to write a good poem
- determine the materials needed to write a good poem
- attempt writing a short poem
- identify the elements required to write a good poem.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Poetry

The Lyric: A lyric is a short musical poem meant to be sung to the music of the lyre. Its ideas and language are usually simple and straight forward.

The Ode: An ode in English is a meditative poem addressed to some people or thing. It is a lyrical poem (i.e. John Keat's Ode to a Nightingale, William Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty").

The Epic: An Epic is a long elaborate philosophical poem with serious purpose, it deals with a nation's or person's heroic exploits (i.e. John Milton's Paradise Lost).

Ballads: These are narrative poems which belong to the ordinary people, rather than by a poet. There are two types of Ballads: Literary and Popular or Folk Ballad. Literary Ballad reflects the features of the folk ballad. Examples are Owusu's "Breaking Colanut" and John Keats "La Belle Dame Sans Merci". The popular or folk ballads were known to have been composed during festivals, but have been altered by the infiltration of civilisation.

3.1.1 Techniques for Writing Poetry

Images 2

An images use a language that addresses the senses. You can use visual images to make your work life-like or realistic. The way you write a poem should give us the physical world to express our imagination. Image means a picture (a mental picture of what we can see, feels, touch, smell, hear). The clearer the poet's picture of what he is writing, the better he achieves his purpose in a poem.

Diction

You must be careful with your choice of words. We expect the words you have used in your poem to be attractive. The language which a poet uses should be concise than other types of writing. Such words must be charged or active. This is because the writing of a poem does not give room for the elaborate use of words as we have in the novels. You can study the use of diction in the poem below. What can you say about the language of the poet? Of course, you will notice the precise use of words.

Power

Power shines like the glase of a thousand mirror
 His face lights up the night, a hunter's lamp of
 horror.
 Who dare move his heifers like the gowns of
 virgin Circling a sacred stone
 Who unleashes his bride on us decked in radiant
 colours
 Hail him! and wrap the city in sheets of bone
 Bait him! and sweep away the grove of virgin
 trees. Crush the brick walls of cascading glory.
 But here I stand in tears in the rack and ruin.
 Burning out the sand dunes in whirlwind Yet
 with this I build my lofty dreams.

Here is another example:

A Parable of Letters (for Professor Wole Soyinka)

He throws a letter and the people
 Suffer dengue fever
 But he issues no denial of responsibility
 As the ill invites a doctor
 Who diagnoses no ailments in particular?
 The doctor retreats and issues a denial of service
 And asked the poet to untie his riddle of words
 Affected by dementia
 As the people denounce his pen policy
 Demour
 Demour
 The doctor explains
 "Your letters are a deluge
 Delimit
 And all who tried to read it

Suffer delirium tremens”
 But the giver of the letter
 A defender of the faith
 And only to Him are the letters
 Defibrillator, decompression and decongestante

Word Order

The poet is expected to arrange his words into meaningful sentences, clauses and phrases (this is called syntax). The meaning of poem may also be conveyed by denotations (i.e. normal dictionary meaning) and connotations (i.e. literal/applied meaning). In writing poetry, a normal word order could be varied and words can be repeated for the sake of emphasis. Study the example which I have given below. Study its word order and sentence structure as well as its repetitive patterns in the second verse.

Underdog

As infant is lifted from the RED BLOOD
 All eyes curious of what gender this one is
 made And from the rear, they stared asking

Repetitive use of words for emphasis { Anus is man-like
 Anus is dim
 Anus is white
 Anus is darkish-grey
 Is this anus purple?
 Or blackish-grayish RAINBOW?

No!

Wrong duplicate
 Wasted semen
 Then, a confused silence of assessment
 All are eager to know

A rectangle or square?
 Pyramid or cone?
 Cumbersome like a cupboard
 And a cold congratulations dispatched
 From the womenfolk
 A F-E-M-A-L-E
 C-O-N-S-P-I-C-U-O-U-S

And all backs turned at her moment of no distinction

Tone

A poet's attitudes toward his subject reflect in the poem. For example, a poem may show nostalgia, anger, affection, sadness, bitterness, or happiness and any other feelings of human beings. It depends on the theme or what you are writing about. For instance, if you are writing on 'marriage', the subject will determine your choice of words and then your tone. Study the poem below and notice the use of words to determine its tone.

This poem was written as a tribute to the late poet and literary critic, E. A. Babalola, an Associate Professor of English, University of Lagos who died on 21st June, 2004. Study the tone of the poem, which I have reproduced in part here.

Now that this pilgrimage is over
 And the *tomb* opens by His will
 Leaving us to *mourn* the mystery
 Of this transformation
 And now in *shroud*
 Before your maker
 We *mourn* your triumph
 Over depressions
 And the rigours of existence
 Transformed you were
 In your synchronised
 Dancing and singing
 To heavenly mysteries
 And the hallelujah of resurrection ...
 We mourn this day
The 21st day in June 2004
 Our diary of sin and
Of a missing letter ...
I offer you roses
And white apparel to your green tomb
 You gave me knowledge
 But now, *I offer you my tears*
 I offer you tears
 That linger in my eyes
 This raining season
But you give me your cotton-filled nose
 Without your bag of humour ...

Study the words which I have italicised in the poem? What effect do the words have on you? What do the words, and phrases suggest about the

tone of the poem on the remembrance of a deceased friend and teacher of the poet?

Symbol

A poem should show a person, place, an object, event or action that conveys more than its (literal) ordinary meaning. A symbol is something that represent another thing else. The meaning of a symbol is determined by the contexts in which it appears.

Here is a poem on the transient nature of man. Notice the use of ‘time’ by the poet to symbolise the temporal nature of man.

Time

*Time keeps ticking away
On a lonely path
And as everyone travels by it
It keeps changing
And assuming the colour of everyone
Like a chameleon
And people keep changing by it
Time pretends to have no relationship
With anyone
Yet, it determines the pace
Anyone can go*

“Time” has been used in this poem to symbolise the temporal nature of life. The use of a “chameleon” in the poem also suggests the permanency of change, in the sense of dying as seen in the poem.

3.1.2 Figures of Speech

Although figures of speech may be indirect, they are meant to aid our understanding of what they describe. Poets often use them to capture the imagination of the readers. Other genres (types) of literature like prose and drama also use figures of speech. But, it is only in poetry that it is used with concentration. It helps the poet to achieve colour, intensity and vividness.

Study the use of figures of speech in the poem below:

The hunter's shot

{
The birds took off like a bullet
When the hunter fired a
Missing shot at them

Notice the use of simile here →

Missing through the forest
Of trees and birds of variegated feather

{
 Unlocking the mystery of flights
The way God unlocked the Ark of Noah
After the flood
 The beautiful Ark so beautiful
The Ark was a woman.

Metaphor →

We notice the repetitive use of the figure of speech “simile” to describe how the birds flew away when the hunter fired a shot at them. You could write a poem using any figure of speech to help the beauty of your work. Figurative language is the language often used to describe effect and is not expected to be read literally. The meanings they express are usually beyond the literal level. Some of them are stated below with examples:

A metaphor - usually states that one thing *is another*

metaphor do not use *like* or *as*
 She was a *lioness* in the fight.

A simile - uses words such as *like* or *as* to compare things that are seemingly unlike

The soldier took off *like* a bullet
 What is compared to some other thing is called the tenor (i.e. the soldier is the tenor)
 The thing with which it is compared is called the vehicle (i.e. like a bullet).

Personification - is a figure of speech in which an animal, an object, or an idea is given human qualities.

→ The sun *smiles* at me.

Imagery - Normally a descriptive language that evokes emotional response, appeals to the senses of touch, sight, sound, taste or smell.

→ The smoke from the engine pipe sprawls, curls, thickens in a grey purplish cloud through the crowd.

Sound Devices

Sound devices contribute to the musical quality of a poem and help to achieve emphasis.

Alliteration - the repetition of consonantal sounds at the beginning of words.

→ All I nocked near the net
- n n n alliterate

Assonance - The repetition of vowel sounds

→ Ignored, she sits, still
- i, i assonance

Consonance - Repetition of consonant sounds within words or at the end of words

→ ill treated she retreated through the door.
- t, t

Onomatopoeia - use of a phrase or a word that suggests or imitates a sound.

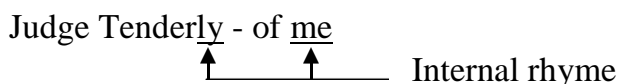


- tick, tick (sounds like the movement of a clock).

3.2 Rhyme

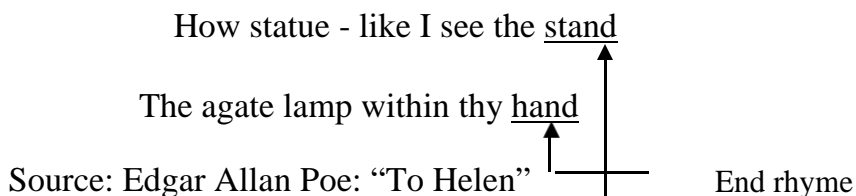
This is the repetition of similar sounds in words that appear close to each other in a poem.

Internal rhyme - occurs within a line of poetry

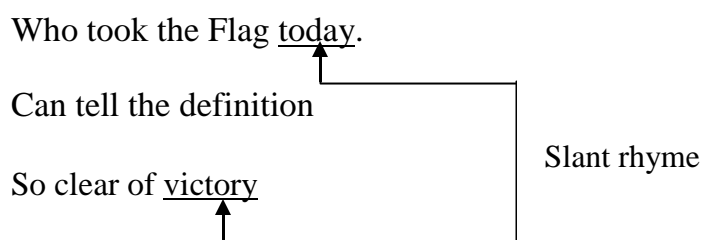


Source: Emily Dickinson: "This is my letter to the world"

End rhyme - Occurs at the end of lines



Start rhyme - Refers to words that almost rhyme, but not quite



Source: Emily Dickinson "Success is counted Sweetest"

Rhyme scheme - Pattern of rhyme formed by end rhyme, is identified by assigning a different letter of the alphabet to each new rhyme.

3.3 Rhythm

In poetry rhythm creates pleasurable patterns to reinforce meaning. A characteristic of rhythm is its repetitive effect using phrases. Stresses are combined to provide the pleasure of the rhythm we hear. Sound effects in poetry in appropriate words give pleasure in poetry. It is only in exceptional cases that prose uses rhythm. For instance, below is a study of a few lines from a speech of Winston Churchill to the House of Commons after the Allied forces lost a battle to the German forces at Dunkirk during World War II (Meyer 1987).

A) Rhythm in prose

Repeated eleven times
in this extract for
beauty and emphasis

{ We shall¹ not flag or fail. We²shall go on to the end.
We³shall fight in France, we⁴ shall fight on the seas
and oceans, we⁵shall fight with growing confidence
and growing strength in the air, we⁶ shall defend our
Island, whatever the cost may be, we⁷shall fight on
the beaches, we⁸ shall fight on the landing grounds,
we⁹shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we
shall¹⁰ fight in the hills; we¹¹ shall never surrender (p.
639).

Winston Churchill conveys his intention to win the war to the British people by a repetitive (identical) use of “we shall”.... The use of repetition creates/gives pleasure through the echoing of similar sounds. Rhyme is for the ear and eyes.

You can also study the repetitive patterns of this poem. You will notice the repetitive use of “you, who dares the stool of songs” in the poem.

“Daring the stool of songs” (for Niyi Osundare)

You

Repeated
beauty and
emphasis

for

{ Who dares the stool of songs
And took from its makers
The gem of complex colours
Which you fabricated
To the a post-modern flame

You

{ Who dares the stool of songs
And took from its makers
The gem of complex colours
And give to your disciples
Who sat round a ritual table
Rehearsing
Redrawing and
Asking for
The mystery behind
The new gem to change its flag of
honour To sing a new song
To earn a nod of our ancestors

You

{ Who dares the stool of songs
And took from its makers
The gem of complex colours
Broken into the famous tunes
Of ancestral rhythm
With multiple disciples
Breaking from their discordant rhyme
To bask in a new rhapsodic order
A renewed song of ancient colour.

3.3 Sounds

The beauty of poetry is fully realised when it is read aloud. When writing a poem you must carefully choose your words and arrange them for their sound effect and meanings. One very important way that the meaning of a poem is communicated is through sound (i.e. snakes hiss, sheep bleat). Poetry has a strong relationship with music. For instance, lyric poetry originated from songs in the phonology of poetry.

Suggestions for reading poetry

- Read a poem more than once to be familiar with its contents.
- Begin your reading from its title and pay attention to it as a lead to the poem.
- When you read, do not allow the difficult words you encounter in the lines hold you back/discourage you.
- On a second reading, pay attention to unfamiliar words/lines you do not understand (i.e. try to look up difficult words in the dictionary).
- As you read, take note of the use of punctuation marks by the poet. The spaces on the page and in-between the lines, must be read.
- The structural placement of words or arrangement of words/letters in some spatial and unconventional order also has meaning in poetry.
- Study the style and diction of the poet and try to identify them with existing schools of thought (i.e. modernism or post-modernism).
- You may read your poem aloud to a friend's hearing or let a friend read it to you aloud. Through this, you will be able to appreciate its beauty and rhythmical pattern.
- Read through each line of the poem again and again.
- Read meaning into/out of the elements of the poem.
- Do not get bored by the subject of the poem, even if it is that which you dislike.
- Ensure you do a comprehensive and objective analysis of your poem because that is when the poem will come alive.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Differentiate between sound, diction, tone, symbol and figures of speech in poetry.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit we have discussed the various techniques for writing poetry. We have also outlined the characteristics of poetry. Read through your work and make sure it is free of errors.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- poetry thrives on use of figurative language, sound, diction, word order, tone, symbol
- some flashes of poetry can occur in prose/speeches. In Unit 5 of Module 3, you will be introduced to the elements of drama and play writing.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How can one read and understand a poem?
2. Mention the advantages of using the diction and image techniques of writing a poem.
3. Write a poem of not more than ten lines on any subject of your choice.
4. Write a poem of not more than twenty lines each on any three of the following.
 - (a) war (b) death (c) love (d) marriage
 - (e) abortion (f) National Open University of Nigeria

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UNIT 5 PLAY WRITING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 A Drama Play
 - 3.2 Setting
 - 3.2.1 Plot
 - 3.2.2 Characters
 - 3.2.3 Types of Comedy
 - 3.2.4 Theme
 - 3.2.5 Language
 - 3.2.6 Characteristics of a Play
 - 3.3 Dialogue
 - 3.3.1 Acts and Scenes
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Unit is designed to take you through some of the information you need to possess to be able to write a good play for reading and for the stage. In this Unit, you will find that some of the elements and techniques of play writing which you are exposed to are things you already know. You may have been introduced to some of the elements in other genres in the previous Units of this Module. These vital elements are repeated in this Unit because they are also relevant to play writing.

The knowledge of play writing is an enterprising one. It also demands a good knowledge of creativity since plays are primarily meant to be acted on the stage. As interesting as it seems, the writing of a play demands a good knowledge of creative writing. That is why you must learn how to be focused as you try to write a play for the stage.

Creative writing, especially as it concerns play writing, demands specific designs to express yourself with the clarity appropriate to the characters in your play as well as to your audience. You may come in contact with some situations in life in which you may be required to write a play for the stage.

Writing a play requires some extra skills so that the audience, and actors would be able to interpret your play on the stage. When such situations

occur, you are expected to be able to show a mastery of the skills required for play writing.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- write a play that comprises the elements of play writing (i.e. setting, imitation/impersonation, dialogue, plot, theme, characters, language etc)
- attempt writing a play that can be acted
- determine the materials you will need for the writing of a play.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 A Drama Play

This is a story that has been written to be performed on stage by actors for an audience. A playwright develops a script for people to act on the stage. He/she also writes the stage direction so that readers, actors and directors can imagine and interpret correctly the entire story or series of actions. The actors in a play revolve around the protagonist whom the audience sometimes sympathises with. Understanding the elements of drama can help you appreciate a play.

3.2 Setting

Like in prose, the setting of a play may be a fictional or real place. The setting of the play which you write should include specific time and location in history.

Your play can only have basis when you provide a specific environment for the characters to act (behave and misbehave).

For example, Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* has its geographical setting in a typical low class hotel in Lagos. Time is between 1914 and the post independent Nigeria. Rasheed Gbadamosi's *Echoes from the Lagoon* is set in Lagos and Ola Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not to Blame* is set in Kutuje, Ikolu, Ile-Ife, Ijékun and so on.

A play can be set in more than one location. Some plays may not have a real or actual location. The setting is usually described at the beginning of a play.

3.2.1 Plot

Your play should have an established sequence of events. Your readers should know how incidents are arranged. The plot of a play is not its story. According to Abrams, “the plot in a dramatic or narrative work is constituted by its events and actions, as these are rendered in emotional and artistic effects” (1993).

A plot according to Aristotle is the first principle and the soul of tragedy. Plot is the sequential arrangement of incidents in a piece of writing. It must have unity that means a ‘whole’ possessing a beginning, middle and an end. A plot may be simple or complex.

- In a simple plot, actions or incidents move from one point to the other till the resolution of the plot. An example is *Oedipus Rex*.
- A complex plot has many subordinate themes which increase the complication of the plot as we have in *King Lear*.
- There is usually a rising action as events give rise to fresh crises. This is known as complication.
- There is a discovery which leads to a falling action.
- The plot of a tragic play is different from that of comedy at the point of resolution (i.e. a comedy ends happily while a tragedy ends in sadness).
- When the plot smoothly graduates from one event to the other in chronological order, it is called *linea plot*.
- When the plot is contrary to the chronological order, (as we have in episodic plays), it is called *mosaic plot*.

3.2.2 Characters

Characters are often listed at the beginning of a play. The list might include a short description of each character.

This is the presentation of person or animals that perform the actions in a dramatic work. While character stands for the personnel, characterisation refers to the attributes and behaviours of each character that distinguishes one from the other. Actions can be given their proper form, meaning and interpretation only through appropriate/effective characters and characterisation. Acting necessitates performance, of a written play. Characters are symbols to communicate meaning, thought, feelings and ideas. The main character is the protagonist. In tragedy, the protagonist is the tragic hero.

- If your play is a tragedy
 - (a) Your major character/hero must arouse pity.
 - (b) He must not be all good and must not be all evil.
 - (c) He must be shown as suffering from the change of fortune as a result of wrongful act.
 - (d) He must commit the wrong act as a result of a flaw in his character.

- (e) The unavoidable flaw in the tragic hero must lead him to violate moral laws.
- (f) He must come to a tragic end through an action that must be serious, complete and be of certain magnitude.
- If your play is a comedy:
 - (a) No matter what, events end in happiness.
 - (b) Issues in the play are always about familiar matters.
 - (c) Good wins over evil
 - (d) Tone and mood are usually comic/humorous.

3.2.3 Types of Comedy (popularised by William Shakespeare)

Romantic Comedy

- The plot is based on a love affair.
- The love affair is not often smooth (e.g. William Shakespeare's *As you like it* and *A Midsummer's Nights Dream*).

Satiric Comedy

- Is designed to ridicule violations of social conventions and morals.
- Uses humour as a weapon (e.g. Wole Soyinka *The Trials of Brother Jero*).

Comedy of manner

- Deals with the life of gentlemen and ladies who live a life of leisure.
- Deals with artificial and polished life.
- Contains illicit love that goes on in the society.
- Makes use of intelligent dialogue (e.g. Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*).

3.2.4 Theme

This is the message or main idea which you want to pass across to your audience. A work of drama must have a main theme (message) and sub-themes. The main theme is derived from the actions revolving around the major character. Sub-themes are usually the other themes that surround the other characters.

For example, in Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, the main theme is corruption while in Ola Rotimi's *Kurunmi* the main theme is power. Other themes on the works are betrayal, lies, pain and endurance and so on.

3.2.5 Language

This is an important aspect of drama. It is the medium by which you can reveal your thoughts. Themes of the play are expressed using language. Though, poetry makes a more conscious use of language than prose fiction and drama. Yet, the playwright's choice of words, whether literal or metaphorical, helps in giving meaning to the play. It is the use of language that distinguishes one character from the other. For instance, a messenger in a play must speak in a language that befits his social status and orientation. A king in the same play must be assigned a 'royal language', and a politician too must be identified through his use of language in a play.

3.2.6 The Characteristics of a Play

- it uses dialogue as a major difference with other creative writings
- use of language is strict and deliberate.
- it uses figures of speech.
- it usually has a central message.
- it uses symbol and imagery.
- it has setting.
- it is written in related acts, scenes and other recent styles like Happenings, Movements, Situations
- plays embody a sequence of events.
- it is meant to be acted on stage.

All of these are not peculiar to plays, but are largely common to the genres of literature.

3.3 Dialogue

Dialogue is the very crucial element that distinguishes drama from other genre of literature. This is the conversation between characters. Dialogue reveals the plot and nature of the characters in the play. Dialogue has a lot to do with actions. Since drama is meant to communicate, words are the linguistic symbols of communication.

3.4 Acts and Scenes

In classical play writing, plays are divided into acts and scenes, which show a change in the passage of time and locations. For instance, a one-act play takes place in one location over a period of time. In modern playwriting however, playwrights may decide to apply non-conventional styles by the use of Happening, Movement and Situation to change actions and events

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What is the relevance of characters and setting to a play?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this Unit, we have discussed the techniques of play writing. We have also talked about some of the characteristics of a play. Take note of these as you read through the work and go over your work thoroughly before you submit to your facilitator.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- setting, plot, characters, theme and language are important to a play.
- with the characteristics mentioned, a play is in some ways different from other genres of literature (i.e. prose, poetry) especially if we consider that plays are meant to be acted on stage. Though, they are somewhat similar in some aspects.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. With reference to any of the plays of William Shakespeare, Wole Soyinka, Bernard Shaw, Athol Fugard, Femi Osofisan and discuss theme and Language in relation to play writing.
2. Write a short comedy for the stage.
3. Write a short play using the techniques of play writing.
4. Write a short play that must be a tragedy.

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COURSE REVIEWER'S CHECKLIST FOR NEWLY REVIEWED COURSE MATERIAL

Course Code: ENG 416 Course Title: **CREATIVE WRITING III**

	DETAILS	CONTENT EDITOR	
		YES	NO
1.	Does the Course Guide state Introduction, Course Aims, Course Objectives, Working through the course, What You Will Learn in the Course, Course Materials, Study Units, Textbooks and References, Assignment File, Tutor-Marked Assignments, Final Exam and Grading, Course Marking Scheme, Course Overview, How to Get the Most from this Course, Tutors and Tutorials, and Summary?	*	
2.	Is the course material well presented in modules and units?	*	
3.	Is the introduction of modules adequate?	*	
4.	Does the introduction of a unit/module relate to the present unit/module and to the previous unit/module and the next to ascertain continuity?	*	
5.	Does the introduction reflect the reason for studying the content in that unit/module?	*	
6.	Does the introduction serve as a good motivator for the learner?	*	
7.	Are there clearly stated behavioral objectives?	*	
8.	Do the objectives cover the entire unit content?	*	
9.	Would the objectives help learners assess their own learning?	*	
10.	Do the objectives set achievable tasks before the learner?	*	
11.	Is the study material planned to meet the theme of the unit?	*	
12.	Is the content logically sequenced?	*	
13.	Is the level of content appropriate for the target learner?	*	
14.	Is the content lucid and learner friendly?	*	
15.	Does the content have adequate relationship with the set objectives?	*	
16.	Are explanations adequate?	*	
17.	Is the content designed to sustain learner's interest by using examples, illustrations, humour, and anecdotes?	*	
18.	Are there adequate illustrations, tables, graphs, and charts? And examples to facilitate learner's retention?	*	
19.	Are there adequate activities for learners?	*	
20.	Are ideas and arguments sequential?	*	
21.	Are relevant information supplied in the content?	*	
22.	Is the given information up-to-date and accurate?	*	
23.	Is the conclusion adequate?	*	
24.	Does the summary review the main points for learner's recapitulation and reinforcement?	*	
25.	Does the summary contain statements of major concepts?	*	
26.	Are the Tutor-Marked Assignments well-structured to cover what has been learnt in the unit?	*	
27.	Are the References/Further Readings well stated and in APA format?	*	

Date...26/10/2020.....

Sign...

