



Benha University

Faculty of Agriculture

Open Education

Second Level-First Semester

2013/2014

English Language Exam

Writing Skills

(210)

Answer the following questions:

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Comment on the following topics:

1. There is a general list of the characteristics of good writing.

Answer:

To that query, in "Eight Characteristics of Good

Writing," Melissa Donovan writes:

Opinions on the matter vary widely. There will be different traits that make good fiction versus good poetry or good nonfiction. However, we can cull together a general list of the characteristics of good writing (in no particular order):

1. **Clarity and focus:** in good writing, everything makes sense and readers don't get lost or have to reread passages to figure out what's going on. Focused writing sticks with the plot or core idea without running off on too many tangents.
2. **Organization:** a well organized piece of writing is not only clear, it's presented in a way that is logical and aesthetically pleasing. You can tell non-linear stories or place your thesis at the end of an essay and get away with it as long as your scenes or ideas are well ordered.
3. **Ideas and themes:** is the topic of your paper relevant? Does your story come complete with themes? Can the reader visualize your poem? For a piece of writing to be considered well crafted, it has to contain clearly identifiable ideas and themes.
4. **Voice:** this is what sets you apart from all other writers. It's your unique way of stringing words together, formulating ideas, and relating scenes or

images to the reader. In any piece of writing, the voice should be consistent and identifiable.

5. **Language (word choice):** we writers can never underestimate or fail to appreciate our most valuable tools — words. Good writing includes smart and appropriate word choices and well crafted sentences.
6. **Grammar and style:** many writers would wish this one away, but for a piece of writing to be considered good (let alone great), it has to follow the rules of grammar (and break those rules only when there's a good reason). Style is also important in ensuring that a piece of writing is clear and consistent. Make sure you keep a grammar book and style guide handy.
7. **Credibility or believability:** nothing says bad writing like getting the facts wrong or misrepresenting oneself. In fiction, the story must be believable (even if it's impossible), and in nonfiction, accurate research can make or break a writer.
8. **Thought-provoking or emotionally inspiring:** perhaps the most important quality of good writing is how the reader responds to it. Does she come away with a fresh perspective and new ideas? Does he close the cover with tears in his eyes or a sense of victory? How readers react to your work will fully determine your success as a writer.

I want to add an honorable mention for originality. Everything has been done before, so originality is somewhat arbitrary. However, putting old ideas together in new ways and creating remixes of the best that literature has to offer is a skill worth developing.

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2 Leo Babauta recommended daily writing for anyone, not just writers.

Answer:

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In his article "Why You Should Write Daily?" Leo Babauta sums up the benefits of daily writing. Babauta writes:

Here's what I've found from my daily habit:

- Writing helps you reflect on your life and changes you're making. This is incredibly valuable, as often we do things without realizing why, or what effects these things are having on us.
- Writing clarifies your thinking. Thoughts and feelings are nebulous happenings in our mind holes, but writing forces us to crystalize those thoughts and put them in a logical order.
- Writing regularly makes you better at writing. And writing is a powerful skill to be good at in our digital age.

- Writing for an audience (even if the audience is just one person) helps you to think from the perspective of the audience. That's when the magic starts, because once you get into the reader's mindset, you begin to understand readers and customers and colleagues and friends better. You have empathy and a wider understanding of the world.
- Writing persuasively — to convince others of your point of view — helps you to get better at persuading people to change their minds. Many people don't want to change their minds when they feel someone is attacking their position, so they get defensive and dig into their position.
- Writing daily forces you to come up with new ideas regularly, and so that forces you to solve the very important problem of where to get ideas. What's the answer to that problem? Ideas are everywhere! In the people you talk to, in your life experiments, in things you read online, in new ventures and magazines and films and music and novels. But when you write regularly, your eyes are open to these ideas.
- Writing regularly online helps you to build an audience who is interested in what you have to share, and how you can help them. This is good for any business, anyone who is building a career, anyone who loves to socialize with others who are interested in similar things as them.

And that's just the start. The full benefits of this regular habit are, ironically, not something you can put into words, but something that must be experienced to be known.