**LEARNER GUIDE**

**Communication Level 4**

**Write For A Range Of Contexts**

Unit Standard 119459

Level 4 Credits 5

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# PERSONAL INFORMATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NAME** |  |
| **CONTACT ADDRESS** |  |
|  |
| **Code** |  |
| **Telephone (H)** |  |
| **Telephone (W)** |  |
| **Cellular** |  |
| **Learner Number** |  |
| **Identity Number** |  |
| **EMPLOYER** |  |
| **EMPLOYER CONTACT ADDRESS** |  |
|  |
| **Code** |  |
| **Supervisor Name** |  |
| **Supervisor Contact Address** |  |
|  |
| **Code** |  |
| **Telephone (H)** |  |
| **Telephone (W)** |  |
| **Cellular** |  |

# **INTRODUCTION**

#### Welcome to the learning programme

Follow along in the guide as the training practitioner takes you through the material. Make notes and sketches that will help you to understand and remember what you have learnt. Take notes and share information with your colleagues. Important and relevant information and skills are transferred by sharing!



This learning programme is divided into sections. Each section is preceded by a description of the required outcomes and assessment criteria as contained in the unit standards specified by the South African Qualifications Authority. These descriptions will define what you have to know and be able to do in order to be awarded the credits attached to this learning programme. These credits are regarded as building blocks towards achieving a National Qualification upon successful assessment and can never be taken away from you!

## Structure

### Programme methodology



The programme methodology includes facilitator presentations, readings, individual activities, group discussions and skill application exercises.

**Know what you want to get out of the programme from the beginning and start applying your new skills immediately. Participate as much as possible so that the learning will be interactive and stimulating.**

The following principles were applied in designing the course:

* Because the course is designed to maximise interactive learning, you are encouraged and required to participate fully during the group exercises
* As a learner you will be presented with numerous problems and will be required to fully apply your mind to finding solutions to problems before being presented with the course presenter’s solutions to the problems
* Through participation and interaction the learners can learn as much from each other as they do from the course presenter
* Although learners attending the course may have varied degrees of experience in the subject matter, the course is designed to ensure that all delegates complete the course with the same level of understanding
* Because reflection forms an important component of adult learning, some learning resources will be followed by a self-assessment which is designed so that the learner will reflect on the material just completed.

This approach to course construction will ensure that learners first apply their minds to finding solutions to problems before the answers are provided, which will then maximise the learning process which is further strengthened by reflecting on the material covered by means of the self-assessments.

#### Different role players in delivery process

* Learner
* Facilitator
* Assessor
* Moderator

### What Learning Material you should have

This learning material has also been designed to provide the learner with a comprehensive reference guide. It is important that you take responsibility for your own learning process; this includes taking care of your learner material. You should at all times have the following material with you:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Learner Guide** | **This learner guide is your valuable possession:**  This is your textbook and reference material, which provides you with all the information you will require to meet the exit level outcomes. During contact sessions, your facilitator will use this guide and will facilitate the learning process. During contact sessions a variety of activities will assist you to gain knowledge and skills.  Follow along in the guide as the training practitioner takes you through the material. Make notes and sketches that will help you to understand and remember what you have learnt. Take and share information with your colleagues. Important and relevant information and skills are transferred by sharing!  This learning programme is divided into sections. Each section is preceded by a description of the required outcomes and assessment criteria as contained in the unit standards specified by the South African Qualifications Authority. These descriptions will define what you have to know and be able to do in order to be awarded the credits attached to this learning programme. These credits are regarded as building blocks towards achieving a National Qualification upon successful assessment and can never be taken away from you! |
| **Formative Assessment Workbook** | The Formative Assessment Workbook supports the Learner Guide and assists you in applying what you have learnt.  The formative assessment workbook contains classroom activities that you have to complete in the classroom, during contact sessions either in groups or individually.  You are required to complete all activities in the Formative Assessment Workbook. The facilitator will assist, lead and coach you through the process. These activities ensure that you understand the content of the material and that you get an opportunity to test your understanding. |

### Different types of activities you can expect

To accommodate your learning preferences, a variety of different types of activities are included in the formative and summative assessments. They will assist you to achieve the outcomes (correct results) and should guide you through the learning process, making learning a positive and pleasant experience.



The table below provides you with more information related to the types of activities.

| **Types of Activities** | **Description** | **Purpose** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Knowledge Activities** | You are required to complete these activities on your own. | These activities normally test your understanding and ability to apply the information. |
| **Skills Application Activities** | You need to complete these activities in the workplace | These activities require you to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the workplace |
| **Natural Occurring Evidence** | You need to collect information and samples of documents from the workplace. | These activities ensure you get the opportunity to learn from experts in the industry.  Collecting examples demonstrates how to implement knowledge and skills in a practical way |

### Assessments

The only way to establish whether a learner is competent and has accomplished the specific outcomes is through the assessment process. Assessment involves collecting and interpreting evidence about the learners’ ability to perform a task.

**To qualify and receive credits towards your qualification, a registered Assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of your portfolio of evidence and competency.**

**This programme has been aligned to registered unit standards. You will be assessed against the outcomes as stipulated in the unit standard by completing assessments and by compiling a portfolio of evidence that provides proof of your ability to apply the learning to your work situation.**



**How will Assessments commence?**

#### Formative Assessments

The assessment process is easy to follow. You will be guided by the Facilitator. Your responsibility is to complete all the activities in the Formative Assessment Workbook and submit it to your facilitator.

#### Summative Assessments

You will be required to complete a series of summative assessments. The Summative Assessment Guide will assist you in identifying the evidence required for final assessment purposes. You will be required to complete these activities on your own time, using real life projects in your workplace or business environment in preparing evidence for your Portfolio of Evidence. Your Facilitator will provide more details in this regard.

**To qualify and receive credits towards your qualification, a registered Assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of your portfolio of evidence and competency.**

### Learner Support

**The responsibility of learning rests with you, so be proactive and ask questions and seek assistance and help from your facilitator, if required.**



Please remember that this Skills Programme is based on outcomes based education principles which implies the following:

* You are responsible for your own learning – make sure you manage your study, research and workplace time effectively.
* Learning activities are learner driven – make sure you use the Learner Guide and Formative Assessment Workbook in the manner intended, and are familiar with the workplace requirements.
* The Facilitator is there to reasonably assist you during contact, practical and workplace time for this programme – make sure that you have his/her contact details.
* You are responsible for the safekeeping of your completed Formative Assessment Workbook and Workplace Guide
* If you need assistance please contact your facilitator who will gladly assist you.
* If you have any special needs please inform the facilitator

## Learner Administration



#### Attendance Register

You are required to sign the Attendance Register every day you attend training sessions facilitated by a facilitator.

#### Programme Evaluation Form

On completion you will be supplied with a “Learning programme Evaluation Form”. You are required to evaluate your experience in attending the programme.

Please complete the form at the end of the programme, as this will assist us in improving our service and programme material. Your assistance is highly appreciated.

### Learner Expectations

Please prepare the following information. You will then be asked to introduce yourself to the instructor as well as your fellow learners



|  |
| --- |
| Your name: |
|  |
|  |
| The organisation you represent: |
|  |
|  |
| Your position in organisation: |
|  |
|  |
| What do you hope to achieve by attending this course / what are your course expectations? |
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# UNIT STANDARD 119459

Unit Standard Title

Write/present/sign for a wide range of contexts

Level

4

Credits

5

Purpose

This unit standard will be useful to learners who communicate confidently and fluently in writing/signing in almost any formal and informal situation. Competence at this level will help learners to analyse and make mature judgements about complex, human, personal, social and environmental issues and to express and motivate own opinions. Learners at this level write/sign expressively and with conviction on topics of interest. They cope well with the exploration of complex themes and issues in a variety of writing/signing styles that stimulate and maintain the interest of their readers/audience. Through a drafting and editing process their writing/signing shows significant improvement. They carefully scrutinise their own and others` writing/signing in terms of its impact on different audiences and contexts. They are also able where possible to use multi-media technologies to present rather than write/sign own texts.

Learners credited with this unit standard are able to: Write/sign effectively and creatively on a range of topics; Choose language structures and features to suit communicative purposes; Edit writing/signing for fluency and unity.

Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

**Specific Outcome 1**: Write/sign effectively and creatively on a range of topics

Assessment Criteria

* Imaginative texts are convincing, and appropriate to the topic and purpose
* Expository/factual texts are convincing and well developed with respect to clearly articulated transactional purposes, using fully developed paragraphs and resulting in a unified text
* Writing/signing on personal interests is convincing in terms of issues and concerns addressed
* The narrative voice or register chosen is appropriate to context, purpose and audience: Passive for scientific writing/signing, adopting a persona for narrative, first person/third person selection, authorial comment within narrative voice/register, subjective or objective options, comedic register for humorous narrative

**Specific Outcome 2:** Choose language structures and features to suit communicative purposes

Assessment Criteria

* Points in argument are logically and deliberately sequenced to build up to a convincing conclusion
* Devices are employed to create particular rhythmic or tonal effects: Punctuation (ellipsis marks, semi-colons and dashes), rhetorical devices (repetition, questioning, emphasis), non-manual modification, sign contractions
* Stylistic devices that enhance meaning are used effectively: Symbol, imagery, irony, understatement, index and icon, logos, hyperbole, visuals, graphics

**Specific Outcome 3:** Edit writing/signing for fluency and unity

Assessment Criteria

* Text is checked for coherence, logical sequence and structure. Weaknesses and/or errors are identified and adjustments improve coherence and flow
* Information is rearranged in ways that promote interest in, and impact of, the text for a defined purpose, target audience and context: Layout, spelling, punctuation, appropriate SASL structures (such as non-manual features) and syntax are checked for accuracy and readability. Major grammatical and linguistic errors are identified and changes made as required
* The completed text is checked against the purposes for writing/presenting to verify that these purposes have been satisfied

Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFO)

* Identify and solve problems: using context to decode and make meaning individually and in groups in oral, reading, signing and/or written activities
* Work effectively with others and in teams: using interactive speech/sign in activities, discussion and research projects
* Organise and manage oneself and one’s activities responsibly and effectively through using language
* Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information: fundamental to the process of growing language capability across language applications and fields of study
* Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills: in formal and informal communications in writing/signing
* Use science and technology effectively and critically: using technology to access and present texts
* Understand the world as a set of inter-related parts of a system: through using language to explore and express links, and exploring a global range of contexts and texts
* Contribute to the full development of oneself: by engaging with texts that stimulate awareness and development of life skills and the learning process.

# WRITE/SIGN EFFECTIVELY FOR A SPECIFIED AUDIENCE

Learning outcome

* Write/sign effectively and creatively on a range of topics

Assessment criteria

* Imaginative texts are convincing, and appropriate to the topic and purpose
* Expository/factual texts are convincing and well developed with respect to clearly articulated transactional purposes, using fully developed paragraphs and resulting in a unified text
* Writing/signing on personal interests is convincing in terms of issues and concerns addressed
* The narrative voice or register chosen is appropriate to context, purpose and audience:

Critical Thinking Skills

Critical thinking: The process of thinking about ideas or situations in order to understand them fully, identify their implications, and/or make a judgement about what is sensible or reasonable to believe or do.

* Before you start writing/signing an essay, a summary, a message to someone or business correspondence you have to plan what you are going to write/sign. Remember, writing something is formal and it forms a permanent record. It is not as easy to correct a mistake as with verbal communication.
* Part of your planning process is to write/sign an outline of what you want to write – the main points that you wish to express. In order to do this, most of us have to improve our thinking skills. Luckily, there are strategies available to help us with our critical thinking skills.
* Critical thinking is when you understand how others think and you also understand your own thinking process. When you can gather evidence to support your reasoning and also evaluate this evidence objectively, you are also applying critical thinking skills.
* A mind map is an excellent technique to improve your critical thinking skills.

SASL

South African Sign Language does not have a written form. Therefore, reading and writing/presenting outcomes take on a different form, that is, a receptive and productive competence.

**Sign devices**: These include register, non-manual features (NMFs), placement, role-shift, parameter

**Sign parameter**: The building blocks of the sign/word: handshape, location, movement, palm orientation, non-manual sign

**Sign devices:** Sign devices are visual strategies used in signed poetry, for example, rhythm, placement, role shifting, and repetition of handshape, location, movement, palm orientation, and non-manual features

Styles Of Writing

To express yourself clearly in writing you should pay special attention to:

* Reading and understanding, also called comprehension.
* Assembling facts and constructing prose (text).
* Sentence structure/collection of signs and non manual features
* Paragraphing: coherent and cohesive collection of sentences. In SASL its boundaries may be indicated by manual or non manual devices, usually chunks of sign
* Assembling paragraphs.
* Making a summary
* Taking notes.
* Expanding notes.
* Paraphrasing.
* NMF’s (non manual features)

Research

Sources Of Information

Before you start writing your document, you have to plan what you are going to write/sign. First, you are going to define the topic and then you have to gather information about the topic.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Information can be gathered from: | In the case of business correspondence, you will find information in: |
| Libraries | Minutes of meetings. |
| Encyclopaedias | Correspondence with clients and suppliers. |
| Manuals | Operations and procedures manuals |
| Magazines | Internal correspondence between departments, branches and regions. |
| Newspapers | Correspondence between management and their departments. |
| Interviews with experts |  |
| Internet |  |

When doing research about a topic it is important that you gather as much information about a subject as possible. The more information you have, the better.

Of course, the information and data must be relevant to the topic that you are going to write/sign about.

Organise The Material

Once you have gathered information, the material you have collected has to be organised.

Sorting and categorizing

Arrange or organise the information with common features or characteristics systematically in groups. All the information with similar content is grouped together. Your classification will depend on the order in which you are going to write/sign the document: you can sort the information chronologically, using contrast or cause and effect.

Sifting for relevance

Once you have classified the information and data, you have to sift through it for relevance. You should keep only the information that is relevant to your topic, everything else can be discarded. In other words, if you are writing about plants that flower in summer, all information about plants that flower in autumn is not relevant, you cannot use it to enhance your writing and you should discard it.

Validity and reliability

Now you have to check your information for validity and reliability. The obvious way of doing this is to check your facts with more than one source: check more than one manual, talk to more than one person, visit more than one website, to ensure that your facts are correct.

Preferably, you should use more than one manual, more than one website and the knowledge of more than one expert for each aspect that has to be checked. If most or all you sources state the same basic fact, you can be reasonably sure that the fact is correct.

Recording

Once you have sifted and verified your information, record it in the categories you have selected. This recording is in draft form, usually in the form of rough notes.

Now you are ready to draft your first copy of the final document.

Produce Writing That Is Appropriate

When you write/sign, you always have to take the audience into consideration. For a letter to friends, you will use the informal register, you can use slang and jargon freely and your layout will be informal. The diction, language features and structures, pictures and sentence lengths will all be more informal than you would use for a business document.

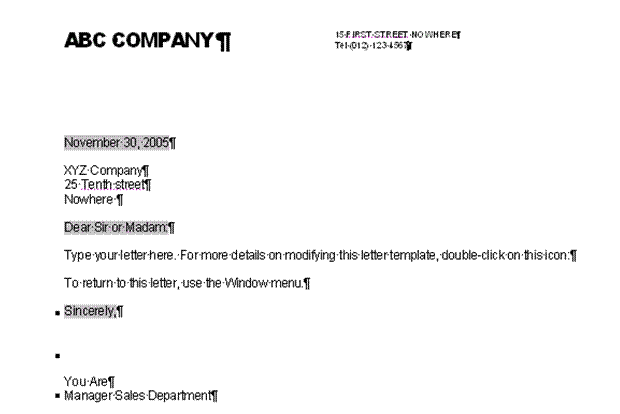
When you are writing a document for the Information Technology department, your presentation will be formal, so you will use the formal register. You can use jargon and technical language freely, without explanatory notes. Your diagrams and other visual aids can be technical, as long as it relates to the IT industry.

When you are writing a note to a friend, telling him/her about something funny that happened to you, you will use the comedic register: something funny is always written in the comedic register.

When you are writing to a client who is not an expert in IT, you will still use the formal register. You will, however, use less jargon and technical language and, where you have to, you will add explanations. Language structure and features will be formal.

This is a layout of a letter done in the formal register. Your choice of words will be formal, you will use headings and sub headings, you will use bold or italic fonts(or NMF’s to emphasise certain aspects), and so on.

Can you see that this letter does not look the same as the letter to your friend? It is important to use the register that is appropriate to the audience you are writing to. If you don’t, the reader can feel insulted or even refuse to take you seriously.



The form that your writing takes must also be appropriate to the context and purpose. For example, a friend’s mother has died and you must write/sign a letter of condolence. Your writing will be more formal than if you were writing to the friend, although not quite as formal as when you are writing to our President. You will not use humour, jargon, technical or ambiguous words. The style will be sympathetic.

When you are inviting a client to a Christmas function, you will use the formal register but you will tone down the formality. You could introduce the theme of the party with a little humour or a funny picture, you will not use titles, heading and so on.

If you are unsure of the difference in the registers, go to a stationer that sells cards and look at birthday cards, cards about illness and death, invitations. There will be more than one example of each and some will be more formal than others. Take note of the tone and style that is used, note the diction and the language structure. Make notes, if necessary and refer back to your notes when necessary.

Narrative Voice

When you write text you also have to choose the voice that you are going to write in.

* Active or passive voice
* First person or third person

Active And Passive Voice

The difference between active and passive voice is in the form of the verb(the doing of something) and the relation to the subject (who is doing it).

“The boy kicked the ball.” Is active voice, because the subject performs the action. You can see that the sentence starts with the subject (the boy), then the verb follows (kicked) and then the object (the ball). This is active voice.

Active voice expresses thoughts, ideas and facts more clearly than passive voice.

“The ball was kicked by the boy.” Is passive voice, because the subject receives the action. The sentence starts with the subject (the ball), the verb follows (kicked) and then the subject receives the action (the boy). This is called passive voice.

When you write, it will mainly be in active voice. Only very formal business writing, scientific writing and legal documents such as affidavits will be in passive voice. “The victim was raped by Mr X.” This is done so that the recipient of the action (the victim) is the most important part of the sentence.

Passive voice is also used when the “who” or “what” that performs the action is not known. “The victim was raped.” Or “The ball was kicked.”

Scientific and sometimes legal writing is done in passive voice.

First Person Or Third Person

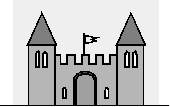
Most writing is done in the third person. The third person reports events as they happen to other people. If you look at the article about Nelson Mandela’s grandson in handout 1, you will find that the article was written by the reporter in the third person, in the discursive style.

If I rewrite the first paragraph of the article in the first person, it would look like this:

I am former President Nelson Mandela’s grandson. AIDS brought my wife and I together.

Can you see the difference?

Imaginative Texts

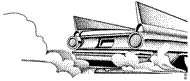
The essays that you had to do at school is an example of imaginative texts, as are fiction novels. All the stories, fairy tales and fables told to children and read by children are examples of imaginative texts. Comedy shows, films such as Tsotsi, television dramas and soaps are all examples of imaginative texts. Love stories and romance novels are imaginative texts.

These texts are creative rather than factual, even when they are based on fact. Based on fact only means that certain aspects of the text is factual and true, but most of the text is imaginary, a figment of the author’s imagination.

Imaginative texts can be fun to write/sign, as long as you have a choice over the subject. It is difficult to write when someone else chooses the subject for you. We all have dreams about what we would like our lives to be like and when you write about this the writing process becomes fun.

Personal Interests

When you write/sign about subjects that interest you, such as sport, hobbies, movies, books or people. This is also fun to do, because you are interested in it.

When you write for an audience about subjects that interest you, you must remain enthusiastic about the subject and be careful that you do not bore the reader. It does not mean that what interests you will necessarily interest the reader as well, so you have to make sure that your writing is interesting, otherwise the audience will stop reading.

Books about gardening, pets, sport, photography, self-improvement, interior decorating, cooking, travel, etc are examples of personal interest books. The authors wrote about something that interests them.

When writing about personal interests, you would write in the first person – “I did this…”, or “I went there …”

Factual/Expository

This type of writing is based on fact. Business correspondence, encyclopaedias, school text books, training manuals, user instructions that you get when you purchase equipment, historical writing, etc. are all examples of factual text.

When you are writing factual text, you have to make sure of your facts and also ensure that they follow each other in a logical order.

Humour

In the dictionary, humour is stated as being:” the quality of being amusing”. Jokes are humorous, so can text in an article be humorous or even a novel (long story) or parts of a novel.

Following is a quote from a book called My Family and Other Animals, by Gerald Durrell. The book contains short stories about his family’s move from England to Greece, in the time before the second world war. They took their dog, called Roger, with them. Gerald had two older brothers, Larry and Leslie.

“That dog’s been a nuisance all the way from England,” said Larry. “I had hoped to give an impression of gracious majesty, and this is what happens … we arrive in town like a troupe of medieval tumblers.”

“Don’t keep on, dear,” Mother said soothingly, straightening her hat: “we’ll soon be at the hotel.”

So our cab clopped and jingled its way into the town, while we sat on the horsehair seats and tried to muster the appearance of gracious majesty Larry required. Roger, wrapped in Leslie’s powerful grasp, lolled his head over the side of the vehicle and rolled his eyes as though at his last gasp. Then we rattled past an alley-way in which four scruffy mongrels were lying in the sun. Roger stiffened, glared at them and let forth a torrent of deep barks. The mongrels were immediately galvanized into activity, and they sped after the cab, yapping vociferously.

Our pose was irretrievable shattered, for it took two people to restrain the raving Roger, while the rest of us leaned out of the cab and made wild gestures with magazines and books at the pursuing horde.

This only had the effect of exciting them still further, and at each alley-way we passed their numbers increased, until by the time we were rolling down the main thoroughfare of the town there were some twenty-four dogs swirling about our wheels, almost hysterical with anger.

# LANGUAGE STRUCTURES AND FEATURES

Learning outcome

* Choose language structures and features to suit communicative purposes

Assessment criteria

* Points in argument are logically and deliberately sequenced to build up to a convincing conclusion
* Devices are employed to create particular rhythmic or tonal effects: Punctuation (ellipsis marks, semi-colons and dashes), rhetorical devices (repetition, questioning, emphasis), non-manual modification, sign contractions
* Stylistic devices that enhance meaning are used effectively: Symbol, imagery, irony, understatement, index and icon, logos, hyperbole, visuals, graphics

Sequence points in an argument logically

Sentences

Too many short sentences will make your text appear choppy and curt. Too many long sentences will have the opposite effect, your text will appear confusing. Short sentences should be varied with longer sentences to give your text an even flow.

The sentence may be regarded as the core of language communication, because a sentence is a complete thought that conveys (gives) a meaning. In other words, you use a sentence to explain yourself to other people, or to give your opinion about something. The end of a sentence is indicated by a full stop, called a period these days.

Sentence (in relation to SASL): A sentence is a unit of meaning made up of a collection of signs and non manual features, always including a verb, and adhering to specific grammatical rules of SASL

A sentence/collection of signs and non manual features must make sense, therefore a sentence/collection of signs and non manual features must express a complete thought. In order to do this a sentence must contain a verb (doing something) and a noun ( a subject) and the sentence/collection of signs and non manual features must contain a thought that includes an idea that is relevant to the subject or the doing.

If you say: “The accident happened as I crossed the road.”, it makes sense to everyone who hears it and reads it. If you say: My dog was run over and Vin Diesel visited South Africa.”, it will not make much sense to other people. The two concepts have nothing to do with each other. In an instance like this, you will have to use two or more sentences or even two paragraphs.

A short sentence could be: Thabo takes the dog for a walk.

Authors use short sentences to heighten (increase) tension in a written piece. Longer sentences make a written piece more relaxed and not as filled with tension. If you are writing about strikes and unrest, your sentences would be shorter, while the sentence in a written piece about farming would be longer to create a more relaxed atmosphere.

Generally, we would try to vary the length of sentences in any written piece. A written piece that has only long or short sentences can be tiring to read.

There are three basic types of sentences.

**Simple Sentences**

These have one verb and one subject and object. **“The boy is playing with the ball.”**

**Compound Sentences**

A compound sentence is made up of two or more thoughts or sentences that are related to each other. The thoughts or sentences are then connected to each other to form one sentence by using the following words: **but, and, or**.

but, and, or

“The boy is playing with the ball, but his mother is calling him.”

“The boy is playing with the ball and some other children are watching.”

Sentences should have the same topic if you want to create a compound sentence. The following two sentences are not related to each other and should not be joined: “It is late.” and “I like reading.” “It is late and I like reading” does not make sense, since they do not share the same topic: lateness and reading do not have anything to do with each other.

“It is late and I am going to bed.” is a better example.

**Complex Sentences**

Consist of one independent sentence with one or more dependent clause that relates to it. The sentence and the clauses are **separated by a comma.**

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“Although it is raining, the boy is playing outside.” Can you see that*: “Although it is raining”* is not a full sentence, it does not have a subject, so it is called a clause and has to be added to a sentence.

The clauses and the sentence must relate to the same topic if you want to create a complex sentence. “Although it is raining, I like reading.” Is a pointless sentence, since they do not share the same subject. “I have to go to the shop, even though it is raining,” is a better example of a complex sentence.

Remember:

* Too many short sentences will make your text appear choppy and curt.
* Too many long sentences will have the opposite effect, your text will appear confusing.
* Short sentences should be varied with longer sentences to give your text an even flow.

Paragraphs

Paragraph (in relation to SASL) A paragraph is a coherent and cohesive collection of sentences. Its boundaries may be indicated by manual or non manual devices. Paragraphs can also be seen as chunks of sign.

The sentences in a paragraph should form a unit. The reader/viewer must be able to easily see how a sentence follows on the one preceding it. A paragraph/chunks of sign starts with a topic sentence/collection of signs and non manual features, that introduces the topic of the paragraph to the reader. The topic sentence acts as a base and holds the paragraph together. Sentences/collection of signs and non manual features that follow in the same paragraph should enlarge on the topic or theme introduced in the first sentence. We call them supporting sentences. Supporting sentences should provide **specific details** about the topic in order to clarify the topic sentence and make the paragraph interesting.

If the sentence/collection of signs and non manual features does not contribute to the theme of the paragraph, it should not be included. You should also avoid adding data that is not relevant to the topic.

Hints for writing good paragraphs

* Each paragraph should have only one theme.
* Do not write/sign paragraphs that are longer than 10 or 12 lines, as longer paragraphs become boring and confusing.
* Mix long and short paragraphs in a document to create interest and attention with the reader.

Document

When you are writing a document, it will usually be about a specific topic or theme. The text you are writing will usually consist of more than one paragraph, each with its own topic but relating to the main topic of the document.

Your piece of writing should start with an introduction of the theme of the document. Your first paragraph would therefore be the introductory paragraph. The introductory paragraph should be short, relevant, it must introduce the theme of the document and it must get the attention of the reader.

Arranging The Paragraphs In A Logical Order

You can use cause and effect and contrast to help you arrange your paragraphs in a logical way.

* **Contrast** is when you contrast one theme, thought, opinion or product with another.
* **Cause and effect**: you can, for example, progress from the causes of war to the consequences(effect) of the civil war on ordinary people.

If you are writing about something that happens over a period of time, you can arrange your paragraphs **chronologically**: start with the earliest date and end with the latest date. When writing about droughts in South Africa you can start with the big drought in the 1930s and end with the current drought.

1930 - 2006

Any arguments used in your document must be **supported by sound reasons and facts**. You have to justify your feeling about the matter with facts in order to persuade the reader to your point of view. Something your neighbour said about the matter is not fact – you have to verify the statement your neighbour made.

Ensure that you **state your point of view clearly**. Remember other people also have to understand your point of view.

***A fragile home threatened by war.***

*Among the last of its kind, a young gorilla peers from its leafy refuge in Rwanda – a nation bloodied by ethnic slaughter. Conservationists fear that Rwanda’s instability could endanger the gorilla’s survival. Others ask: How should the plight of the world’s rarest ape be weighed against more than 500,000 human dead?*

As it stands the paragraph above is clear. If I leave out certain key words, I can change the paragraph so that it does not make any sense:

“A young gorilla peers from its leafy refuge and instability could endanger the gorilla’s survival.” What on earth am I talking about? Where is the gorilla, why would its survival be endangered and what is the instability that I wrote about?

If you want your writing to be clear, you have to ensure that you give the reader **all the information** he/she requires to understand your reasoning.

“They said it is going to rain today.” This is a terrible sentence. Who are “they”, where did they get their information from, where is it going to rain, where do they live – do they even live in the same area as you and I?

**Always check your facts for correctness** before you commit them to writing. Readers are very critical and will never forgive you if you get your facts wrong. Anything you write/sign in future will be viewed with suspicion

“The Weather Bureau predicts that there is an 80% chance of rain in Gauteng today.” Now you have stated the source of your fact, you have backed your statement with an estimate of the possibility of rain and you have also made it clear where it will rain. If it doesn’t rain, your readers cannot be angry with you, since you only reported what the Weather Bureau predicted.

At the end of your document, you have to come to a **conclusion**, where you connect all the facts that you stated previously. State your conclusion or recommendation clearly and make sure that it is based on the facts you stated. The conclusion can be:

* A short **summary** of the main points of your document.
* A **direct-approach** conclusion where you show the reader how the message relates to him/her.
* **Plan of action** conclusion where you answer the question of what should be done about the matters discussed in the body of your document.

Create particular rhythmic or tonal effects

During oral communication, the speaker can use **inflections, pauses, variations in tempo, eye and body movements and gestures** to add emphasis or to make his speech more interesting.

When writing, we have to make use of punctuation to indicate tone, undertone, emphasis, accent and meaning.

All the things a speaker does with his voice, we do with punctuation. Unfortunately, incorrect use of punctuation can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the written word.

Using punctuation is one way of ensuring that your writing is interesting. Using punctuation is also necessary if you want your work to be grammatically correct.

Punctuation

* Punctuation should **clarify the meaning** of text
* Punctuation should make the written material **more readable**
* Punctuation should be reader-oriented: the most important reason for using full stops (periods) is to **help your reader understand** you. Of course, when you use periods (full stops) in the right places, your work will automatically be grammatically correct.
* Punctuation marks indicate the **emphasis**, **tone** and **undertone** in a piece of writing

Writers are not free to punctuate as they wish, certain rules have to be followed:

* A period or full stop at the end of a sentence indicates a long pause.
* A question is always indicated by a question mark. (?)
* An exclamation mark always indicates an exclamation. (!)
* A quote must always be placed within quotation marks. (“…”)

When using SASL, attention must be paid to handshape, location, movement, palm orientation, non-manual signs, where appropriate.

Period

* Use at the end of a sentence.
* Use after a declarative or imperative statement: Write in pencil.
* Used after certain abbreviations: etc.

Do not use periods at the end of a heading or a theme title.

Comma

Commas are used to:

* Separate an introductory phrase from the body of the sentence: “During the discussions in parliament, it was decided that ….” Doing this, tells the reader that the introductory phrase is less important than the main part of the sentence. In the example, the important part of the sentence is the decision that was made, the place where it was made is not that important.
* Separate two independent clauses that are joined by a conjunction. Examples of conjunctions are: “and”, “but”, “or”, “nor”, “for”, “yet”, “so”. You will place the comma after the first independent clause and before the conjunction: “I have finished reading this book, and I am taking it back to my friend. “It is raining outside, but inside the room it is dry and warm.”
* A separable (non-restrictive) clause from the principal clause. This is when you insert an interesting clause, word or phrase into a sentence: “The water, polluted by industrial waste, is poisonous.” The clause that was inserted is interesting, but not essential to the point of the sentence. Of course, when the clause is essential to the sentence, you will not use commas.

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* Separate elements in a simple series. When you quote a list or series of things in a sentence, you must separate them with a comma: “All the furniture, domestic appliances, office equipment and other business articles must be included in the inventory.” “I want to buy the red dress, yellow jersey, white slacks and black shoes.”
* Separate transitional words or phrases such as: “well”, “yes”, “no” and “finally” from the rest of the sentence. “Yes, I will make the opening speech for the debate.” “No, the blue jacket does not look good with the brown slacks.”

Ellipses

The ellipse (…) is three spaced periods that indicate the intentional omission of words in a quotation, a remark that is not complete or to show that the author did not cite all the information: “I understand your problem…”

When you use an ellipse with other punctuation marks, such as a question mark, the ellipse follows the question mark: “Why don’t you tell me what is bothering you?...”

...

Semi-colons

The semi-colon (;) is a stronger punctuation mark than a comma, but not as strong as a period. When you use a semi-colon, you are indicating a longer pause than a comma, but the pause is not as long that of the full stop.

* Use a semi-colon when you want to separate ideas that are related that follow a colon: “the secretary should: prepare the chairman’s agenda; take minutes of the meeting; read the minutes …”

;

* Semi-colons are also used if items in a series contain a comma: “Are you going to Parys, Free State; or Paris, France?”

Dash

* Use the dash sparingly. Too many dashes in a piece of writing is bad style.

(-)

* The dash shows an abrupt break in the thought or construction of a sentence: “I believe – no, I am sure – that he is responsible.”
* A dash takes the place of **to**: “January – March” or “1994 – 2004”.

Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical devices help you to create rhythmic effects in your writing.

You will find many examples of repetition, questioning and emphasis in speeches, but you can also use in written work to create rhythm.

Repetition

Repeating words and phrases is very effective to emphasise the importance of the statement. Sir Winston Churchill made very good use of repetition in his famous speeches during World War 11.

On 22 May 1940, after the British soldiers had been evacuated from Dunkirk, he said:

“**We shall fight** on the beaches, **we shall fight** on the landing-grounds, **we shall fight** in the fields and in the streets, **we shall fight** in the hills; *we shall* never surrender…

On 13 May 1940, just after he was elected prime Minister, he said that he had one aim:

“**Victory – victory** at all costs, **victory** in spite of terror; **victory**, however long and hard the road may be.”

Of course, he said many more memorable things and it is worthwhile reading about him. He was the Prime Minister of Britain during World War 11 and he was a rather colourful character – just what the British needed during wartime.

?

Questioning

Trainers, teachers and facilitators use questions all the time, and you can use questions in written text to set your readers thinking.

?

Of course, when you ask questions in your text you do not expect the readers to answer you, so you have to provide the answers.

* Always make sure that your questions relate to the topic of your writing.
* You can ask more than one question at the same time for effect.
* You can start your writing with a question
* You can also end your writing with a question and leave the readers to think about the question, however, when you ask a factual question, do not leave your readers hanging in the air – give them the answer.

Emphasis

Some of the ways of emphasising certain texts in your writing have been discussed in the section about punctuation.

You can also use the following to emphasize text:

**Bold**

*Italics:* commonly used to quote titles of books, magazines, television programs, etc.

Underline

Stylistic Devices

You can use the following to enhance the meaning of your written work.

* Photographs
* Index
* Irony – but do not be sarcastic
* Visual aids such as graphics, pictures, tables, etc
* Iconicity: Iconicity as a poetic strategy is the use of signs to represent action/movement, and is often used in conjunction with repetition of parameters and rhythm.

Photographs

One of the most popular techniques used in written communication is photographs. As with any visual representation that is used to supplement written material, photos can have a big impact. The old saying: “A picture paints a thousand words” is very true of photos.

Newspaper photos of the weekend’s sport events illustrate what happened. Photos, of a big natural disaster, such as the tsunami around Christmas 2004, or a hurricane or earthquake, a plane crash or a train that has derailed, sells many newspapers, as people want to see what it looks like after the disaster.

Of course, photos are used in more positive ways than negative ways and it is important for you to consider using photos with your written work. The photo has to add to your writing, please don’t use photos that are not relevant to your written work.

Photos are very effective when you want to persuade readers to your point of view: If you want investors to buy a nice seaside or bushveld property, including a colourful, clear photo of the property will give the reader a positive visual stimulation.

If you want readers to contribute towards a hunger relief fund, showing photos of hungry children will encourage many people to contribute.

If you want voters to vote for you, show them photos of what you have achieved, for example, the houses that have been built, the roads that have been built, and so on.

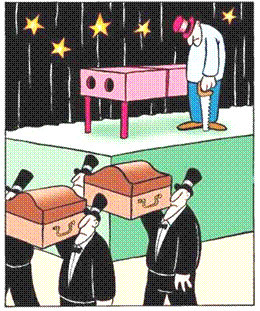


Visual aids

Pictures And Drawings

Writers also use pictures to illustrate their points and to influence your thinking of the matter.

Not every presentation is successful



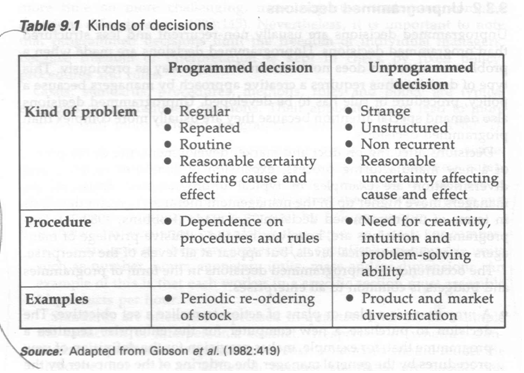
Posters

There are many examples of posters for us to view every day. Posters about violence against women, AIDS, soccer games, films, TV shows, advertisements, etc.

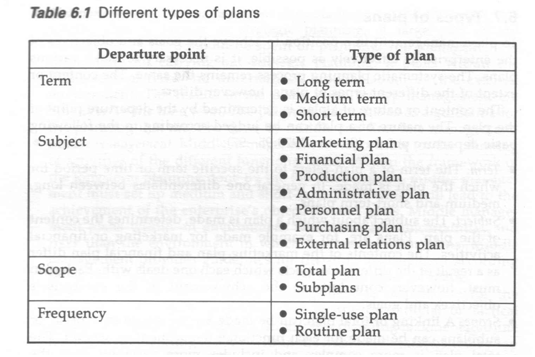
Tables

A table is a list where figures, facts or other information is given shortly.

The table below details the types of decisions usually made when solving problems.



And this table gives details about types of business plans:



Irony

The expression of meaning through the use of language which normally means the opposite.

When an author uses irony, he states one thing, while meaning the opposite.

Your sport team lost a game badly over the weekend. On Monday morning you discuss the game with colleagues and you say: “Well, they played really well”, you are being ironic, since you mean the opposite

Hyperbole

An exaggerated statement that is not meant to be taken in the strict sense of the words.

*“I have told you a thousand times to clean your room.”*

Understatement

This is the opposite of the hyperbole or exaggeration.

When your team has had a spectacular win over the weekend and you say:

*“They did not do too bad…” it is an understatement.*

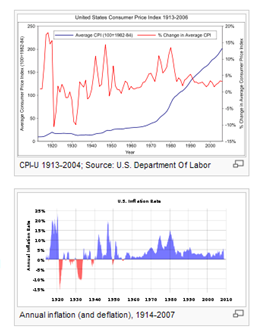
Index and icon

Index

An index is a system used to make finding information easier.

Index may also refer to:

* In publishing, an index is a detailed list, usually arranged alphabetically, of the specific information in a publication
* In economics an index is a single number calculated from an array of prices and quantities, for example a price index is a typical price for some good or service. These indexes are usually presented graphically:



* In finance an index is a list of stocks

Icon

An **icon** is a religious work of art, most commonly a painting. More broadly the term is used in a wide number of contexts for an image, picture, or representation; it is a sign or likeness that stands for an object by signifying or representing it.

By extension, **icon** is also used, particularly in modern culture, in the general sense of symbol — i.e. a name, face, picture, edifice or even a person readily recognized as having some well-known significance or embodying certain qualities.

A person or thing seen as a symbol of something.

In South Africa, we have our own icon: Nelson Mandela, or Madiba. He is an icon throughout the world and has even been called the world’s president.

Logos And Symbols

A symbol can be a letter, a sign or a simplified sketch that indicates a subject or image, e.g. the picture of a locomotive at a railway crossing. Symbols are very common in architecture and garden landscaping. Traffic signals and road signs also make use of symbols.

© this is the symbol for copyright

√ this is the symbol for square root, used in mathematics.



Logos are used by companies and organisations to enable readers to identify the symbol with their organisation. All the big companies, and most smaller companies and organisations make use of logos.

# DRAFT AND EDIT OWN WRITING/SIGNING

Learning outcome

* Edit writing/signing for fluency and unity

Assessment criteria

* Text is checked for coherence, logical sequence and structure. Weaknesses and/or errors are identified and adjustments improve coherence and flow
* Information is rearranged in ways that promote interest in, and impact of, the text for a defined purpose, target audience and context: Layout, spelling, punctuation, appropriate SASL structures (such as non-manual features) and syntax are checked for accuracy and readability. Major grammatical and linguistic errors are identified and changes made as required
* The completed text is checked against the purposes for writing/presenting to verify that these purposes have been satisfied

Write/sign Effectively

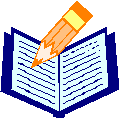
**There are many reasons why authors write texts:**

* To **persuade** readers to his/her point of view: Sport writers typically want to persuade their readers, as do people who write about political issues. When an author is writing to persuade, he wants you to accept his opinion about issues, policies and situations.
* To **inform** readers: in SA Computer you will find a lot of articles that inform readers about new developments in Information Technology. In other magazines you will find fashion articles, articles about healthy eating and fitness, etc. These articles were all written to inform readers.
* To **entertain** readers: the short stories found in magazines were written to entertain. Fables, fairy tales, fictional novels, cartoons, short, funny pieces in magazines were all written to entertain. The passage in Formative Assessment 2 that you had to rewrite in the third person was written to entertain. It is an extract from a book written by *James Herriot* called *If Only They Could Talk*, published by *Michael Joseph Publishers* in 1970. The book is a collection of short stories about his experiences as a veterinary surgeon in rural England before World War 11. the short stories are written in a friendly and light style and are very humorous. If you want to improve your reading skills, any one of his books is a good place to start. His books were written for the general public and are easy and fun to read.

**Before you start writing your text you have to plan what you are going to write/sign:**

* Who will you be writing/signing for: your friends and family, the general public, a business document, a newspaper or magazine article, etc.
* In which register will you be writing/signing the text: formal or informal
* Sign devices non-manual features (NMFs), placement, role-shift, parameter
* Sign parameter: handshape, location, movement, palm orientation, non-manual sign
* Which writing style will you use: narrative, discursive, expository, etc.
* Determine the research you will do
* Organise your writing: make sure ideas and facts flow logically

Make your writing interesting:

* Use numbers and bullets to separate ideas, facts and paragraphs. You will find examples of bullets and numbers in this learner guide
* Use punctuation/NMF’s correctly: commas, periods, etc.
* Use titles, subtitles, headings, contents and index
* Use an introduction and a conclusion
* Use visual images and captions with these images
* Vary the length of your sentences
* Structure your paragraphs correctly
* If any action is required, make suggestions about the actions
* Put ideas forward
* Use appendices or addenda if required
* Use NMF’s (non manual features) appropriately
* Sign devices non-manual features (NMFs), placement, role-shift, parameter
* Sign parameter: handshape, location, movement, palm orientation, non-manual sign

Diction

* Choose words that are familiar and easy to understand
* Make sure that you are using the correct words
* Do not use technical language, legalisms, etc. when writing for the general public. When it is a business document, use of technical terms and jargon will be acceptable
* Do not use slang or write in dialect unless you are writing to entertain

Always

* Be ethical: readers must be able to trust your writing
* Quote facts and substantiate your facts with evidence so that the readers can believe you
* Be sensitive to the reader’s point of view, culture, etc.

Redrafting

You will never use your first draft for the final document without reading and rereading and making changes.

Your first draft is never good enough for the final product, you have to check and recheck and recheck again in order to make corrections to your writing that is an improvement on the original.

When you are checking your document, check the following:

* Your use of grammar.
* Diction.
* The sentence and paragraph structure.
* If necessary, which it usually is, make changes to ensure consistency.
* Ensure that your ideas and topics **flow logically** from one to the other in the sentences as well as the paragraphs.
* Identify and remove inappropriate or potentially offensive language.
* Be on the lookout specifically for jargon and technical language. Don’t use them too much, replace them with other explanatory words. Too much jargon and technical language confuses a reader who is not familiar with it. The reader will lose interest and stop reading. I am sure you have stopped reading an article or document because of excessive use of jargon and technical language.
* Beware of using offensive language with regards to gender, rank, family, sports and wealth
* You might find a sexist joke funny, the other party might not. Do not make fun of a person’s gender or rank. Also, do not refer to “that old woman”, she might be someone’s mother. Do not call your boss the “Big Chief”, call him by his proper rank.
* Experiment with the layout of your writing/signing: change the headings, change the font type and size, move the pictures around until your writing looks pleasing to the eye
* Check your sign devices non-manual features (NMFs), placement, role-shift, parameter
* Check your sign parameters: handshape, location, movement, palm orientation, non-manual sign

If necessary, which it usually is, make changes to ensure consistency.

* Ensure that your ideas and topics flow **logically** from one to the other in the sentences as well as the paragraphs.
* Identify and remove **inappropriate or potentially offensive language**. Be on the lookout specifically for jargon and technical language. Don’t use them too much, replace them with other explanatory words. Too much jargon and technical language confuses a reader who is not familiar with it. The reader will lose interest and stop reading. I am sure you have stopped reading an article or document because of excessive use of jargon and technical language.
* Beware of using **offensive** language with regards to gender, rank, family, sports, wealth and obfuscation. You might find a sexist joke funny, the other party might not. Do not make fun of a person’s gender or rank. Also, do not refer to “that old woman”, she might be someone’s mother. Do not call your boss the “Big Chief” call him by his proper rank.
* **Obfuscation** means to make unclear or hard to understand. “I will horizontalise your perpendicularity” actually means that I will knock you over. Perpendicular means upright and horizontal means parallel to the ground. When you write/sign something, do not make it more difficult than it has to be.
* While you are redrafting your piece, experiment with the **layout**: use titles, headings, colour and so on. This way you can see what the finished product will look like. Add pictures, captions and visual effects at the appropriate places. Visualise what it will look like.
* Move them around until you are happy with the result – all the graphics, for example, should not be on the same side of the page. Vary their positions from the left to the centre to the right and so on.

Keep your rough copies for your portfolio of evidence, as you have to prove that your did redraft your work.