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Writing Skills

ESSAY WRITING

Name and signature of the sender

What is an essay?

Is a short piece of writing on a subject especially as part of a course of studying.

There are several types of essays but the main ones are three which are classified according to the purpose.

a) Narrative essay

This is the kind of writing that gives an account of an event that the writer has witnessed and which he or she wants to share with the

reader. This kind of writing needs to be so carefully written in order to make the reader understand the incident.

The following are some of the guidelines to be followed for effective narration.

i) Write on an incident that is amusing, exciting or significant. The writer should put essential details of the incident into the reader's mind that will help the reader be involved and share the writer's experience.

ii) Give your story a structure i.e. the narrative essay needs to have the beginning, the middle and the end in which the beginning need to capture the reader's attention, the middle has to narrate events chronologically were as the ending of your story should quench your reader thirst.

iii) Piece your climax of the story close to the end so as to create suspense to the reader

iv) Create suspense in the story, this is used to arose the readers excitement hence enhancing the understanding of the story suspense is created by delaying the climax.

v) Use the techniques that will make your reader experience that as the use of imagery that is powerful in eroding emotion by so doing you set how the reader will respond.

vi) Be consistent in the use of point of view i.e. is decide what person to use, it may be either the first or the third person, when this is consistent, it makes the reader follow your story without difficulty

b) Descriptive essays

This is the type of essay that is meant to tell us things people, event or place look like i.e. it is

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used to describe the physical features of the people, things, event or places.

The following are the things to be considered in order to develop a good descriptive essay

i) Before you start your description, list your vivid memories, that means list all things that you remember then categories, the list into people, places or things after that choose items on the list that interest you and which you will include in your essay.

ii) Determine some variables of your writing I.e. think about your audience, topic, purpose, format of presentation and the situation in which you will make your description.

iii) Organize your essay start your description at a certain focal point, that means you should have a center from which the description proceeds, in a logical direction i.e. you may describe something from top to bottom or from near to far or from other perspective depending on the thing being described.

iv) Use metaphors to add life to every day or boring subject matters. The use of metaphors may help in making ordinary things seem new.

E.g. the guys tip toed in the mine fields of garbage.

v) Try to incorporate five senses in your description i.e. Use the words that appeal to senses hence making the description affection.

vi) Consider the impression that you want to make i.e. be conscious about the effect that you want to bring to your audience such as whether you want your audience to like or dislike something or a person you are describing, you may also wish your reader to be flattened or amused e.g. skinny vs. slim give different impressions

Example of the descriptive essay

KIGAMBONI

In terms of population, Kigamboni is averagely populated by people of different tribes, religions and race. But rather a great number happens to be people of the coast from Zanzibar and Pemba. Both Christians Muslims and other religions exist among the population of Kigamboni Hehe, Sukuma, Chagga with many other tribes. All these make up the people we see in that area.

The environment in Kigamboni is awesome considering the green vegetable around, the ocean at large bringing the breeze towards the area. And due to the ocean, people have to cross using a ferry well known as Panton to get to town for their activities. Despite existence of fishing activities, trade centers, people in Kigamboni still manage to keep the environment clean.

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Weather in Kigamboni is good, sunny at times rainy too but worthy. It even facilitates growth of crops such as coconut yams, potatoes and more helped by the fertile soil around the areas. And so far no disaster has occurred involving the weather.

Economically Kigamboni is full of various activities, trade, fishing, industries. People living have a normal life standard for an African as they participate in various activities.

Kigamboni happens to be a very unique place that lately it's been heard that it will be renovated to a very big- beautiful city, so maybe then it can always remain a perfect home for me and every other citizens living there.

c) Expository essays

It is the type of essay or composition which is meant to present information, explanation opinions or ideas about something.

These are the essay we most often write at school and they usually rely on the writers experience that means without experience these essays cannot be written.

The following are some of the strategies of expository essays

Choose the topic that you are familiar with, for example if your given a task to write about the disadvantages of corruption Development a thesis statement that will act as the basis of your explanation; For example the following statements,

- It is good for people of different religions to marry
- Civil education can lead to free and fair election
- If a female student gets pregnant, her parents should be held responsible

Determine your purpose and audience

The purpose will make you decide on the style and the audience will guide you how to write your exposition.

Question:

"Bride price is outdated", Discus

BUSINESS/OFFICIAL LETTERS

The business or official letters file into several categories as follows

Application letters – for job application

Query letters – for seeking information

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Complain letters – claiming something

Resignation letters – resigning

Inquiring/order letter – for ordering goods

Confirmation letters – confirming or indicating that things will be done

APPLICATION LETTER

Consider the following letters

Example 1.

MWINJU STREET

P.O. BOX 232,

11th July 2013

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER,

MWANANCHI COMMUNICATION LTD,

P.O. BOX 1123,

DAR ES SALAAM.

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: APPLICATION FOR THE NEWS EDITOR POST

I read with interest your advertisement that appeared in the Mwananchi news paper of 10th July 2013 through which you declared that you are in need of a qualified news editor. So, I write in response.

I am a graduate from the University of Dar Salaam where I got my degree in journalism in 2008. Since my graduation I have been working as a free lancing news editor for various news papers in Tanzania so have ample experience in the field of editing. Other qualifications that I possess will be evident in the CV and the certificate copies that I have enclosed with this letter.

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I will be pleased to work with a prosperous and International standard news paper like yours. The experience that I have most in these few years convinces me that I can work to meet your standards. Working with your company will make me advance my carrier further. Indeed, I regard may self as the right person your company is looking for.

I am ready to appear for interview at your convenience. I'm also looking forward to receiving a positive response from you.

Yours faithfully,

c.s

Caroline Senga

Components

The senders address

Date

The receivers address

Salutation

Title/heading of the letter

Body of the letter

Should have four paragraphs

- i. Opening (reflects the title)
- ii. Give brief description of your recent qualifications and experience
- iii. Describe why your special, why you should be considered and others
- iv. How you will be contacted and your readiness for the interview.

7. The ending or closure of the letter

this goes with the words yours faithfully if the address is unknown your sincerely if the address is known

Example 2.

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MWINJU STREET

P.O. BOX 232,

11th July 2013

GENERAL MANAGER,
MTWARA WATER AUTHORITY,
P.O. BOX 8877,

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: APPLICATION FOR THE SECRETARY POST

I learned of the position as advertised recently in the daily news paper that you are in need of a secretary and so I write in response.

I am a Diploma holder of secretarial courses at the Mwalimu Nyerere College in Dar es Salaam. I have worked as a secretary in an NGO in Dar es Salaam for two years after receiving my diploma hence I have experience on this field. The certificates to prove this plus other qualifications I have as indicated in my CV will be attached with the letter.

I have considerable working experience which makes me feel confident about the fact that I can work to meet your needs. I will be very pleased to get job with a good and accurate company.

I would welcome an opportunity to get discuss with you during the interview hence am hoping for a positive response.

Yours faithfully,

c.s

Caroline Senga

Exercise

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Write an application letter to the general manager, Mtwara water authority, P.O. BOX 8877, Mtwara. Apply for the post of a secretary as advertised recently in the daily news paper.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letter to the newspaper editor are formal letters which are written on different subjects. For example complains about something like poor sewage system, poor services offered by certain company. In that scenario one may wish to write a letter to the editor to express his/her point of view. Try to keep them short under 150 words because the longer one may be cropped by the editor.

Guideline on how to write letters to the editor

1. State the argument you are responding to
2. Deal with one issue per letter.
3. Do not be abusive.
4. It should be logically organized
 - a brief explanation of the argument you are opposing
 - followed by a statement of your own position
 - present your evidence
 - close with a pithy comment.
5. Use facts, figures and expert testimony whenever possible
6. Respect the opinion of people with special knowledge or experience.
7. Proof read your letter carefully for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
8. A letter should not be mailed the same day it is written.
9. Try to view the letter from the reader's perspective.
10. Always include your names, address, day-time, phone number and signature.

Format on how to write the letter to the editor.

1. Receiver's address
2. Salutation

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3. Title

4. Main body

5. Ending of the letter

6. Sender's address

For instance,

The Editor,

Uhuru Communication,

P. O. Box 34

Dar Es Salaam.

Dear Editor ,

RE: DIRTINESS IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT.

Your main body should have at least 4 points each in an independent paragraph (so the main body should be of 4 paragraphs)

Yours in building the nation.

Good Citizen (your name)

P. O. Box.....

Ubungo Kibangu

DAR ES SALAAM

Date

CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

-It is the document that gives ones use account in terms as education, date of birth, work experience employment status, citizenship etc.

There are 2 ways/style of writing a CV

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British style

American style

BRITISH STYLE CV

I. PARTICULARS/PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Name – (John Mario Woolworth)

Marital status- single/married/widow

Address.....

Telephone.....

Nationality.....

Date of birth.....

Place of birth.....

II. EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS

2013-2017 University of Mzumbe

B.A of Public Administration

2010-2012 Shaaban Robert Secondary School.

A – level education, Division I

2006-2009 Tusime Secondary School

O-level education, Division II

III EMPLOYMENT TO DATE

2012 to-date Human Resource Manager

Kwanza Bottlers Ltd

2016-2018 Personnel officers

TANAPA

IV. SKILL

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Driving, computer literacy in Ms.word, Mc.excel

V. INTERESTS/HOBBIES

- Football
- praying
- Basketball

VI REFEREES/REFERENCES

Name

Title

Address

Tel. number

Should be someone who knows you well

SAMPLE OF A BRITISH STYLE CV

PARTICULARS/PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Name	Caroline Senga
Marital Status	Single
Address	P.O. BOX 123 DSM
Telephone	0719528392
Nationality	Tanzania
Date of Birth	21 st March, 1994
Place of Birth	Mwanza

2. EDUCATION/ QUALIFICATIONS

2014-2017 University of Dar es Salaam

B.A of Sociology

2012-2014 Shaaban Robert Secondary School

A-level education, division I

2008-2011 Cornelius Girls Secondary

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O-level education division III

2001-2007 St. Mary Junior School

Primary level

3. SKILLS

Information technology

Fluent in French

4. INTEREST/HOBBIES

Reading novels

Watching movies

Singing

5. REFEREES/REFERENCES

Name Nicholas Raphael Mbena

Title Lawyer

Address P.O. BOX 678 Iringa

Tel no. 0784-188840

2.AMERICAN STYLE CV

I. ADDRESS

Name

Email

Tel. No

II. OBJECTIVE

To obtain a post of human Resource Manager

III. EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS

IV. WORK EXPERIENCE

V. SKILLS

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VI. PERSONAL INTERESTS

In includes: - football, Jogging, Reading novels

VII. REFERENCES/REFEREES

NB:-

(i) The major differences between American style and British style are that the American style has an objective for which the CV is written while British style has no objective.

(ii) British style contains many details in the personal particulars while in American style there is only address of the writer

(iii) British CV can be attached to different letters while American CV is attached to particular letter

Question: - Write your own CV using British style and another using American style

MEMORANDUM

A memo is defined as a short note that is written by the superiors to their subordinates whom they lead or work within an organization or institution.

Memo is mainly meant to inform about issues such as meeting, problems

The following are the parts of the memo (format)

1. Title – usually written memo or memorandum
2. Name of the address (which comes after the word to)
3. Name of the writer (it comes after the word from)
4. The date of which the memo is written
5. The subject
6. The body of the memo (the main content)
7. The name of the secretary who typed the memo/Title

MEMORANDUM

TO: James Mason

FROM: Headmaster

DATE: 18th July 2013

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SUBJECT: Meeting

Kindly inform other teachers about the meeting which will take place tomorrow in the staff room at 10 o'clock am. Class teachers should come with their monthly reports. I hope everyone will attend, making the meeting successfully take place.

Joyce Tibainyuki

J.t

NB: The name of the sender has to be followed by the sender signature or initials. In the main body of the memo you ought to show what the topic is about and what you expect from the addressee.

TASK

Imagine you are the head prefect at your school write a memo to other prefects telling them to attend the meeting that you have called to every prefect that he/she thinks is worth discussing.

MEMORANDUM

TO: HASSAN KILOKO

FROM: HEAD PREFECT

DATE: 23/07/2013

SUBJECT: MEETING

Kindly inform all the prefects that early Monday morning 26th September, 2013 there will be a meeting at 10:00 am sharp. Attendance is compulsory. All prefects are requested to come with matters worth discussing at the meeting.

Isaka Mikui

I.M

WRITING MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Meetings are formal gatherings convened in order for people to discuss various issues known as AGENDA.

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AGENDA is a Latin word meaning THINGS TO BE DONE.

Agenda refers to business items to be dealt within/ during the meeting.

WHY TAKE MINUTES?

Minutes give you a permanent record of what was said in the meeting, there are several reasons why you might find this record useful.

- i To remind you of the actions that you and other people agreed to take.
- ii To remind you of what was decided.
- iii To tell those who couldn't attend what was said
- iv To form the basis of decision making at the next meeting.
- v To take actions and make follow ups.

Minute taking may be annoying tedious and often and difficult as you have to write down accurately what was said without writing word to word.

The Following guide line is useful in writing minutes (formal minutes) should include the following.

I. Title of the minutes

This will include the name of the organization and the reason for the meeting. The title should include the date, time and location.

MBEZI BEACH HIGH SCHOOL

Minutes of the staff meeting to evaluate the form six 2013 results, held on 15th August 2013 3:00 PM in staff room NO. 2.

II. Those present

You should list the names of those who are attending the meeting. The Chairperson always reads the list, usually followed by the secretary or recorder. You may put the secretary last. Ideally you should list the attendees in order of seniority.

III. Apologies for absentees

You should make a list of those who made apologies

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IV. Body of minutes

You should write the minutes themselves. Use headings to highlight the main points. Use paragraph numbers so that each item is easily identifiable.

V. Approval

The Chairperson should sign and date the minutes

VI. Action points

You should highlight the person responsible for a particular action which was agreed at the meeting. It is then clear who is supposed to be doing what

HOW SHOULD THE MINUTES BE?

Minutes should be brief, clear, accurate, and complete, in a suitable tone. In writing minutes you should always keep in mind that the reader of the minutes is always the most important person, if the readers cannot understand what you have written, the minutes are worthless.

BE BRIEF

You can be brief by doing the following:

- a Separate the important parts of the conversation from the phatic and write the important parts only. Example The audit of stock took four weeks because of the variation of stock levels and the poor state of the record
- b Include only the information needed by the readers of your minutes. E.g. If the chairperson starts by saying “We welcome Michael to our meeting”, Do not include this in the minutes.
- c You should try to avoid saying or noting who said what unless it is essential, otherwise the minutes can become resistive and boring.

BE CLEAR

Although you should make your minutes as brief as possible, do not leave your reader to give what you mean.

E.g.

-If the same word is used again and again you can make the abbreviation in a bracket. The abbreviation can be used on its own in the text of the minutes for example Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA)

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BE ACCURATE

Here what is meant is that the writer of the minutes should use the correct vocabulary and an appropriate tone when writing the minute.

As the minutes later you will be responsible for all the facts in the minutes. So you should understand what is going on in the meeting.

This will allow to summarize what is said accurately if you do not understand something ask for help, otherwise you risk problems arising later on if people query what you have written.

Do not tempt to use words just because they sound impressive, they may have a slightly different meaning from the actual words used at the meeting.

BE COMPLETE

You should be careful not to leave out useful information when trying to be brief. For Example if your minutes say that a letter from the client was read and discussed. This does not give any useful information we need to know what was in the letter and the outcome of the discussion