

**Writing Action Plan:**  
*Cole Harbour District High School*  
**Principles of Writing**

## Writing Action Plan

### **Cole Harbour District High School** **Principles of Writing**

It is the expectation at Cole Harbour District High School that literacy/writing strategies be reinforced and practiced across the curriculum, and across grade levels. Sentence and paragraph construction, essay composition, and research paper writing are integral parts of the writing process in all subject areas and grade levels. In the interest of simplification of implementation, and grade level consistency, a different area of writing will be the focus for all subject area teachers within each grade level.

## Writing Action Plan

### **Grade 10 Level Courses**

#### ***Sentence and Paragraph Construction***

##### Sentences:

Students are encouraged in all subject areas, when at all possible, and when appropriate, to write in complete and meaningful sentences.

- A complete sentence makes sense by itself.
- A sentence is about someone or something (subject) doing or being (verb-predicate) something.
- A sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.
- Run-on sentences or sentence fragments are not acceptable.
- Sentences should not generally begin with words like: And, Because or But and should not end in prepositions, such as; for or with.

##### Paragraphs:

Students are required to practice paragraph writing in all subject areas.

- A paragraph begins with an indentation.
- Every paragraph contains a statement of the topic and development of the topic.
- Paragraphs are written in at least five complete and related sentences.
- Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence that states the main idea and grabs the reader's interest (interesting incident or anecdote, opinion challenge, definition, quotation, little known or striking fact).
- The details in the other sentences of the paragraph support or add information to the topic sentence. This support or information may include such details as; examples, definitions, explanation of steps, facts, quotations, paraphrase, comparisons, statistics, incidents and reasons.
- Each paragraph ends with a sentence that re-states the main idea of the topic sentence in a new way and should leave the reader with a memorable statement.

## **Grade 11 Level Courses**

### ***Essay Composition***

Students are encouraged in all subject areas to address and express questions of concern using the five-paragraph essay format. Although this format should be encouraged at all high school grade levels, there should be a concerted effort by all Grade 11 teachers to reinforce and practice the use of this format within their subject area content and issue considerations.

An essay is an organized body of writing that explores a particular subject or topic and expresses a viewpoint on that topic. It is organized by paragraphs and generally should have a minimum of five paragraphs. Each paragraph in the essay plays a particular role in the development of your subject or topic consideration. Each paragraph has its own main idea, body and conclusion, but at the same time, it is part of the introduction, body or conclusion of the essay. Whenever you introduce a new idea, you start a new paragraph. The point of view of a formal essay is generally third person and should not contain contractions or abbreviations.

#### INTRODUCTION

- Paragraph 1: The opening paragraph of an essay usually states the subject (thesis statement), gains the reader's attention and leads smoothly into the main part of the essay. The thesis statement expresses the controlling idea of your essay. Not only does it relate your subject matter, it often states a point of view or position that becomes the guiding principle for all subsequent discussion. It should describe an angle on your topic. An effective thesis should be a generalization, not a fact; it should be limited, not too broad; and it should be sharply focused, not too vague. Because a thesis must prepare the readers for facts and details, it cannot itself be a fact. It must always be a generalization demanding proof or further development. The attention-getter of the introductory paragraph may take a number of forms such as; an example; an anecdote; a question; an analogy; a challenge to an opinion; a definition; a quotation; or a little known or striking fact. Each paragraph in an essay should end with a transitional sentence that leads the reader into the next paragraph.

#### BODY

- Paragraph 2-4 (or more): The paragraphs of the body of your essay develop the idea presented in your thesis statement. Each paragraph will explain, describe or reveal evidence about a new idea relevant to your subject. Each paragraph will include both a topic sentence and sentences that support the main idea of that paragraph. There are many ways to present the supporting details of the paragraph's main idea, some of which are through the use of; example, narration, explanation, description, comparison/contrast, classification and persuasive argument. Each main idea of an essay should be presented in order of importance

## Writing Action Plan

so that the first paragraph of the body of your essay should detail the most important main idea of your subject. The main idea of each paragraph should reflect a connection to your thesis statement.

## CONCLUSION

- Paragraph 5: The closing paragraph of an essay should tie all of the important points of the writing together. It should leave the reader with a clear idea of the essay's importance. This concluding paragraph usually has two parts: a summary of the main points of your essay (phrased differently than your thesis statement), and a memorable statement that may take any number of forms such as; a prediction, a statement of significance, a relevant or thought-provoking quotation or question, a recommendation, a challenge, or a solution.

## **GRADE 12 COURSES**

### ***Research Writing***

Although research writing is an expectation within all grade 12 courses it should be encouraged at all grade levels and across the curriculum. It is important that all students have opportunities to practice the expression of their research through an organized and reference-documented body of writing. The following process has been adopted from the Cole Harbour District High School Student Handbook (Premier, A School Specialty Company). Other useful resources include the Cole Harbour District High School's online library and *A Canadian Writer's Reference* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) – D. Hacker.

## Writing Action Plan

- 1. Topic** – *What are you going to write about?* Sometimes the topic is determined for you. If not, write about something that interests you.

*Narrow your topic* – After you know your topic, narrow it to a manageable size.

Large Mammals  
Large Mammals of North America  
North American Black Bears  
Habitat of North American Black Bears

*Focus your writing on a main idea or argument* – Develop a thesis statement that briefly expresses your point of view.

The natural habitat of North American black bears is being lost to development at an alarming rate.

- 2. Strategy** – *How will you write?*

*What is the purpose of your writing?* – You can write to inform, to persuade, to entertain or to instruct. Deciding what the purpose of your writing is will give you insight into how to write.

If you are writing to persuade, you might include examples that prove or give support to your claim.

*Who is your intended audience?* – You write differently depending on audience (eg. friend vs. employer). Adjust your style and language for each audience. If you want to persuade, know your audience's position/beliefs.

*What point of view will you use?* – Generally, pick a point of view and stick with it.

Nonfiction – You can write with your own voice or without:

With: Based on this evidence, I conclude...

Without: Based on this evidence, it is possible to conclude...

Fiction – You can write in either the first person or the third person.

First: I walked down the street...

Third: She walked down the street...

*What form will you give your writing?* – Different forms (e.g. essay, book review) have different requirements. Ask your teacher what form (or genre) you should write in.

- 3. Content** – *What information do you need?*

*Research your topic thoroughly* –

Start general – encyclopedias, CD-Roms – to get a broad view of the topic.

Go specific – books, magazines, Internet, interviews – to get more detail.

## Writing Action Plan

*Take notes as you go* – Write down relevant information. Don't write down everything. Taking too many notes just drowns you in information, making it harder for you to write a coherent paper in which everything fits together.

*Make an outline* – As you take notes, form general ideas about your topic. Take those ideas and make a general outline of your paper. Write down each main idea then organize them. Make sure they all fit in place.

**Tips: When you take notes, immediately jot down the title of the work, the author, the publisher, and the date published. This saves time later.**

### **4. Writing** – *Finally, it's time for the real work!*

Write your first draft – Begin with a brief, interesting introduction. Include your thesis statement. Develop each paragraph in turn as a whole. For interest, vary the lengths. Make sure each paragraph is linked to the next (and the previous). Use your best arguments at the beginning and near the end. Close with a restatement of your original thesis.

Revise your draft – Read it out loud slowly, listening for awkward words/sentences. Proofread for spelling and grammatical errors. Take out redundant phrases (ones that repeat what has already been said). Make sure the sentences have enough variety to keep readers interested. Check that all your paragraphs provide meaningful information. Clear up vague or ambiguous sentences.

Write the final draft – Make it look good!

### **5. Documentation** – *Find out what method(s) of documentation your teacher prefers.* See Appendices: Citing Sources: MLA Style



**APPENDICES**

- A. Plagiarism policy
- B. Paragraph writing outline
- C. Essay writing outline
- D. Formatting
  - i. materials
  - ii. title and identification
  - iii. margins, spacing and indentation
  - iv. sample title page
- E. Citing sources: MLA Styles
- F. Sample student papers
  - i. student essay without documentation
  - ii. sample MLA research paper
  - iii. sample student **500** word essay
- G. Sample assessment rubrics
  - i. rubric #1: The Essay
  - ii. rubric #2: The Persuasive Essay

Hacker, D. *A Canadian Writer's Reference* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1996.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Cole Harbour District High School has a clear policy concerning the theft of others' ideas and words. When you take an idea, expression, plot or information from another source and use it as your own it is an act of plagiarism. The use of another's words without appropriate documentation, will result in the work receiving a mark of zero and disciplinary action. It is important to reference your sources when presenting another's words in your own writing or presentation. We have highlighted the use of the MLA method of reference-documentation in the school Writing Plan, but if desired, other methods are available at the Cole Harbour District High School online library and in *A Canadian Writer's Reference (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)* – D. Hacker.

## Writing Action Plan

### **PARAGRAPH WRITING**

Practice the creation of effective placement of the parts of the paragraph. Use the Checkpoints to guide you through this exercise.

Topic Sentence First

---

(topic sentence)

---

(sentence with supporting detail)

---

(sentence with supporting detail)

---

(sentence with supporting detail)

---

(concluding sentence)

Checkpoints for creating paragraphs

- Will my topic sentence, which states the main idea, grab my readers' interest? Is it more effectively placed at the beginning or at the end of the paragraph?
- Do the details in the other sentences support or add information to the topic sentence? Are these details the best I can find (examples, facts, statistics, incidents, reasons)?
- Does the concluding sentence both re-state and expand on the main idea of the topic sentence?

**ESSAY WRITING**  
**The Five Paragraph Essay**

**INTRODUCTION**

Paragraph One: In your introductory paragraph write five sentences to introduce the subject/topic of your essay. (attention-getter, thesis statement, transition sentence)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**BODY**

Paragraph Two: Select one detail of your topic and describe more fully. Use at least three sentences.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Paragraph Three: Select another detail that supports or describes your essay topic and describe in detail. Again, use at least three sentences.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Paragraph Four: As in paragraphs 2 and 3, select another detail that supports the topic of your essay, and write at least three sentences to describe this detail.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**CONCLUSION**

Paragraph Five: This is the closing paragraph where you bring your essay to an end. Summarize some of the points you have made. Write a sentence that leaves your reader thinking positively about what you have written (restatement of thesis statement, summary of main ideas, memorable statement).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## **FORMATTING**

### ***Materials***

Use 8 ½ x 11, 20-pound white paper. Secure the pages with a paper clip. Unless your instructor suggests otherwise, do not staple the pages together or use any sort of binder.

### ***Title and identification***

Essays written for English and humanities classes do not require a title page unless your instructor requests one. Unless you are told otherwise, against the left margin about one inch (2.5cm) from the top of the page, place your name, the instructor's name, the course name and number, and the date on separate lines; double-space between lines. Double-space again and centre the title of the paper on the page. Capitalize the first and last words of the title and all other words except articles, prepositions and coordinating conjunctions. Double-space after the title and begin typing the text of the paper. A possible format for the title page follows. See your instructor for format preferences.

### ***Margins, spacing and indentation***

Leave margins of at least one inch (2.5cm) but no more than an inch and a half (about 4cm) on all sides of the page. Double-space between lines and indent the first line of each paragraph five spaces from the left margin. For quotations longer than four typed lines of prose or three lines of verse, indent each line 10 spaces from the left margin. Double-space between the body of the paper and the quotation, and double-space the lines of the quotation. Quotation marks are not needed when a quotation is indented.

**SAMPLE TITLE PAGE**

Title is centered  
about one-third  
down the page

Between the Word and the Sentence:  
Apes and Language

Writer's name is  
centered near the  
middle of the page

Karen Shaw

The name and  
section number of  
the course, the  
professor's name,  
and the date are  
centered near the  
bottom of the page

English 101, Section 30  
Dr. Robert Barshay  
1 November 1994

**Citing Sources: MLA Style**

- Put the author's last name first. Include all the authors if there is more than one.
- Next, include the title, the place of publication, the publisher's name and the date it was published. You will find all this information on the copyright page of the book.

**Here are some sample entries for a reference list: (alphabetical by author's last name)**

**Single Author**

Aaronson, Sylvia. *A History of Cash Registers*. Toronto: Moneytalks Press, 1995.

**Several Authors**

Brown, Tom, Richard Smith and Harry Jones. *Unusual Names*. London: Whittaker, 1989.

**Editors**

Chu, Sandra and Mark Pick, eds. *Decision Making Models*. New York: Wall Street Press, 1995.

**Unknown author**

*The Chicago Manual of Style*. 13<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

**Encyclopedia**

Wilson, J. Tuzo. "Plate Tectonics". *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. 1988 ed.

**Translation**

Dostoyevski, Fyodor. *The Idiot*. Trans. David Magarshack. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982.

**Corporate author**

Ontario Human Right Commission. *Human Rights: Employment Application Forms and Interviews*. Toronto: OHRC, 1991.

**Work in an anthology**

Forster, E.M. "The Machine Stops." *Classics of Modern Fiction: Ten Short Novels*. Ed. Irving Howe. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972.

**Magazine article**

Picovich, Edward. "School of the Future: Plugged in Learning." *Maclean's* 30 Sept. 1991: 25-32.

## Writing Action Plan

### **Newspaper article**

DeLonghi, Greta. "Project Haiti's Hospital Sees a Sunny Future." *Guelph Tribune* 19 October 1994: 12.

"Ottawa Plans Major Cutbacks." *The Globe and Mail* 20 Feb. 1992: A1.

### **Videos, television shows, and movies**

*The Big Snit*. Dir. Richard Condie. National Film Board of Canada, 1985.

### **Recording**

Verdi, Giuseppe. *Arias*. Simon Estes, Bass. Cond. Gaetano Delogu. New Philharmonia Orchestra. Philips, 416 818-4, 1987.

### **Interview**

Springsteen, Bruce. Personal interview. 15 Oct. 1995.

### **CD-ROM**

*DISCovering Authors, Canadian Edition*. Vers. 1.0. Biographical database. On CD-ROM. IBM. Detroit: Gale Research, 1994.

### **Internet**


Lynch, Tim. "DSN Trials and Tribble-ations Review." [Psi Phi: Bradley's Science Fiction Club](http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/psiphi/DS9/ep/503r.html). 1996. Bradley University. 8 Oct 1997  
<http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/psiphi/DS9/ep/503r.html>.

**For alternative reference styles (ie APA) see "A Canadian Writer's Reference", D. Hacker**



# Writing Action Plan

*Student essay without documentation*

1" (2.5cm) 

Tom Weitzel

Dr. Fry

English 101

15 October 1994

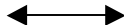
1/2" (1.25cm)  
Weitzel 1

Weitzel 2

## Who Goes to the Races?

5 space  
indent 

A favorite pastime of mine is observing people, and my favorite place to observe is at the horse races. After many encounters with the racing crowd, I have discovered that there are four distinct groups at the track: the once-a-year bunch, the professionals, the clubhouse set, and the unemployed.

1" (2.5cm) 

The largest group at the track consists of those who show up once a year. They know little about horses or betting and rely strictly on race track gimmick sheets and newspaper predictions for selecting possible winners. If that doesn't work they use intuition, lucky numbers, favorite colors, or appealing names. They bet larger amounts as the day goes along, gambling on every race, including long-shot bets on exactas and daily doubles. The vast majority go home broke and frustrated.

A more subtle and quiet group is the professionals. They follow the horses from track to track and live in campers and motor homes. Many are married

couples, some are retired, and all are easily spotted with their lunch sacks, water jugs, and binoculars. Since most know one another, they section themselves off in a particular area of the stadium. All rely on the racing form and on personal knowledge of each horse, jockey and track in making the proper bet. They bet only on the smart races, rarely on the favorites. Never do they bet on exactas or daily doubles. More often than not they either break even or go home winners.

Isolated from the others is the clubhouse set. Found either at the cocktail lounge or in the restaurant, usually involved in business transactions, these racing fans rarely see a race in person and do their betting via the waiter. It's difficult to tell whether they go home sad, happy or in between. They keep their emotions to themselves.

The most interesting members of the racetrack population are the unemployed. They won't be found in the clubhouse, but right down at the rail next to the finish line. Here one can discover the real emotion of the racetrack – the screaming, the cursing, and the pushing. The unemployed are not in it for sport. Betting is not a game for them, but a battle for survival. If they lose, they must borrow enough money to carry them until the next cheque comes in, and then, of course, they head right back to the track. This particular group arrives at the track beaten and leaves beaten.

I have probably lost more money than I have won at the track, but observing these four interesting groups of people makes it all worthwhile.

# Writing Action Plan

*Title is centered about one-third down the page.*

Between the Word and the Sentence:

Apes and Language

*Writer's name is centered near the middle of the page*

Karen Shaw

*The name and section number of the course, the professor's name, and the date are centered near the bottom of the page.*

English 101, Section 30

Dr. Robert Barshay

1 November 1994

*Writer's name and page number are typed 1/2" from top of each page.*

Shaw 1

Between the Word and the Sentence:

Apes and Language

*Title is centered and double-spaced.*

One afternoon, Koko the gorilla, who was often bored with language lessons, stubbornly and repeatedly signaled "red" in American Sign Language when asked the color of a white towel. She did this even though she had identified the color white many times before. At last the gorilla plucked a bit of red lint from the towel and showed it to her trainer (Patterson and Linden 80-81). At Yerkes Primate Center, chimpanzees Sherman and Austin, who had been taught symbols for foods and tools, were put in separate rooms. To obtain food in different containers, one chimp had to ask the other for a tool, such as a key or a wrench, by projecting symbols onto a screen using a computer. After some experimentation, the chimpanzees succeeded 97 percent of the time (Marx 1333). These and hundreds of similar scenes played out over the last twenty-five years demonstrate that the great apes (gorillas, orangutans, and chimpanzees) resemble humans in language abilities far more than researchers once thought. And evidence is mounting, despite opposition

*Citation with author's name and page number in parentheses.*

*Thesis states writer's conclusions about the ape language experiments.*

## Writing Action Plan

Shaw 2

from some linguists and psychologists, that the most intelligent of the apes – pygmy chimpanzees – can understand and perhaps even create sentences.

Although apes lack the vocal ability to produce human sounds, they have acquired vocabularies in American Sign Language (Ameslan) and in artificial languages. Vocabularies ranging from 100 to 200 signs or symbols have been reported for the gorillas Koko and Michael; for the orangutan Chantek; and for numerous chimpanzees, including Washoe, Nim, Lana, Sherman, Austin and Kanzi.

The apes' acquisition of these vocabularies is not in dispute, but some researchers have questioned whether the apes are truly learning the signs and symbols. These critics suggest that the apes may be merely imitating their trainers or responding to cues. Psychologist H. S. Terrace, the chief trainer of a chimp named Nim, is one of the most formidable of the skeptics because he was once a believer. Ultimately Terrace concluded that in many cases "the teacher's signs had prompted Nim's signs" (75). Terrace argued that cuing had also played a large role in Beatrice Gardner's training of Washoe.

*Author is named in signal phrase; page number is put in parentheses at end of quotation.*

Shaw 3

While it is possible that in these early studies many of the apes' signs were in response to cues, Terrace and other critics failed to prove that all of them were. Even as early as 1979, psychologists R. Allen and Beatrix T. Gardner were performing double-blind experiments that prevented any possibility of cuing (Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok 81-82). Terrace criticizes these experiments without mentioning the double-blind technique, an attack that seems unfair.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence that the apes have not been simply responding to cues is that they have used signs or symbols spontaneously among themselves. Francine Patterson's gorillas Koko and Michael sign to one another, with Michael occasionally using signs that he could have learned only from Koko. "Even more intriguing," write Patterson and Linden, "is his variation of the tickle sign depending only who he is conversing with" (176).

The most dramatic instances of spontaneous signing have involved Washoe. In 1976, she had a baby, and although the baby chimp lived on a few hours, Washoe signed to it before it died (Davis 42). Later, another baby chimpanzee placed in Washoe's care mastered more than 50 signs in

*The writer interprets the evidence; she doesn't just report it.*

*The writer supports her point with examples from a variety of sources.*

*The writer supports her point with examples from a variety of sources.*

## Writing Action Plan

Shaw 4

*No page number is needed for Toner because the article is one page long*

Ameslan without help from humans (Toner). When the Gardners returned Washoe to an ape colony in Oklahoma, she desperately signaled to humans from whom she was separated by a moat, and from the start she signed to other apes. Adrian Desmond vividly describes Washoe's efforts to converse:

*Quotation longer than four lines is indented 10 spaces; quotation marks are omitted no period is used after citation.*

Frustrated by lack of conversationalists, she (Washoe) even tried talking to dogs...One particularly memorable day, a snake spread terror through...the ape island, and all but one fled in panic. Then Washoe was seen running over signing to him "come, hurry up." (42)

*Brackets indicate words not in the original source, ellipse dots indicate words deleted from the original source.*

In addition to learning signs and using them spontaneously, apes have used language creatively. Koko has signed "finger bracelet" to describe a ring and "bottle match" for a cigarette lighter (Patterson and Linden 146). The Gardners' Lucy is reported to have called an onion "cry fruit" and a radish "cry hurt food" (Desmond 40). And the pygmy chimpanzee Kanzi has punched symbols for "campfire" and "TV" to ask to see Quest for Fire, a film about early humans discovering fire (Eckholm, "Kanzi" C3).

*Citation includes short title because two works by Eckholm appear in the list of works cited.*

Shaw 5

Apes who invent creative names are not simply learning by rote. They are adapting language for their own purposes. And those purposes, it turns out, may even include lying and joking. In a recent personal interview, Professor Esther Robbins, who worked with Francine Patterson's gorilla Michael for seven months, pointed out how difficult it is to verify such uses of language quantitatively. What counts as language is "a very grey area," she says. "But you know that animal, and there is very definitely communication, even lying and joking."

*Use of a personal interview as a source.*

Although the great apes have demonstrated significant language skills, one central question remains: Can they be taught to use that uniquely human language tool we call grammar, to learn the difference, for instance, between "ape bite human" and "human bite ape"? In other words, can an ape create a sentence?

*A clear transition prepares readers for the next major point.*

Apes have used multi-sign sequences, but until recently there was little convincing evidence that the combinations displayed a grasp of grammar. Many of the sequences seemed confusing and repetitious, such as Nim's longest sequence: "give orange me give eat orange me eat orange give me eat orange give me you" (Terrace et al. 895). Currently, however,

*Citation of work with four or more authors*

## Writing Action Plan

Shaw 6

E. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh's studies on the pygmy chimpanzee Kanzi are making even the skeptics take notice. Young Kanzi had played in the lab while his mother was being tutored in a language of symbols, and when he was two and a half, his mother was sent away for breeding. "To the scientists amazement," writes Erik Eckholm, "he had been learning symbols out of the corner of his eye. He hit the symbol for apple, then proved he knew what he was saying by picking an apple from an assortment of foods" ("Kanzi" C2).

Impressed by Kanzi's ability to pick up language without explicit training, Savage-Rumbaugh decided to replace rote learning with "a more naturalistic approach": Kanzi would learn language much the way human children do (Lewin 50). Consequently, Kanzi's linguistic development has taken place not in a laboratory but in a 22-hectare forest, which he roams in the company of his caretakers. During games of tag and hide-and-seek and other childhood activities, Kanzi communicates with his caregivers on a computerized keyboard equipped with a voice synthesizer. A word is spoken each time Kanzi touches a symbol on the board.

Shaw 7

Evidence of Kanzi's linguistic progress was published in 1991, when Kanzi was 10. The results show that he can understand grammatically complex spoken English and that he seems to be developing a primitive grammar. In their studies of Kanzi and his half sister Mulika, Savage-Rumbaugh and members of her team have taken great care to avoid cuing. Lewin reports that spoken instructions to Kanzi were "delivered by someone out of his sight" and that the other team members "could not hear the instructions as so could not cue Kanzi, even unconsciously" (51). When Kanzi correctly responded to sentences like "Can you put the raisins in the bowl?" his caretakers made the instructions more difficult. For example, in response to the question "Can you go to the colony room and get the telephone?" Kanzi brought back the telephone even though there were other objects in the room.

Most surprising is Kanzi's apparent grasp of grammar. The first grammatical rule that Kanzi began to display was to put action before object (as in "hide peanut" and "grab Kanzi"), a pattern probably picked up from his caregivers. In 1985, Eckholm reported that Kanzi's "two and three word statements are often made without prompting, systematically add

*Citation appears after the quotation mark and before the period.*

## Writing Action Plan

Shaw 8

useful information and represent his own creative responses to novel situations” (“Pygmy” 87). In the first month of study, Kanzi showed no understanding of grammatical ordering, but gradually he began to pick it up. Patricia Marks Greenfield and E. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh point out that this development trend “was also found for human children at the two-word stage” (559).

At times Kanzi deviated from the grammar of his keepers and began to develop his own patterns, an ability that may be more impressive than picking up rules from keepers. Without prompting, Kanzi began to combine gestures and symbols, usually pointing to the symbol first. For example, Ann Gibbons reports that when Kanzi wanted to visit the lab’s dog, “he would point to the symbol for dog, then make a gesture for ‘go’” (1561). Perhaps even more significant is the pattern that Kanzi developed on his own in combining various symbols. According to Gibbons, “When he gave an order combining two symbols for action –such as “chase” and “hide”—it was important to him that the first action – “chase” –be done first” (1561). Kanzi’s consistency in combining symbols suggests that he has at least a rudimentary grasp of grammar.

Shaw 9

If Kanzi and other pygmy chimpanzees continue to develop grammatical patterns, the implications for the study of human evolution could be profound. Anthropologist Richard Leakey and coauthor Roger Lewin pose the issue like this:

Is spoken language merely an extension and enhancement of cognitive capacities to be found among our ape relatives? Or is spoken language a unique human characteristic completely separate from any cognitive abilities in apes? (240)

*A quotation set off from the text is clearly introduced.*

Leakey and Lewin believe that there is a continuity in linguistic ability between apes and humans. Linguist Noam Chomsky believes the opposite. Chomsky describes the entire ape language field as gripped by “sentimental confusion” and dismisses the studies on Kanzie with a flippant analogy: “To maintain that Kanzie has language ability is like saying man can fly because he can jump in the air” (qtd. In Booth). This is certainly strong language from a man who, in the words of Anne Gibbons, has not even “seen the new data – and doesn’t care to” (1521).

*Citation of an indirect source (words quoted in another source)*

*The writer addresses opposing arguments.*

## Writing Action Plan

Skeptics such as Chomsky seem to be applying a double standard when they compare apes' linguistic abilities to those of young human children. As Savage-Rumbaugh puts it, "When children make up novel words it is called lexical innovation, but when chimpanzees do the same thing it is called ambiguous" (qtd. In Lewin 51). The double standard issue is unlikely to be resolved any time soon, however, because the methodologies used in studies of human children are different from – and possibly less rigorous than – those used in the ape language studies.

Certainly no one expects any chimpanzee to perform linguistically far beyond the level of a very young human child. After all, a chimpanzee's brain is only one-third the size of our own. But the brains of the ancestors of Homo sapiens at some point were of similar size. Surely it makes more sense that an animal with whom we share 99 percent of our genetic makeup would at least have the inklings in its brain of the ability to communicate in language, and surely the ability to communicate in language in our human ancestors came before language itself. Maybe I am "sentimental," to Chomsky's word, but when I read about Kanzi's achievements, it is difficult not to believe that there is some commonality of abilities.

*No citation is needed for "common knowledge" – facts mentioned in many general reference works*

*The writer ends with her own stand on the controversy*

## Writing Action Plan

List of works  
cited begins on a  
separate page.

Shaw 12

### Works Cited

Heading centered, is  
typed 1: from top of page

List is  
alphabetized  
by author's  
last names.

Booth, William. "Monkeying with Language: Is Chimp Using Words or Merely Aping Handlers?" Washington Post 29 Oct. 1990: A3.

Davis, Flora. Eloquent Animals: A Study in Animal Communication. New York: Coward, 1978.

Desmond, Adrian. The Ape's Reflexion. New York: Wade-Dial, 1979.

Eckholm, Erik. "Kanzi the Chimp: A Life in Science." New York Times 25 June 1985, local ed.: C1+.

- - -. "Pygmy Chimp Readily Learns Language Skill." New York Times 24 June 1985, local ed.: A1+

Gibbons, Ann. "Déjà Vu All Over Again: Chimp-Language Wars." Science 251 (1991): 1561-62.

Greenfield, Patricia Marks, and E. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh. "Grammatical Combination in Pan paniscus: Processes of Learning and Invention in the Evolution and Development of Language." "Language" and Intelligence in Monkeys and

First line of an  
entry is typed  
at left margin;  
subsequent  
lines are  
indented five  
spaces.

Double-  
spacing is  
used through  
out.

Shaw 13

Apes: Comparative Developmental Perspectives. Ed.

Sue Taylor Parker and Kathleen Rita Gibson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. 540-78.

Leakey, Richard, and Roger Lewin. Origins Reconsidered: In Search of What Makes Us Human. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Lewin, Roger. "Look Who's Talking Now." New Scientist 29 Apr. 1991: 49-52.

Marx, Jean L. "Ape-Language Controversy Flares Up." Science 207 (1980): 1330-33.

Patterson, Francine, and Eurgan Linden. The Education of KoKo. New York: Holt, 1981.

Robbins, Esther. Personal Interview. 17 May 1993.

Sebeok, Thomas A., and Jean Umiker-Sebeok. "Performing Animals: Secrets of the Trade." Psychology Today Nov. 1979: 78-91.

Terrace, H. S. "How Nim Chimpsky Changed My Mind." Psychology Today Nov. 1979: 65-76.



## Writing Action Plan

Shaw 14

Terrace, H. S., et al. "Can an Ape Create a Sentence?" Science 206 (1979):  
891-902.

Toner, Mike. "Louis, the Talking Chimp." National Wildlife Feb. – Mar.  
1986: 24.

**SAMPLE STUDENT 500 WORD ESSAY  
(unedited)**

**\*An exemplar for length expectation only, not intended to necessarily exhibit good writing.**

*The Chrysalids* is worth reading

Reading novels develops opinions. In addition to developing an opinion, there are guidelines we use in determining an opinion. For example, if a novel can relate personally, or, to a big issue, we may decide to like that novel. The Chrysalids is an enjoyable novel. The Chrysalids, written by John Wyndham, relates to many of us, as well as to myself in reference to being different – and possibly, cast out.

In this novel, one of the characters, Sophie, was cast out because she had six toes rather than five. In my school I am considered different. The majority of students in high school these days conform to the current trends and values of teenagers everywhere. I tend not to. I prefer to make up my own mind about most everything. My peer group, those who are of the same age as me, regard me as strange, weird and geeky. Sometimes it's hard to be me, but, I can't do too much to change who I am anymore than Sophie's character could change who she was.

As well as relating personally to me, this novel relates also to the issue of religion and to those things which are considered to be right, or, proper. In The Chrysalids, the Definition of Man is believed to be correct and anyone or anything that does not fit the definition is banished and cast out. This is similar to the real world we live in. There are many religions that believe they are the right religion. But not only that, they teach that some religions are wrong!

In some religions, and not only the ones that exist in other parts of the world since there are some in our own country, people can be stoned, beaten or killed if the rules and regulations of the religion are not precisely followed.

Besides exploring interesting issues, whether personal or not, The Chrysalids is an enjoyable novel because it has an interesting plot. As one reads the novel, David's life becomes more complicated and, as a result, a reader get curious. For example, one can wonder who killed Alan? Later on in the novel, it is revealed. It is a novel with some suspense that keeps a reader reading.

In conclusion, the novel, The Chrysalids, is an enjoyable read for many reasons. John Wyndham was able to create a story that touched me personally, touched on some significant issues in society, and presented ideas which a lot of us have an opinion about. The characters in this story were real. At least to me. The setting was unusual because it was not something common, or ordinary to most of us. But this fact did not take away from the story, for me, the setting was interesting because it was unusual. Of course, not everyone will agree with me. However, Whyndham's novel deals with some significant issues to think about and for this reason, I think it is an interesting book and a good read.

**SAMPLE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC #1**

The Essay

(You may choose to focus on any or all of the categories)

<b>Category</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction (Organization)</b>	The introduction is inviting, states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction clearly states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper, but is not particularly inviting to the reader.	The introduction states the main topic, but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper nor is it particularly inviting to the reader.	There is no clear introduction of the main topic or structure of the paper.
<b>Sequencing (Organization)</b>	Details are placed in a logical order and the way they are presented effectively keeps the interest of the reader.	Details are placed in a logical order, but the way in which they are presented/introduced sometimes makes the writing less interesting.	Some details are not in a logical order, and this distracts the reader.	Many details are not in a logical order. There is little sense that the writing is organized.
<b>Focus on Topic (Content)</b>	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is supported by detailed information.	Main idea is clear but the supporting information is general.	Main idea is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information.	The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information.
<b>Support for Topic (Content)</b>	Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but one key issue or portion of the storyline is unsupported.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues or portions of the storyline are unsupported.	Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic.
<b>Accuracy of Facts (Content)</b>	All supportive facts are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts are reported accurately.	NO facts are reported OR most are inaccurately reported.
<b>Sentence Length (Sentence Fluency)</b>	Every paragraph has sentences that vary in length.	Almost all paragraphs have sentences that vary in length.	Some sentences vary in length.	Sentences rarely vary in length.

**SAMPLE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC #2**

The Persuasive Essay

(You may choose to focus on any or all of the categories)

<b>Category</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction (Organization)</b>	Introduction is engaging, identifies story title, author, summarizes story logically and well, ends in a clearly stated position statement.	Invites the reader with basic chronological summary, story title and author. Ends in position statement.	Identifiable summary, ends in position statement. Title or author may be missing.	Introduction lacks logical summary and title and /or author. Position statement may be weakly or unclearly stated.
<b>Body Paragraphs 1 &amp; 2</b>	Two insightful body paragraphs clearly supporting writer's position. Examples are sufficient well chosen, and clearly explained.	Two competent body paragraphs with appropriate examples supporting the writer's stance.	Two adequate body paragraphs noting examples in support of writer's stance, but may lack clear explanation.	Two body paragraphs with less than adequate supporting examples.
<b>Body Paragraph 3</b>	Thoughtful body paragraph clearly articulating opposing point of view and sufficiently and clearly defusing it.	Competent body paragraph acknowledging appositional point of view, clearly arguing against it.	Adequate body paragraph noting oppositional viewpoint, and arguing against it without, perhaps, clear and logical reasoning.	Body paragraph less than adequate in addressing opposing viewpoint. Rebuttal may be weak or absent.
<b>Conclusion (Organization)</b>	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding writer's position. Effective restatement of the thesis opens conclusion.	The conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all the loose ends. Thesis is restated at the opening.	The conclusion is recognizable; thesis is restated.	There is no clear conclusion, the paper just ends, or conclusion is weak with thesis not clearly or correctly restated.
<b>Grammar &amp; Spelling (Conventions)</b>	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 5-6 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes several errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
<b>Capitalization &amp; Punctuation (Conventions)</b>	Writer makes 1-2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the paper is exceptionally easy to read.	Writer make 3-4 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the paper is still easy to read.	Writer makes 5-6 errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.	Writer makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and greatly interrupt the flow.

## Writing Action Plan

	4	3	2	1
<b>Transitions (Organization)</b>	A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. They clearly show how ideas are connected.	Transitions clearly show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety.	Some transitions work well; but connections between other ideas are fuzzy.	The transitions between ideas are unclear or nonexistent.
<b>Pacing (Organization)</b>	The pacing is well-controlled. The writer knows when to slow down and elaborate, and when to pick up the pace and move on.	The pacing is generally well-controlled but the writer occasionally does not elaborate enough.	The pacing is generally well-controlled but the writer sometimes repeats the same point over and over, or spends too much time on details that don't matter.	The pacing often feels awkward to the reader. The writer elaborates when there is little need, and then leaves out necessary supporting information.
<b>Flow &amp; Rhythm (Sentence Fluency)</b>	All sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud. Each sentence is clear and has an obvious emphasis.	Almost all sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but 1 or 2 are stiff and awkward or difficult to understand.	Most sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but several are stiff and awkward or are difficult to understand.	The sentences are difficult to read aloud because they sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or difficult to understand.
<b>Recognition of Reader (Voice)</b>	The reader's questions are anticipated and answered thoroughly and completely.	The reader's questions are anticipated and answered to some extent.	The reader is left with one or two questions. More information is needed to "fill in the blanks".	The reader is left with several questions.