

SEN-SRN Conversion Course
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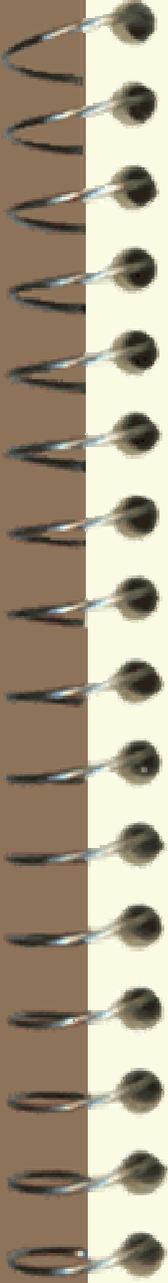
Study Skills Module

Writing Skills
Preparation for Exams



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Lecture Overview

-  The Need for Good Preparation
-  Defining the Purpose
-  Rules for Writing
-  Preparation for Examinations

The Need for Good Preparation

📄 ***Good preparation*** = an effective report and it makes writing very much easier

📄 ***Positive feedback*** is the result of effective communication

Defining the Purpose

 To help clarify the purpose of your report, try completing this sentence: “ As a result of reading this report, the reader will.....”

- Perhaps he will be able to make better-informed decisions
- Or maybe he will be persuaded to take a certain course of action
- Or maybe he could just feel re-assured that everything is going to plan

Rules for Writing (1)

Remember the readers ...

- 📄 Who is going to read the report?
- 📄 What does he need to know?
- 📄 What technical terms will he understand?
- 📄 How much does he know already of the background to your subject?
- 📄 How much time does he have for reading?
- 📄 What is his attitude to the subject?

Rules for Writing (2)

Distinguish between fact and opinion

📄 Fact = piece of information based on evidence

📄 Opinion = belief based on our judgement

Get the right level of detail

📄 Try to strike the right balance between giving all the information readers are likely to want, and producing a readable document with a logical flow.

📄 Use appendices to avoid cluttering up the text with a lot of detail that breaks the flow of the reports

Rules for Writing (3)

- 📄 ***Use simple and familiar words.*** For example; “I have endeavoured to ascertain” can be written simply as “I have tried to find out”
- 📄 ***Avoid long-winded phrases*** that can be replaced by a single word. “In the event that” can be replaced by “if”.
- 📄 ***Do not use unnecessary words.*** Some words, especially adjectives and adverbs add nothing at all to the meanings. “Absolutely impossible” can be replaced by the word “impossible” without changing its meaning.
- 📄 ***Do not use long sentences.*** An easily readable piece of writing usually has an average of not more than 18-20 words per sentence.

Rules for Writing (4)

- 📄 ***Be specific.*** If you write “Communication facility” do you mean...a telephone?... a road network?... All these are “communication facilities”. Does the reader understand?
- 📄 ***Avoid ambiguities.*** When writing you should always aim to produce a sentence capable of one meaning only. E.g. “She likes coffee, and rolls in bed”.
- 📄 ***One paragraph one point.*** Paragraphing is the basic way of grouping your material. Each paragraph should deal with a precise point. New topic in 1st sentence.
- 📄 ***Write in a simple, precise and human style.*** Aim for a style that is simple, precise and human - easy reading

Preparation for Examinations (1)

Before the Examination

- ☞ *Carefully plan* your programme of preparation to avoid “cram” at the last minute.
- ☞ *Practice thinking up analytical essay questions and drafting answers to them.* This is one of the best ways to help put a wide variety of material into some coherent form.
- ☞ *Seek tutorial help* if you have any worries before the examination.
- ☞ *Do not stay up late the night before* trying to cram in everything. Try to get a good night’s sleep.

Preparation for Examinations (2)

During the Examination

- 📄 The basic ground rule is: I supply the bluebooks and the questions; you supply the pens and the answers.
- 📄 Start by reading over the whole examination paper and think about which questions you can answer most effectively.
- 📄 Spend some time focusing your answer, perhaps even drafting a brief outline.

Preparation for Examinations (3)

During the Examination (Cont'd)

- 📄 Label all your answers.
- 📄 Answer the question, the whole question, and nothing but the question.
- 📄 Pace yourself to the time guidelines given.
- 📄 Leave yourself enough time to revise what you have written.

After the Test

After the examination, remember that you cannot change what you have written so try not to worry about failing.

Wait for the results that will tell you if you really have anything to worry about.