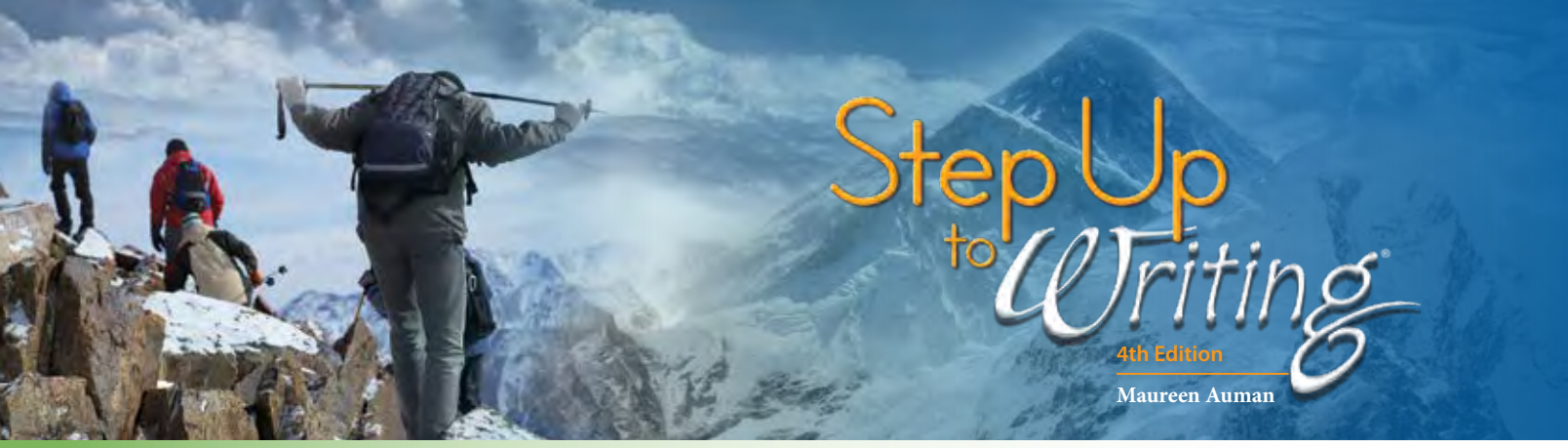


Step Up to Writing®

4th Edition

Maureen Auman

NAME:







Handy Pages

Grades 6–8

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VOYAGER SOPRIS LEARNING

The Writing Process for *Step Up to Writing*

Your writing assignments will go more smoothly if you follow the writing process.



1. Prewrite	Brainstorm, discuss, or research the topic.
2. Plan	Organize your thoughts and ideas—such as in an outline or a set of sketches.
3. Draft	Write one draft.
4. Revise	Add, delete, or rearrange text to improve wording, organization and flow, interest, or level of detail.
5. Edit	Polish by fixing CUPS errors: Capitalization, Usage, Punctuation, and Spelling.
6. Write final copy	Create a final, clean copy. Type or use your best handwriting.
7. Proofread	Correct minor errors, such as typos. Make corrections as needed.
8. Share and/or publish	Celebrate! Share your writing with family, friends, or classmates.

Task, Purpose, and Audience

Who are you writing for, and why? The answer to these questions helps you decide how to best express yourself.

- **Task**—What is the assignment? Will you write a short summary, an essay, or create a website? Identify the final product, length or research requirements, and other details.
- **Purpose**—Is your goal to explain, convince, or tell a story? This helps you set the mood or tone—the writing style you use.
- **Audience**—Do your readers know your topic? Are they peers, adults, or younger children? You will choose words, a style, and ideas that best fit your readers.

SECTION 2

Foundational Skills

Parts of Speech

Knowing the jobs of different words helps you write sentences that make sense.

Noun—Names a person, place, thing, or idea

The **tundra** is one of the coldest **places** on the **planet**.

Adjective—Tells *which one*, *what kind*, or *how many* about a noun or pronoun

The **few** plants and animals that live in the **tundra's harsh** environment struggle to stay alive.

Verb—Expresses action or state of being

Some animals in the Arctic tundra **hibernate** in the winter, but others **migrate** to warmer climates.

Adverb—Tells *how*, *when*, *where*, or *to what degree* about a verb, adjective, or another adverb

Because of the low temperatures, water in the Arctic tundra evaporates **very slowly**.

Masterful Sentences

Good sentences convey your meaning, and sentence variety makes your writing interesting.

A **clause** includes a subject and predicate. **Independent clauses** can stand alone—they can be complete sentences. **Dependent clauses** can't stand alone; to make sense they must be connected to an independent clause.

Four Sentence Structures	
Simple	Some Arctic animals hibernate. *independent clause*
Compound	Some Arctic animals hibernate but others migrate. *independent clause* ↑ *coordinating conjunction* *independent clause*
Complex	Some Arctic animals hibernate when winter arrives. *independent clause* *dependent clause*
Compound-complex	*coordinating conjunction* *independent clause* ↓ *independent clause* Some Arctic animals hibernate but others migrate when winter arrives, so that they can survive. *dependent clause* *dependent clause*

Perfect Paragraphs

Plan your perfect paragraph with an informal outline. Make sure to support each key/star idea with details!

Title = Learn to Play

Topic = How playing an instrument improves life

☆ Mastering an instrument teaches discipline (Transition: to begin with)	– Practice – Tedious drills – Study musical notation
☆ Playing is a great way to relax (Transition: however)	– Music takes up all your attention – Problems fade away

Conclusion = It will change your life

Learn to Play — Title

Topic Sentence — Learning to play a musical instrument can improve your life.

To begin with, mastering an instrument teaches discipline. — Key/Star Idea

Learning to play involves taking time to practice, repeating tedious drills, and studying the language of musical notation. However, once you develop these basic skills, playing an instrument is a great — Key/Star Idea

way to relax. When you're strumming a guitar or playing the piano, the music takes up all of your attention, and day-to-day problems fade away. Consider taking up a musical instrument to change — Conclusion

your life.

Supporting Details

Can you find each part of the outline in the paragraph?

Types of Writing

You can write to explain, to convince, or to tell a story. Each of these is a different type of writing.



Informative/Explanatory Writing

Gives information or explains ideas.

The Tuareg — Title

Topic Sentence — The Tuareg, nomads of the Sahara Desert, have a distinct way of life.

Key/Star Idea — For centuries they have lived as wandering herders and traders.

Elaboration or Details — Herders camp wherever they can find plants and water. Traders carry dates, grains, salt, and other goods to market. Both groups depend on the camel for transportation and to carry heavy loads. The Tuareg's culture is as fascinating as their nomadic lifestyle. They are known as fearless warriors. They play drum-filled music, create jewelry, and wear turbans dyed blue with indigo. They are sometimes called "The Blue People" because of the dye that rubs off on their skin. Outsiders are fascinated by the Tuareg's unique culture and lifestyle.

Conclusion

Argument Writing

States and supports a claim.

In argument, the topic sentence includes the **claim**.

Time for the Tuareg to Stop Wandering — Title

Topic Sentence — Although the Tuareg have always been a nomadic, it is time for them to stop wandering. One reason to do so is to improve relations with other tribal groups. The Tuareg's laws and traditions differ from those in some of the areas they travel through, causing friction between tribes. Friction and even deadly conflict is also caused by competition for water and grazing land. Another reason to settle down is environmental change. Years of little rain and blowing sand have expanded the desert. Now there are fewer water holes and less grazing land that the Tuareg's livestock need. Due to these cultural and environmental challenges, the Tuareg should change their nomadic way of life.

In argument, the key/star ideas are **reasons**.

In argument, the detail is called **evidence**.

Elaboration or Details

Conclusion

Narrative Writing—Nonfiction

Tells a true or fictional story. The following is an example of non-fiction narrative writing.

The Salt Caravans of the Tuareg — Title

Beginning

Each winter, Tuareg traders gather in Timbuktu for a difficult but necessary journey. In caravans, most of which include camels, they travel across the Sahara Desert to Bilma, an oasis in Niger.

Middle

An experienced guide called a madagu leads the caravans on a grueling journey lasting up to three weeks. They make this trip to obtain salt—an important nutrient that is rare in this part of the world. When they reach Bilma at last, they trade goats and crops for salt from local pits. Camels may carry as much as 600 pounds of salt on the return trip. Back in Timbuktu, traders sell this salt at the market. Despite its difficulty, the trip is well worth the effort.

End



What type of writing do you most enjoy reading or creating?

Elements of Informative/Explanatory Writing

Writing that informs or explains is all around you—in the news, instructions, or textbooks, to name a few. When you summarize, or write paragraphs or reports to share information, use the elements below.



Organization is key.
Use informal outlines and Traffic Light colors to plan a paragraph, essay, or report.



Topic sentences are the heart.
Use green to remember that topic sentences tell readers what you are *going* to explain. In essays, the topic sentence is called a thesis statement.



Transitions are the glue for the key/star ideas.
Use yellow to remind yourself to *slow down* and make smooth, clear transitions when you introduce a new key/star idea.



Examples, evidence, and explanation are the meat.
Use red to remind yourself to *stop* and explain. Examples, evidence, and explanation support your key/star ideas.

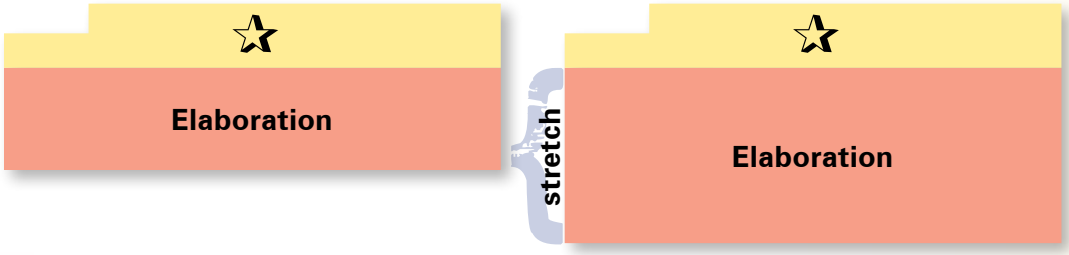


Conclusions tie it all together with a ribbon.
Use green again. Remember to *go back* to your topic. A good conclusion reminds readers of the purpose of your paragraph or essay.



Stretch, Don't Stack

For longer written pieces, stretch the red by adding more examples, evidence and explanation (like an accordion), rather than stacking more key/star ideas.





What topics for informative/explanatory writing interest you?

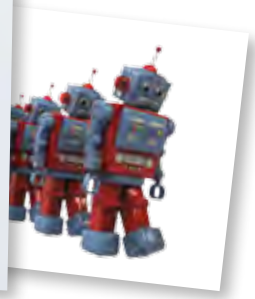
Planning and Organizing Informative/Explanatory Writing

Create an informal outline, with a topic and ideas for the conclusion.

Topic = Types of robots

☆ Teleoperated robots (Transition: one)	– Controlled directly by a person • Remotely – Example of use: search and rescue
☆ Supervisory robots (Transition: another)	– Programmed for particular jobs – Example of use: factories
☆ Autonomous robots (Transition: a final kind)	– Programmed to work by themselves • Sensors provide input – Example of use: driverless cars

Conclusion = Different types of robots for different kinds of jobs



Introductions

Start off with a strong introduction to draw your reader in: include a **topic sentence/thesis statement** presenting your main point. A **plan sentence** gives your readers a sense of how you have organized your key/star ideas and details. Writers often use a **lead** to get readers' attention and spark their interest in a topic.

Leads



Add a lead before your topic sentence when you want to add interest or background for the reader. Leads are blue because, like the blues, they jazz up your writing.

Plan Sentence

Indicates how you plan to support the topic or thesis using key/star ideas.

Lead — From androids to drones, humans have been fascinated with robots, imagined and real. Real robots now have more roles in the — Topic Sentence real world. There are three types of robots in use today. — Plan Sentence

Topic Sentences

Use sentence structures like these to craft a great topic sentence.

Action Verb Topic Sentence
More than a billion people lack access to clean water.
(strong verb)

Occasion/Position Statement
Although bike helmets may not be fashionable, riders should wear them.
(occasion (reason for writing); position)

Power (Number) Statement
Students traveling to Rome will want to visit five spectacular sights.
(could use several)

The List Statement
When buying a car, look for a vehicle that is safe, reliable, and economical.
(list of subtopics)

Quotations
In 1961, John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."
(quotes have impact)

Transitions

Use transitions to help readers follow your ideas. Choose them with purpose to introduce ideas and show their relationship to one another. Look for other transitions to use in your writing.

Basic	Compare/ Contrast	Place or Location	Time	Making a Point
one the other also to begin next one example in addition besides finally	equal to likewise a similar the same as unlike on the other hand in contrast different from but	near beside between outside inside behind under next to throughout	before during until after later then meanwhile as soon as sometimes	for example for instance an example of as well as in other words the most important furthermore

Be aware of transitions as you read. Collect and add new transitions to the lists.

What type of topic sentence do you most often use? Circle another on the list to try out sometime soon.

Elaboration Using the E's

Add "meat" to your paper by adding more elaboration, or the E's. Using E's means you will "stretch, not stack" your ideas for stronger writing.

Explanation	Give details that identify, describe, or clarify.
Elaboration	Offer additional information that develops an idea.
Experiences	Relate a particular experience that helps readers understand or relate.
Everyday life	Write about someone's daily or regular life to help readers understand or relate.
Examples	Offer specific situations or cases.
Expert Opinion	Use thoughtful observations made by someone who has studied the issue in depth.
Events	Write about a specific event or events.
Exact Information	Include statistics and data from trustworthy sources.
Evidence	Provide factual details or proof.
Effective Illustration	Include metaphors, similes, or descriptions that help readers visualize.
Effective Quotations	Include a quotation that helps a reader understand or connect to an idea.

Conclusions

Finish strong! Make an impression on your reader with a **formal conclusion**, a **closing statement**, or a **clincher**. These conclusions summarize, restate the main idea, or wrap up the topic in a less formal way.

Tips for Conclusions	
Remember the Basics	Restate your main idea by repeating key words from it or using synonyms.
Use Conclusion Words	If it fits and makes sense for your purpose and audience, include conclusion words or phrases such as *all in all*, *clearly*, *in conclusion*, *overall*, or *to sum up*. Use sparingly and only if they really work.

Text Features, Graphics, and Multimedia

These features, used wisely, make your writing really shine. Text features can help organize, and graphics and multimedia can add relevant detail. Some examples are shown below. Other features not shown include: charts, tables, diagrams and labels, timelines, flowcharts, or multimedia (photos, audio, video, and web links).

Bacteria

You can't see them, but they're everywhere! Bacteria are single-celled organisms that come in many shapes, and live in many environments.

Heading → **How big are they?**

Bacteria are from 100 to 6,000 **nanometers** in length, can only be seen with a microscope.

Bolded word (to be explained in the text)

How Big is That?

Table →

nanometer	meter	gigameter
• 1 billionth of a meter • Bacteria	• 1 meter (about 39 inches) • About one big step	• 1 billion meters • About 25 times around the Earth

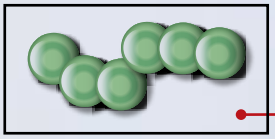
Bulleted list

How many kinds are there?

Bacteria are classified into five groups according to shape:

Numbered list →

1. Rod-shaped with rounded ends, called bacilli.
2. Spiral- or wavy-shaped, called spirilla.
3. Spherical bacteria, called cocci (see figure).
4. Comma-shaped, called vibrios.
5. Corkscrew-shaped, called spirochetes.



Drawing of Cocci

Figure, with caption

What topics might be clarified by a timeline? A photo? Think about topics and the kinds of graphics that would make them clearer and more interesting.