

U.S. ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY (ANCOC)

L430

OCT 03

ARMY WRITING STYLE

TRAINING SUPPORT PACKAGE



TRAINING SUPPORT PACKAGE (TSP)

TSP Number / Title	L430 / ARMY WRITING STYLE
Effective Date	01 Oct 2003
Supersedes TSP(s) / Lesson(s)	None
TSP Users	600-ANCOC, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
Proponent	The proponent for this document is the Sergeants Major Academy.
Improvement Comments	<p>Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028, <i>Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms</i>. Completed forms, or equivalent response, will be mailed or attached to electronic e-mail and transmitted to:</p> <p>COMDT USASMA ATTN ATSS D BLDG 11291 BIGGS FIELD FORT BLISS TX 79918-8002</p> <p>Telephone (Comm) (915) 568-8875 Telephone (DSN) 978-8875</p> <p>E-Mail: atss-dca-ancoc@bliss.army.mil</p>
Security Clearance / Access	Unclassified
Foreign Disclosure Restrictions	FD5. This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the USASMA foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from all requesting foreign countries without restrictions.

PREFACE

Purpose

This Training Support Package provides the instructor with a standardized lesson plan for presenting instruction for:

Task Number

Task Title

Individual

158-300-0050

Write to persuade a decision maker to choose a course of action

**This TSP
Contains**

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**THE ARMY WRITING STYLE
L430 / Version 1
01 Oct 2003**

SECTION I. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

All Courses Including This Lesson	<u>Course Number</u> 600-ANCOC	<u>Version</u> 1	<u>Course Title</u> Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
Task(s) Taught(*) or Supported	<u>Task Number</u> <u>Individual</u> 158-300-0050 (*)	<u>Task Title</u> Write to Persuade a Decision Maker to Choose a Course of Action	
Reinforced Task(s)	<u>Task Number</u> 158-300-0010 158-300-0020 158-300-0030 158-300-0040	<u>Task Title</u> Write In the Army Style Conduct a Military Briefing Brief to Inform, Persuade, or Direct Write to Inform or Direct	
Academic Hours	The academic hours required to teach this lesson are as follows:		
	<u>Resident Hours/Methods</u>		
		1 hr 20 mins / Conference / Discussion 30 mins / Practical Exercise	
	Test	0 hrs	
	Test Review	0 hrs	
	Total Hours:	2 hrs	
Test Lesson Number	Testing (to include test review)	<u>Hours</u> 4 hrs _____	<u>Lesson No.</u> E403 version 1
Prerequisite Lesson(s)	<u>Lesson Number</u> None	<u>Lesson Title</u>	
Clearance Access	Security Level: Unclassified Requirements: There are no clearance or access requirements for the lesson.		
Foreign Disclosure Restrictions	This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the USASMA foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from all requesting foreign countries without restrictions.		

References

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
AR 25-50	PREPARING AND MANAGING CORRESPONDENCE	03 Jun 2002	
DA PAM 600-67	EFFECTIVE WRITING FOR ARMY LEADER	02 Jun 1986	

Student Study Assignments

Before class--

- Read Student Handout 1, Advance Sheet.
- Read Student Handout 2, Extracted Material from AR 25-50.
- Read Student Handout 3, Extracted Material from DA Pam 600-67.
- Complete Student Handout 4, The Army Writing Style Programmed Text.

During class--

- Participate in group discussion.
- Complete PE-1 and PE-2.

After class--

- Turn in recoverable materials.

Instructor Requirements

1:16, ANCOG grad, ITC, and SGITC qualified

Additional Support Personnel Requirements

<u>Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Man Hours</u>
None			

Equipment Required for Instruction

<u>ID Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Exp</u>
441-06 LCD Projection System	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
559359 SCREEN PROJECTION	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
673000T101700 PROJECTOR, OVERHEAD, 3M	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
702101T134520 DELL CPU, MONITOR, MOUSE, KEYBOARD	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
703500T102257 DESKTOP/EPSON PRINTER	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
7110-00-T81-1805 DRY ERASE BOARD	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
7510-01-424-4867 EASEL, (STAND ALONE) WITH PAPER	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
SNV1240262544393 36 - INCH COLOR MONITOR W/REMOTE CONTROL AND LUXOR STAND	1:16	1:1	No	1	No

**Equipment
Required for
Instruction,**
continued

SOFTWARE-2
WINDOWS XP, LATEST GOVERNMENT
APPROVED VERSION

1:1 1:1 No 1 No

* Before Id indicates a TADSS

**Materials
Required**

Instructor Materials:

- Viewgraphs: VGT-1 thru VGT-10.
- AR 25-50.
- DA Pam 600-67.
- Dictionary.

Student Materials:

- Pen or pencil.
 - Highlighter.
 - Calculator.
 - Reading material listed on advance sheet.
-

**Classroom,
Training Area,
and Range
Requirements**

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION 900 SF, 16 PN or Classroom Conducive to Small Group Instruction of 16 Students.

**Ammunition
Requirements**

<u>Id</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Exp</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt Qty</u>
None					

**Instructional
Guidance**

NOTE: Before presenting this lesson, instructors must thoroughly prepare by studying this lesson and identified reference material.

Before class--

- Issue all materials (SH-1 thru SH-4) NLT three days prior to class.
- Inform students they must complete SH-4, The Army Writing Style Programmed Text prior to this lesson.
- Read all TSP material and be ready to conduct the PEs.

During class--

- Conduct the class in accordance with the TSP.
- Conduct the PEs.

After class--

- Collect recoverable material after the examination for this lesson.
 - Report any lesson discrepancies to the Senior Instructor.
-

**Proponent
Lesson Plan
Approvals**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>
Pyke, Bonnie G.	GS11	Senior Training Developer	
Eichman, Guy A.	MSG	Course Chief, ANCOC/BNCOC	
Lawson, Brian H.	SGM	Chief, NCOES	
Mays, Albert J.	SGM	Chief, CDDD	

SECTION II. INTRODUCTION

Method of Instruction: <u>Conference / Discussion</u>
Technique of Delivery: <u>Small Group Instruction</u>
Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:16</u>
Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u>
Media: <u>None</u>

Motivator

Have you ever read an FM, an AR, or a piece of correspondence that you had to read two or three times just to understand its intended message? How did you feel while you were reading it? Did it cause you to form any impressions or perceptions about the author? Too often writing does not communicate well. It confuses rather than clarifies; it is wordy rather than concise; it hides the main idea rather than getting to the point.

The Army has mandated a style and standards to prevent Army writing from being the type of writing we just described. As leaders it is up to you to ensure that your writing and the writing of your subordinates conforms to the mandated style and standards.

Terminal Learning Objective

NOTE: Inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective requirements. At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:

Action:	Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.
Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.
Standards:	<p>Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. <p>IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.</p>

Safety Requirements

None

**Risk
Assessment
Level**

Low

**Environmental
Considerations**

NOTE: It is the responsibility of all soldiers and DA civilians to protect the environment from damage.
None

Evaluation

At the end of this course you will take a 50-question written examination. The examination will include questions on the ELOs and TLO from this lesson. You must correctly answer 35 questions or more to receive a passing score of 70 percent. This is a graduation requirement.

**Instructional
Lead-In**

How many times has a subordinate come to you and asked you to review something he has written? How many times have you been the one doing the writing? Think about it . . . duty logs, NCOERs, counseling forms, SOPs, memorandums, messages, incident reports . . . and the list goes on. In carrying out your military duties, you will frequently write and review documents--all kinds of documents. These documents must conform to the Army writing style standards.

In this lesson we will begin with a brief review of the standards and techniques mandated for Army writing. You should have learned these skills in BNCOC. Then we will discuss the quick-screen edit and the clarity index. These are two skills you can use to ensure your writing and that of your subordinates is in compliance with Army standards. You will use the skills you learn in this lesson again in Lesson L432, Write to Persuade a Decision Maker to Choose a Course of Action, throughout the rest of this course, and throughout the rest of your military career.

SECTION III. PRESENTATION

NOTE: Inform the students of the Enabling Learning Objective requirements.

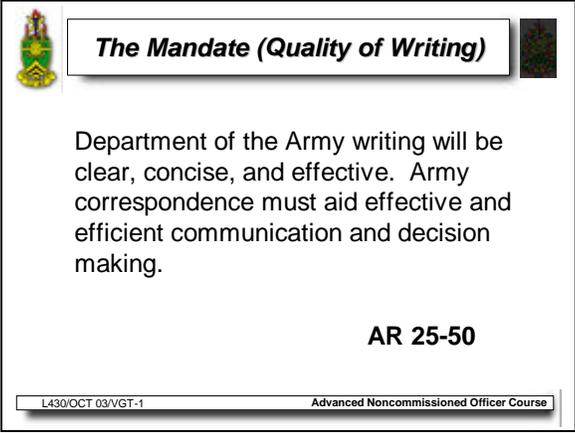
A. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Review the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.
STANDARDS:	Reviewed the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence IAW AR 25-50, Chap 1 and 2; DA Pam 600-67, Chap 2 and 3; and SH-4.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Review the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence.
Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 20 mins
Media: VGT-1 thru VGT-5

NOTE: Inform the students that this ELO serves as a review of information they should have learned in previous NCOES courses. This information forms the foundation for the rest of this lesson.

SHOW VGT-1, THE MANDATE (QUALITY OF WRITING)



The Mandate (Quality of Writing)

Department of the Army writing will be clear, concise, and effective. Army correspondence must aid effective and efficient communication and decision making.

AR 25-50

L430/OCT 03/VGT-1 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-10

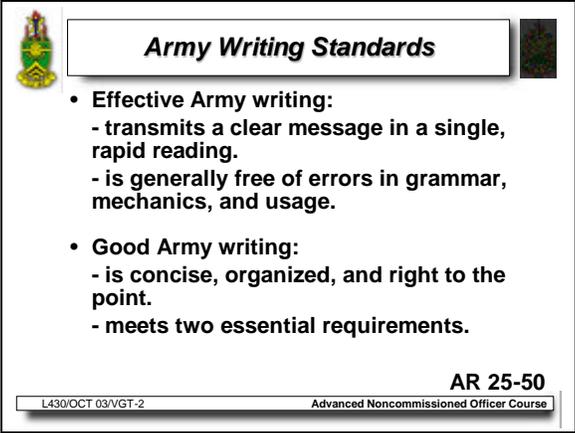
NOTE: Have one student read VGT-1.

The Army has established standards for Army writing. AR 25-50 mandates these standards as the Army style; they are not merely suggestions.

REMOVE VGT-1

Let's review these standards.

SHOW VGT-2, ARMY WRITING STANDARDS



The slide features the Army crest on the left and a title box containing the text "Army Writing Standards". Below the title, there are two bullet points. The first bullet point is "Effective Army writing:" followed by two sub-points: "- transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading." and "- is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage." The second bullet point is "Good Army writing:" followed by two sub-points: "- is concise, organized, and right to the point." and "- meets two essential requirements." At the bottom right of the slide is the reference "AR 25-50". At the bottom left, in small text, is "L430/OCT 03/VGT-2". At the bottom center, in small text, is "Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course".

Army Writing Standards

- **Effective Army writing:**
 - transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading.
 - is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- **Good Army writing:**
 - is concise, organized, and right to the point.
 - meets two essential requirements.

AR 25-50

L430/OCT 03/VGT-2 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44a and 1-44b

Effective Army writing transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading. The reader should be able to easily read the writing one time and understand the author's intended message.

Effective Army writing is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage. We do not have the time during this lesson to teach grammar, mechanics, and usage skills – you should already be familiar with them. We designed the programmed text to review some of the basic rules; however, it did not, and could not, cover every rule and its application. It's up to you to be proficient in these areas.

AR 25-50 states, "good Army writing is concise, organized, and right to the point." One thing to keep in mind is that concise does not necessarily mean short; it means that there are no unnecessary words in the sentence. You should organize your writing so that the main point is at the beginning, and that it is easy for the reader to follow. In regard to the phrase "right to the point," one Army leader said, "Tell me what you're going to tell me, tell me, and then tell me what you told me."

QUESTION: What does AR 25-50 identify as the two essential requirements for good Army writing?

ANSWER: Putting the main point at the beginning and using active voice.

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44b

NOTE: Inform the students that AR 25-50 uses the terminology “putting the main point at the beginning,” and DA Pam 600-67 refers to it as “bottom line up front” or BLUF. To conform to the latest doctrine, we will use the terminology main point at the beginning.

Using the standard English sentence order of subject-verb-object, works best in writing effectively. It speeds communication and helps the reader understand the main point.

As writers of Army correspondence, you must know and understand the standards for Army writing so you can apply them to your writing. As leaders you must explain the standards to your subordinates, check their writing for compliance, and help them produce writing that meets those standards.

NOTE: Clarify any questions the students may have regarding the standards of Army writing.

REMOVE VGT-2

We said that the two essential requirements for Army writing include putting the main point at the beginning and using the active voice. Let's review some active voice writing techniques.

SHOW VGT-3, ACTIVE VS PASSIVE

Active vs Passive

Active: SSG Jones counseled SGT Smith.

Passive: SGT Smith was counseled by SSG Jones.

L430/OCT 03/VGT-3 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44d

NOTE: Use VGT-3 and the following information to review active writing.

Active voice:

- **emphasizes the doer of the action.** In the example notice that the active writing emphasizes SSG Jones (the doer of the action) and the passive writing emphasizes SGT Smith (the receiver of the action).
- **shows who or what does the action or puts the doer before the verb.** In the example notice that the active writing puts the doer, SSG Jones, before the verb “counseled,” and the passive writing puts the receiver, SGT Smith, before the verb.
- **creates shorter sentences.** In the example notice that the active writing is five words, and the passive writing is seven words.

Many Army writers overuse the passive voice and create sentences that are indirect and unfocused, and that slow communication.

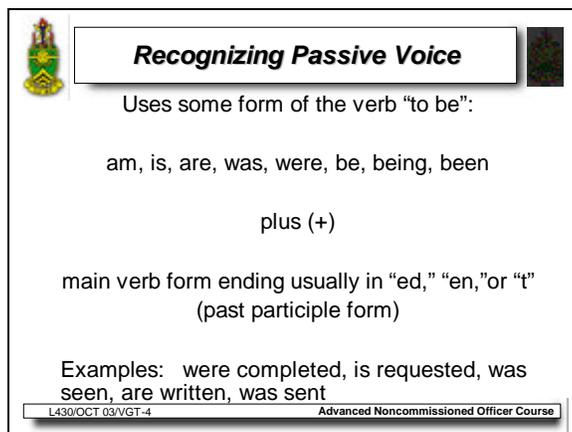
NOTE: Tell the students that even though using passive voice is not an error and is sometimes appropriate, for teaching purposes, we will require them to write in the active voice.

Passive voice hides the doer of the action, blocking communication. The active voice is direct, natural, and forceful; it also makes sentences clearer. Passive voice is also easy to recognize.

REMOVE VGT-3

NOTE: Direct the students to AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44e. Have one student read para 1-44e. Tell the students that in addition to a main verb ending in “en” or “ed,” other references also include the past participle form ending in “t.” Tell them for teaching purposes we will also include the past participle form ending in “t.”

SHOW VGT-4, RECOGNIZING PASSIVE VOICE



Recognizing Passive Voice

Uses some form of the verb “to be”:

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

plus (+)

main verb form ending usually in “ed,” “en,” or “t”
(past participle form)

Examples: were completed, is requested, was seen, are written, was sent

L430/OCT 03/VGT-4 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44e

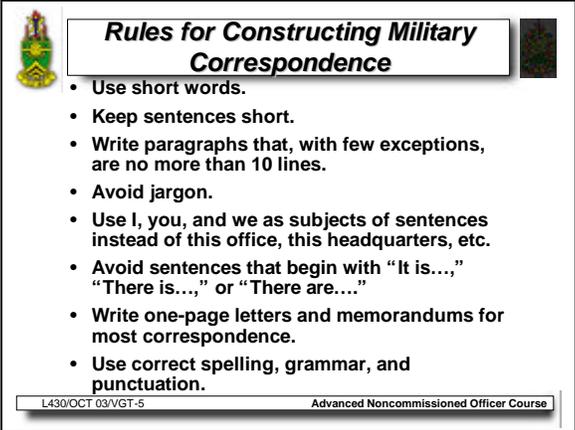
So, an easy way to recognize passive voice is to look for the verbs am, is, are, was, were, be, being, and been plus the past participle form of a main verb ending in “ed,” “en,” or “t.”

NOTE: Clarify any questions students may have regarding recognizing passive voice and writing in the active voice.

REMOVE VGT-4

The goal of all Army correspondence is effective communication; that’s the goal all of us need to strive for. We have already discussed two requirements for reaching that goal: putting the main point at the beginning and using the active voice. These techniques will get us off to a good start. However, we must also apply other, more specific techniques to improve the effectiveness of our writing. AR 25-50 gives us some more specific rules in para 1-45.

SHOW VGT-5, RULES FOR CONSTRUCTING MILITARY CORRESPONDENCE



Rules for Constructing Military Correspondence

- Use short words.
- Keep sentences short.
- Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are no more than 10 lines.
- Avoid jargon.
- Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of this office, this headquarters, etc.
- Avoid sentences that begin with “It is...,” “There is...,” or “There are...”
- Write one-page letters and memorandums for most correspondence.
- Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

L430/OCT 03/VGT-5 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-45

NOTE: Inform the students that this is not the same order as in the AR, but we will use this order because we will discuss the last two bullets in greater detail. Use the following to review VGT-5. Keep in mind, this is only a review, the students should be familiar with this already.

- **Use short words.** Normally shorter words are simpler, but not in all cases. An example of a shorter word that isn’t necessarily simpler is “foe.” “Enemy” is the better choice for military readers. Normally using shorter and simpler words will make your writing clearer. IAW AR 25-50, try to write so that not more than 15 percent of your words are over two syllables long.

- **Keep sentences short.** Besides keeping words short, you should also keep sentences short. You should keep the average length of your sentences to 15 words.

That doesn't mean every sentence should be 15 words; some sentences may be longer and some may be shorter, but the average should be about 15 words.

- **Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are not more than 10 lines.** You should write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are not more than 10 lines. Using shorter words and shorter sentences should assist you in following this rule.
- **Avoid jargon.** Jargon is "The specialized language of a trade, profession, or similar group." A few examples based on this definition are: leg – nonairborne soldier; Top – first sergeant; and old man – commander.
- **Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of this office, this headquarters, this command, all individuals, and so forth.** Using pronouns not only places responsibility for our own writing and makes it more direct, it usually makes it shorter also. As general guidance use **I**, **me**, and **my** when speaking for yourself, and use **we**, **us**, and **our** when speaking for the unit.
- **Avoid sentences that begin with "It is . . .," "There is . . .," or "There are . . ."** Normally these words don't add to the meaning of the sentence, they just make it longer. For example, instead of writing, "There is one problem that bothers me." Just write, "One problem bothers me." This supports the rule of keeping sentences short.
- **Write one-page letters and memorandums for most correspondence.** By writing short sentences and short paragraphs, we should be able to say what we want to say in one page. Remind students that they can find the formats for memorandums in AR 25-50, Chap 2.
- **Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.** Using correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation is a necessity in constructing military correspondence. Errors or mistakes in these areas not only detract from your writing, but may also turn your reader into an editor. Once the reader sees one error, it may become instinctive to look for more errors instead of reading the correspondence for its intended message. Most computer word processing programs have a spelling and grammar checker—use them. Your proficiency, or lack thereof, in spelling, grammar, and punctuation will make an impression on your reader. You are the one who decides whether that impression will be positive or negative.

NOTE: At this time remind the students that grammar and punctuation are skills they should already have. Ask if the programmed text was beneficial to them as a review and if they had any specific questions regarding it. Clarify any questions the students may have.

REMOVE VGT-5

CHECK ON LEARNING: We reviewed the material in this ELO rapidly, but it was information with which you should already be familiar. Before we go on to the next ELO let's review.

QUESTION: What is effective Army writing?

ANSWER: Writing that transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44a

QUESTION: What are some of the characteristics of active writing?

ANSWER: It emphasizes the doer of the action, it shows who or what does the action or puts the doer before the verb, and it creates shorter sentences.

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44d

QUESTION: How can you recognize passive voice?

ANSWER: Look for the verbs am, is, are, was, were, be, being, and been plus the past participle form of a main verb ending in "ed," "en," or "t."

Ref: AR 25-50, Chap 1, para 1-44e

B. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Perform a quick-screen edit on written correspondence.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.
STANDARDS:	Performed a quick-screen edit on written correspondence IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Perform a quick-screen edit on written correspondence.
Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 10 mins
Media: None

The goal in military writing is to produce effective communication. But how do we check to see if our writing meets that goal? We need to edit it. DA Pam 600-67 prescribes two editing tools that you can use to fix your writing. During this ELO you will practice editing using the quick-screen edit. This method will help you correct your own work quickly and constructively critique your subordinates' writing. In conducting a quick-screen edit, you will use a pen, pencil, or highlighter to quickly mark errors.

NOTE: Have the students turn to DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), para 4-2. Have one student read para 4-2a and 4-2b.

QUESTION: When conducting a quick-screen edit, what four things do we look for?

ANSWER:

1. The main point at the beginning (remind the students we will use the terminology used in AR 25-50).
2. Any forms of the verb "to be" used with a past participle (passive voice).
3. Any unnecessary long words or jargon.
4. Spelling, punctuation, or grammar mistakes.

Ref: DA Pam 600-67, para 4-2

NOTE: Point out that DA Pam 600-67 has an example of a quick-screen edit in Figure 4-1. Discuss the example and answer any questions about what to look for during a quick-screen edit.

2. Learning Step / Activity 2. Practical Exercise
- Method of Instruction: Practical Exercise
 - Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction
 - Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
 - Time of Instruction: 15 mins
 - Media: PE-1 and SPE-1

NOTE: Tell the students they will now do a PE in which they will conduct a quick-screen edit. Distribute PE-1. Tell the students they have 10 minutes to complete the PE.

NOTE: After 10 minutes, issue the solution to PE-1 and have the students discuss their solutions for approximately 5 minutes. If time permits, have students discuss how they would fix the errors.

The quick-screen edit is a tool that you can use on your own work or the work of others. If it's your work, correct your errors after the edit. If it's the work of your subordinate, return it and have him correct the errors.

The quick-screen edit identifies errors that detract from the clarity of our writing, but sometimes our writing has other problems that make it hard to read. When we return from break we will look at the clarity index, another tool that will assist us in identifying other problems..

CHECK ON LEARNING: PE-1 serves as a check on learning for this ELO.

Break TIME: 00:50 to 01:00

C. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Perform a clarity index on written correspondence.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.
STANDARDS:	Performed a clarity index on written correspondence IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Perform a clarity index on written correspondence.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion

Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction

Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16

Time of Instruction: 30 mins

Media: VGT-6 thru VGT-10

The quick-screen edit helps identify violations in writing that do not meet the Army writing standard; however, some writing problems do not lend themselves to a quick-screen edit. The clarity index, a second editing tool, pinpoints two other problem areas that make writing confusing and difficult to read. These problems are long words and long sentences. Word and sentence length are the basis for the clarity index formula.

You must do a series of calculations in determining the clarity index of a written piece. Let's look at those calculations.

SHOW VGT-6, COMPUTING THE CLARITY INDEX

Computing the Clarity Index

ASL (Average Sentence Length) = $\frac{\text{Number of Words}}{\text{Number of Sentences}}$

PLW (Percentage of Long Words) = $\frac{\text{Number of Long Words}}{\text{Number of Words}} \times 100$

Clarity Index = ASL + PLW

L430/OCT 03/VGT-6 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: DA Pam 600-67, Chap 4, para 4-3

NOTE: Direct the students to DA Pam 600-67, para 4-3b and review the steps in computing the clarity index.

1. Count the number of sentences.
2. Count the number of words.
3. Divide the number of words by the number of sentences. This gives you the average sentence length (ASL). Target average is 15.
4. Count the number of long words (three syllables or more).
5. Divide the number of long words by the number of words. **** The DA Pam does not say, but to obtain the percentage of long words (PLW) you must multiple this by 100.**
6. Add the ASL to the PLW to obtain the clarity index. Target average is 30.

The target for the clarity index on Army writing is 30. If the clarity index is below 20, the writing is too abrupt. If the clarity index is over 40, the writing is difficult to understand.

Before we look at some examples, let's look at some specific rules about counting sentences and syllables.

REMOVE VGT-6

NOTE: Inform the students that the information contained on VGTs 7 thru 9 comes from TRADOC Reg 25-30 which they do not have. Tell them they may want to copy this information.

NOTE: For VGTs 7 thru 9 simply review the rules and examples shown.

SHOW VGT-7, RULES FOR COUNTING WORDS



Rules for Counting Words

- Words include numbers, letters, symbols, and groups of letters surrounded by white space.
- Count hyphenated words and contractions as one word.
- Count each ACRONYM as one word.
- Don't count the words in headings or subject lines.

Examples:

One word each: couldn't, DARCOM, i.e., long-term

Two words each: AR 670-1, TM 9-1920-238-13P

Three words each: DA Pam 600-67, 3 x 6

L430/OCT 03/VGT-7Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

REMOVE VGT-7

SHOW VGT-8, RULES FOR COUNTING SENTENCES





Rules for Counting Sentences

- Count as one sentence any independent clause ending with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.
- Count independent clauses separated by a semicolon or colon as separate sentences.
- If a lead-in is an independent clause, count it as a sentence; if it is a phrase or dependent clause, do not count it as a sentence.
- Do not count headings or subject lines as sentences.

Example:
The troops were ready for battle; still they hoped for peace. (two sentences)

L430/OCT 03/VGT-8Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

REMOVE VGT-8

SHOW VGT-9, RULES FOR COUNTING SYLLABLES





Rules for Counting Syllables

- Count acronyms that you do not pronounce as words as one syllable, for acronyms pronounced as words, count the number of syllables.
- Count a string of numbers as one syllable unless it contains a hyphen. If it contains a hyphen, count each portion as a syllable.

Examples:

MACOM	(2 syllables)
NCO	(1 syllable)
DA Form 2407-1	(4 syllables)

L430/OCT 03/VGT-9Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

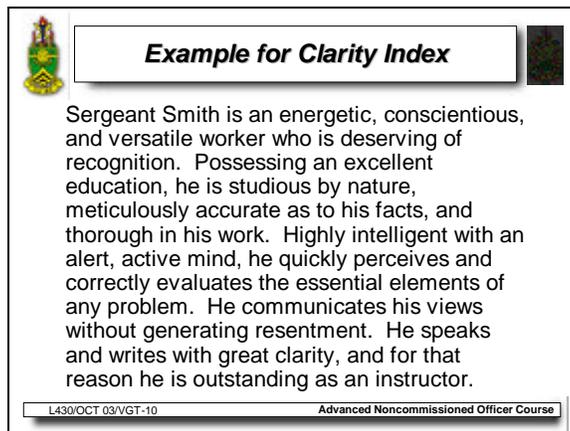
REMOVE VGT-9

NOTE: Clarify any questions the students may have regarding counting words, sentences, and long words.

NOTE: Tell the students to turn to DA Pam 600-67, p 4. Review the examples in Figure 4-4. Clarify any questions the students might have.

Let's try one together.

SHOW VGT-10, EXAMPLE FOR CLARITY INDEX



The slide features a title box with the text "Example for Clarity Index" and a small crest on the left. Below the title is a paragraph of text describing Sergeant Smith. At the bottom of the slide, there is a footer with the text "L430/OCT 03/VGT-10" and "Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course".

Example for Clarity Index

Sergeant Smith is an energetic, conscientious, and versatile worker who is deserving of recognition. Possessing an excellent education, he is studious by nature, meticulously accurate as to his facts, and thorough in his work. Highly intelligent with an alert, active mind, he quickly perceives and correctly evaluates the essential elements of any problem. He communicates his views without generating resentment. He speaks and writes with great clarity, and for that reason he is outstanding as an instructor.

L430/OCT 03/VGT-10 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: DA Pam 600-67, Chap 4, para 4-3

This is an example of writing that still has problems, even after correcting the errors found during the quick-screen edit. This should look familiar; it is a rewrite correcting the errors we found in PE-1.

NOTE: Using a step-by-step method, lead the students through conducting a clarity index on the narrative in VGT-10. Inform the students that since the DA Pam shows rounded numbers they should round their numbers also. Announce the step, have students complete it, then call on a student to provide the answer. Reconcile any differences in answers. Have one student annotate the answers on the white board. Answers are as follows:

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| (1) Count the number of sentences: | 5 |
| (2) Count the number of words: | 77 |
| (3) Divide the number of words by the number of sentences (ASL): | 15 (rounded) |
| (4) Count the number of long words: | 22 |
| (5) Divide the number of long words by the total number of words and multiply by 100 (PLW): | 29 (rounded) |
| (6) Add the ASL plus the PLW: | 44 |

QUESTION: Is 44 an acceptable clarity index?

ANSWER: No. The clarity index is too high; the average clarity index should be 30.

Ref: DA Pam 600-67, Chap 4, para 4-3b

NOTE: Have the students discuss how they should rewrite this passage to reduce the clarity index. The discussion should include that since the average sentence length is right on target (15), it seems that the problem is in the number of long words. If we reduce the number of long words it will decrease the percentage of long words, which will in turn reduce the overall clarity index.

NOTE: Clarify any questions the students may have concerning the clarity index.

REMOVE VGT-10

NOTE: Direct the students to DA Pam 600-67, Figures 5-1 and 5-2 and review the examples of poor and good writing. Base the amount of discussion on the amount of time left in this LS/A.

2. Learning Step / Activity 2. Practical Exercise
Method of Instruction: Practical Exercise
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: PE-2 and SPE-2

NOTE: Tell the students they will now do a PE in which they will conduct a clarity index by themselves. Distribute PE-2. Tell the students they have 10 minutes to complete the PE.

NOTE: After 10 minutes, issue the solution to PE-2 and have the students discuss their solutions for approximately 5 minutes.

As you can see, by decreasing the number of long words you can reduce the clarity index. This passage is now very near the suggested target of 30.

CHECK ON LEARNING: PE-2 serves as a check on learning for this ELO.

SECTION IV. SUMMARY

Method of Instruction: <u>Conference / Discussion</u>
Technique of Delivery: <u>Small Group Instruction</u>
Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:16</u>
Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u>
Media: <u>None</u>

Check on Learning

PE-1 and PE-2 serve as a check on learning for this lesson.

Review / Summarize Lesson

During this lesson we reviewed the Army writing standards, active voice writing techniques, and the rules for constructing military correspondence. Additionally we reviewed a tool, the quick-screen edit, that you can use to identify major violations of the Army style. Remember, when conducting a quick-screen edit we identify four things: (1) the main point of the writing; (2) any passive voice; (3) any unnecessary long words or jargon; and (4) any errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are not always the problem in Army writing. We reviewed another tool, the clarity index, which pinpoints two other major reasons why writing is often confusing and difficult to read: long words and sentences.

Using these two tools on your writing will assist you in becoming a more effective Army writer. Using these two tools on your subordinate's writing will assist you so that you can give your subordinate specific, quantifiable feedback.

Transition to Next Lesson

In L432, Write to Persuade a Decision Maker to Choose a Course of Action, you will write a memorandum on a given subject which will count as input toward the Written Communication portion of your Academic Evaluation Report (AER). Using the information you covered in this lesson: the Army writing standards, active voice writing techniques, the rules for constructing military correspondence, the quick-screen edit, and the clarity index will assist you in successfully completing that requirement.

SECTION V. STUDENT EVALUATION

**Testing
Requirements**

NOTE: Describe how the student must demonstrate accomplishment of the TLO. Refer student to the Student Evaluation Plan.

At the end of this course you will take a 50-question written examination. The examination will include questions on the ELOs and TLO from this lesson. You must correctly answer 35 questions or more to receive a passing score of 70 percent. This is a graduation requirement.

**Feedback
Requirements**

NOTE: Feedback is essential to effective learning. Schedule and provide feedback on the evaluation and any information to help answer students' questions about the test. Provide remedial training as needed.

None

VGT-1, The Mandate (Quality of Writing)



The Mandate (Quality of Writing)



Department of the Army writing will be clear, concise, and effective. Army correspondence must aid effective and efficient communication and decision making.

AR 25-50



Army Writing Standards



- **Effective Army writing:**
 - transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading.
 - is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- **Good Army writing:**
 - is concise, organized, and right to the point.
 - meets two essential requirements.

AR 25-50



Active vs Passive



Active: SSG Jones counseled SGT Smith.

Passive: SGT Smith was counseled by SSG Jones.



Recognizing Passive Voice



Uses some form of the verb “to be”:

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

plus (+)

main verb form ending usually in “ed,” “en,” or “t”
(past participle form)

Examples: were completed, is requested, was
seen, are written, was sent



Rules for Constructing Military Correspondence



- **Use short words.**
- **Keep sentences short.**
- **Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are no more than 10 lines.**
- **Avoid jargon.**
- **Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of this office, this headquarters, etc.**
- **Avoid sentences that begin with “It is...,” “There is...,” or “There are....”**
- **Write one-page letters and memorandums for most correspondence.**
- **Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.**



Computing the Clarity Index



$$\text{ASL (Average Sentence Length)} = \frac{\text{Number of Words}}{\text{Number of Sentences}}$$

$$\text{PLW (Percentage of Long Words)} = \frac{\text{Number of Long Words}}{\text{Number of Words}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Clarity Index} = \text{ASL} + \text{PLW}$$



Rules for Counting Words



- Words include numbers, letters, symbols, and groups of letters surrounded by white space.
- Count hyphenated words and contractions as one word.
- Count each ACRONYM as one word.
- Don't count the words in headings or subject lines.

Examples:

One word each: couldn't, DARCOM, i.e., long-term

Two words each: AR 670-1, TM 9-1920-238-13P

Three words each: DA Pam 600-67, 3 x 6



Rules for Counting Sentences



- Count as one sentence any independent clause ending with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.
- Count independent clauses separated by a semicolon or colon as separate sentences.
- If a lead-in is an independent clause, count it as a sentence; if it is a phrase or dependent clause, do not count it as a sentence.
- Do not count headings or subject lines as sentences.

Example:

The troops were ready for battle; still they hoped for peace. (two sentences)



Rules for Counting Syllables



- Count acronyms that you do not pronounce as words as one syllable, for acronyms pronounced as words, count the number of syllables.
- Count a string of numbers as one syllable unless it contains a hyphen. If it contains a hyphen, count each portion as a syllable.

Examples:

MACOM	(2 syllables)
NCO	(1 syllable)
DA Form 2407-1	(4 syllables)



Example for Clarity Index



Sergeant Smith is an energetic, conscientious, and versatile worker who is deserving of recognition. Possessing an excellent education, he is studious by nature, meticulously accurate as to his facts, and thorough in his work. Highly intelligent with an alert, active mind, he quickly perceives and correctly evaluates the essential elements of any problem. He communicates his views without generating resentment. He speaks and writes with great clarity, and for that reason he is outstanding as an instructor.

Appendix B Test(s) and Test Solution(s) (N/A)

PRACTICAL EXERCISE SHEET L430 PE-1

Title	Quick-Screen Edit						
Lesson Number/Title	L430 version 1 / THE ARMY WRITING STYLE						
Introduction	None						
Motivator	This practical exercise will evaluate your understanding of the quick-screen edit. It will also allow you to evaluate your proficiency in identifying errors in punctuation, grammar, word choice, and active voice writing skills.						
Terminal Learning Objective	<p>NOTE: The instructor should inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective covered by this practical exercise.</p> <p>At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Action:</td> <td>Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conditions:</td> <td>As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standards:</td> <td> Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4. </td> </tr> </table>	Action:	Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.	Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.	Standards:	Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.
Action:	Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.						
Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.						
Standards:	Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.						
Safety Requirements	None						
Risk Assessment Level	Low						
Environmental Considerations	None						
Evaluation	This is not a graded PE. At the end of the PE, you will receive a solution sheet. As a group, you will discuss your solutions and the provided solution and resolve any questions.						
Instructional Lead-In	None						

Resource Requirements

- AR 25-50 (SH-2)
 - DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3)
 - The Army Writing Style Programmed Text (SH-4)
 - Pen, pencil, or highlighter
-

Special Instructions

You will have 10 minutes to complete this PE.

Procedures

1. You are reviewing a narrative about one of your subordinates. This is an excerpt from your first draft. Using a highlighter, pen, or pencil, do a quick-screen edit IAW DA Pam 600-67. Remember, in a single, rapid reading highlight, circle, or underline—

- The “bottom line (main point),” the purpose of the writing.”
- Passive voice.
- Unnecessary long words or jargon.
- Spelling, punctuation, or grammar mistakes.

2. After you identify the errors, identify how you would correct the errors.

An energetic, conscientious, and versatile worker. Sergeant Smith is studious by nature, meticulously accurate as to his facts, and thorough in his work.

Possessing an excellent education. Highly intelligent with an alert active mind, he quickly perceives and correctly evaluates the essential elements of any problem.

Views were communicated by him without generating resentment. He speaks and writes with great clarity for that reason he is outstanding as an instructor. He deserves recognition.

Feedback Requirements

At the completion of this practical exercise, as a group you will discuss your solutions and the provided solution and resolve any questions.

**SOLUTION FOR
PRACTICAL EXERCISE L430 PE-1**

In this solution we underlined the errors you should have highlighted, circled, or underlined. After each error, in parenthesis in bold, we identified the type of error.

An energetic, conscientious, (SPELLING) and versatile worker. (FRAG) Sergeant Smith is studious by nature, meticulously accurate as to his facts, and thorough in his work. Possessing an excellent education. (FRAG) Highly intelligent with an alert (COMMA) active mind, he quickly percieves (SPELLING) and correctly evaluates the essential elements of any problem. Views were communicated (PASSIVE VOICE) by him without generating resentment. He speaks and writes with great clarity for that reason he is outstanding as an instructor. (RUN-ON) He deserves recognition. (POSSIBLE MAIN POINT, NOT AT THE BEGINNING)

PRACTICAL EXERCISE SHEET L430 PE-2

Title	Clarity Index						
Lesson Number/Title	L430 version 1 / THE ARMY WRITING STYLE						
Introduction	None						
Motivator	<p>Despite clear writing guidelines, some writing you see still won't meet the standards of effective Army writing. Even when you've conducted a quick-screen edit and corrected any problems in location of main point, spelling, grammar, and punctuation, your writing (or your subordinate's writing) may still be difficult to read. Normally we have no problem identifying poor writing, but we don't always know how to correct it. The clarity index pinpoints two other major reasons why writing is often confusing and difficult to read: long words and sentences. During this PE you will conduct a clarity index on a written passage.</p>						
Terminal Learning Objective	<p>NOTE: The instructor should inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective covered by this practical exercise.</p> <p>At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">Action:</td> <td>Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conditions:</td> <td>As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standards:</td> <td> <p>Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. <p>IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Action:	Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.	Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.	Standards:	<p>Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. <p>IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.</p>
Action:	Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.						
Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.						
Standards:	<p>Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence. • Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence. • Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. <p>IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.</p>						
Safety Requirements	None						
Risk Assessment Level	Low						
Environmental Considerations	None						
Evaluation	<p>This is not a graded PE. At the end of the PE, you will receive a solution sheet. As a group, you will discuss your solutions and the provided solution and resolve any questions.</p>						
Instructional Lead-In	None						

Resource Requirements

- AR 25-50 (SH-2)
 - DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3)
 - The Army Writing Style Programmed Text (SH-4)
 - Pencil or pen and writing paper
 - Calculator
-

Special Instructions

You will have 10 minutes to complete this PE.

Procedures

During class you conducted a clarity index on a passage and found that it was 44. Remember, you should aim for a clarity index closer to 30. The average sentence length was 15, but a couple of the sentences were very long. You determined that the main problem in the passage was not the length of your sentences, but was the percentage of long words. You have rewritten the passage. Perform a clarity index on the revised passage below to see if it is closer to 30.

Sergeant Smith is an energetic and conscientious worker who deserves recognition. He speaks and writes clearly, and his work is thorough and accurate. Always alert, he quickly finds problems and then corrects them without causing resentment. His excellent education and many talents make him an outstanding soldier.

- (1) Count the number of sentences: _____
- (2) Count the number of words: _____
- (3) Divide the number of words by the number of sentences (ASL): _____
- (4) Count the number of long words: _____
- (5) Divide the number of long words by the total number of words and multiply by 100 (PLW): _____
- (6) Add the ASL plus the PLW: _____

CLARITY INDEX:

Feedback Requirements

At the completion of this practical exercise, as a group you will discuss your solutions and the provided solution and resolve any questions.

**SOLUTION FOR
PRACTICAL EXERCISE L430 PE-2**

Sergeant Smith is an energetic and conscientious worker who deserves recognition. He speaks and writes clearly, and his work is thorough and accurate. Always alert, he quickly finds problems and then corrects them without causing resentment. His excellent education and many talents make him an outstanding soldier.

(1) Count the number of sentences:	<u>4</u>
(2) Count the number of words:	<u>47</u>
(3) Divide the number of words by the number of sentences (ASL):	<u>12</u>
(4) Count the number of long words:	<u>8</u>
(5) Divide the number of long words by the total number of words and multiply by 100 (PLW):	<u>17</u>
(6) Add the ASL plus the PLW:	<u>29</u>

CLARITY INDEX: 29

HANDOUTS FOR LESSON 1: L430 version 1

**This Appendix
Contains**

This appendix contains the items listed in this table--

Title/Synopsis	Pages
SH-1, Advance Sheet	SH-1-1 and SH-1-2
SH-2, Extracted Material from AR 25-50	SH-2-1
SH-3, Extracted Material from DA Pam 600-67	SH-3-1
SH-4, The Army Writing Standard Programmed Text	SH-4-1 thru SH-4-54

Student Handout 1

Advance Sheet

Lesson Hours This lesson consists of 1 hour and 20 minutes of conference/discussion and 30 minutes of practical exercise.

Overview As a leader you must prepare written correspondence to your leaders and subordinates in accordance with the Army writing style. You must also review correspondence written by your subordinates. Despite clear writing guidelines, some writing you see still won't meet the standards of effective Army writing. During this lesson you will review the Army writing style standards, active voice techniques, and the rules for constructing correspondence. You will also learn about the quick-screen edit that allows you to identify major violations of the Army standard for writing. Additionally, you will learn about another tool, the clarity index, which will assist you in identifying other problems in Army writing once you've conducted a quick-screen edit, corrected the errors, and the writing is still difficult to read.

Learning Objective Terminal Learning Objective (TLO).

Action:	Examine written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard.
Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant in a classroom environment given AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.
Standards:	Examined written correspondence to determine compliance with the Army writing standard by— <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewing the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence.• Performing a quick-screen edit on written correspondence.• Performing a clarity index on written correspondence. IAW AR 25-50 (SH-2), DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3), and SH-4.

ELO A Review the standards for Army writing, active voice writing techniques, and general rules for constructing correspondence.

ELO B Perform a quick-screen edit on written correspondence.

ELO C Perform a clarity index on written correspondence.

Assignment

The student assignments for this lesson are:

- Read Student Handout 1, Advance Sheet.
 - Read Student Handout 2, Extracted Material from AR 25-50.
 - Read Student Handout 3, Extracted Material from DA Pam 600-67.
 - Complete Student Handout 4, The Army Writing Style Programmed Text.
-

**Additional
Subject Area
Resources**

TRADOC Reg 25-30

Bring to Class

- Pen or pencil.
 - Highlighter.
 - Calculator.
 - AR 25-50 (SH-2).
 - DA Pam 600-67 (SH-3).
 - SH-4, The Army Writing Style Programmed Text
-

Student Handout 2

Extracted Material from AR 25-50

**This Student
Handout
Contains**

This student handout contains 8 pages of extracted material from the following publication:

AR 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence, 3 June 2002

Cover Page	not numbered
Chapter 1	pages 1 thru 7

Disclaimer: The training developer downloaded the extracted material from the U.S. Army Publishing Directorate Home Page. The text may contain passive voice, misspellings, grammatical errors, etc., and may not be in compliance with the Army Writing Style Program.

RECOVERABLE PUBLICATION

YOU RECEIVED THIS DOCUMENT IN A DAMAGE-FREE CONDITION. DAMAGE, IN ANY WAY, TO INCLUDE HIGHLIGHTING, PENCIL MARKS, OR MISSING PAGES WILL SUBJECT YOU TO PECUNIARY LIABILITY (STATEMENT OF CHARGES, CASH COLLECTION, ETC.) TO RECOVER PRINTING COSTS.

Army Regulation 25–50

Information Management

Preparing and Managing Correspondence

**Headquarters
Department of the Army
Washington, DC
3 June 2002**

UNCLASSIFIED

Chapter 1

Preparing Correspondence

Section I

General

1–1. Purpose

This regulation prescribes Department of the Army (DA) policies, procedures, and standard formats for preparing and processing Army correspondence.

1–2. References

Required and related publications and prescribed and referenced forms are listed in appendix A.

1–3. Explanation of abbreviations and terms

Abbreviations and terms used in this regulation are explained in the glossary.

1–4. Responsibilities

- a. The Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army will—
 - (1) Establish policies and procedures for preparing correspondence on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.
 - (2) Oversee Army correspondence on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.
- b. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel will develop policy and direction of correspondence management for DA.
- c. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans will incorporate effective and efficient Army writing into training policy and will fund any special requirements.
- d. Heads of Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) agencies and commanders of major Army commands (MACOMs), installations, activities, and units will supervise and manage the Correspondence Management Program within their agencies or commands.
- e. Commanders at all levels will actively support effective and efficient Army writing by working to eliminate poor writing in their commands and providing training opportunities for all Army writers.

1–5. Restrictions to this regulation

This regulation has been made as complete as possible to avoid the need to issue additional instructions. The correspondence formats outlined in this regulation take precedence over format instructions outlined in other regulations or directives. Therefore, supplements to this regulation will be restricted to instructions that are unique to an agency or command. Guidance found in DA Memo 25–52, dated 15 September 1996 (Staff Action Process and Correspondence Policies), must be followed when preparing correspondence for signature by the Secretary of Defense; Secretary of the Army; Chief of Staff, Army; Vice Chief of Staff, Army; and the Director of the Army Staff.

1–6. Objectives

The objectives of this regulation are to—

- a. Create a standard of acceptance for written communication in the Army.
- b. Provide clear instructions for the preparation of all correspondence. This should reduce the time needed for training in this area.
- c. Reduce the cost of preparing correspondence.
- d. Standardize the preparation and distribution of correspondence.

Section II

General Correspondence Guidance

1–7. Methods of communication

- a. *Personal or telephone contact.* Whenever possible and appropriate, conduct official business by personal contact, local telephone, Defense Switched Network (DSN) or electronic mail (e-mail). A memorandum for record (MFR) should be used to document any decisions or agreements reached during these communications.
- b. *Memorandum.* The memorandum will be used for correspondence within a department or agency, as well as for routine correspondence to Federal Government agencies outside the Department of Defense (DOD). Do not use the memorandum format for corresponding with the families of military personnel or private businesses. See paragraph 2–2 for the proper use of the memorandum.
- c. *Letter.* Letters will be used for correspondence addressed to the President or the Vice President of the United States, members of the White House staff, members of Congress, Justices of the Supreme Court, heads of departments and agencies, State governors, mayors, foreign government officials, and the public. Letters may also be used to

address individuals outside the department or agency when a personal tone is appropriate, such as in letters of commendation or condolence. See paragraph 3–2 for the proper use of the letter.

d. Electronic mail. Electronic mail may be used for unclassified organizational and individual information transfer.

e. Automated Digital Network (AUTODIN) messages. Use electronically transmitted AUTODIN messages or commercial telephone only when other means of transmission will not suffice.

1–8. Direct communications

Send correspondence as directly as possible to the action office concerned. See paragraph 2–4a(4). Include the action officer's name and office symbol when addressing correspondence.

1–9. Routing through channels

a. Routing action correspondence. Route correspondence through commands, agencies, or offices expected to exercise control or to take action.

b. Bypassing intermediate headquarters. Correspondence will not be routed through a headquarters that has no interest or concern in the matter or action. However, a copy of the communication and the referral action will be sent to the command, agency, or office that was bypassed. Routine correspondence may bypass intermediate headquarters when—

(1) It is apparent that the intermediate headquarters is not concerned.

(2) No action is required.

(3) No controls need to be exercised.

c. Routing directly to the addressee. When there is not enough time to route a communication through channels and still meet a suspense date, send it directly to the addressee. This is an exception to 1–9a. At the same time, send a copy of the communication and referral action to the organizations that were bypassed.

d. Using technical channels. Use technical channels to route correspondence that deals with technical matters. This includes technical reports, instructions, or requests for information that do not involve command matters. Before using technical channels, ensure that the action is not one that should be sent through command channels. Do not use FOR THE COMMANDER on the authority line of technical channel correspondence.

1–10. Quality of writing

Department of the Army writing will be clear, concise, and effective. Army correspondence must aid effective and efficient communication and decision making. Writing that is effective and efficient can be understood in a single rapid reading and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage. Refer to paragraphs 1–43 through 1–46 of chapter 1 and appendix B of this regulation and to DA Pamphlet (Pam) 600–67, *Effective Writing for Army Leaders*, for more information on effective and efficient Army writing. The standards contained in these references are the mandated Army style.

1–11. Rewriting, retyping, and drafts

a. Correspondence and mission accomplishment. Correspondence helps the Army accomplish its mission. Information clarity and efficient mission accomplishment are the most important aspects of correspondence.

b. Rewriting. Excessive revisions to create a perfect product are a waste of time. The objectives of good correspondence are clarity and brevity. Do not rewrite internal DA correspondence unless it is clearly inadequate for the intended purpose. Do not rewrite to correct minor errors in format, arrangement, and phraseology unless the correspondence is going outside DA or to the general public.

c. Retyping. Do not retype DA correspondence to correct typographical errors, word omissions, or other minor errors unless the changes are so numerous that the end result looks sloppy. Make corrections neatly and legibly with pen and ink.

d. Drafts. When correspondence must be prepared for the approval or concurrence of another office, submit it in draft form (unless it is known that it will not be changed). The approving or reviewing official will approve and return the draft. Prepare the final correspondence for signature and attach the draft to the record copy.

1–12. Review of outgoing correspondence

Keep the number of times outgoing correspondence is reviewed to a minimum. Normally, make one review for grammar, format, and content. When available, use electronic spell check. The senior secretary or administrative officer of an organization should provide a final review of all the correspondence prepared for the signature of the signing official.

1–13. Form letters

The term “form letter” is a generic term and encompasses memorandums and letters. Form letters save time and money and often provide a higher level of quality than composed letters.

a. Economy. The form letter, when designed and used properly, is the most economical of all correspondence media.

- b. Appropriateness.* Use a form letter to convey information about impersonal or routine matters.
- c. Flexibility.* Form letters that are well designed provide flexibility and can be adapted to serve almost all the needs for which a form letter is economical and appropriate.
- d. Forms approval and control.* See AR 25–30, The Army Publishing and Printing Program, for information on approval procedures and forms control.

1–14. Exclusive For correspondence

- a. Use.* Use Exclusive For correspondence for matters of a sensitive or privileged nature. Keep its use to a minimum to avoid delay of action if the named addressee is absent or unavailable to receive and act on the correspondence. Prepare Exclusive For correspondence in either the letter or memorandum format.
- b. Addressing.* Address Exclusive For correspondence to the name and title of the addressee.
- c. Handling.* When preparing Exclusive For correspondence, place it in a sealed envelope. Type and underline the words *Exclusive For* on the envelope. Distribution center and mailroom workers will give this kind of mail to addressees unopened.
- d. Personal For.* The term *Personal For* is not authorized for use on Army correspondence, but it is used in certain electronic message traffic as prescribed in AR 25–11, Record Communications and the Privacy Communications System.

Section III Specific Correspondence Guidance

1–15. Dissemination of command instructions

The acronyms ALARACT (all Army activities) and ARSTAF (Army Staff) are used only in electronically transmitted messages. These acronyms assign responsibility for distribution instructions. Do not use them in Army correspondence.

1–16. Abbreviations and brevity codes

- a. Memorandums.* Use abbreviations and brevity codes authorized in AR 310–50, Authorized Abbreviations and Brevity Codes, for memorandums. Use standard dictionaries for abbreviations not contained in AR 310–50. Prescribing regulations for various technical fields also provide authorized abbreviations, acronyms, and brevity codes. Abbreviated ranks are authorized for memorandums and personal correspondence. General officers will use their full rank on all formal or official correspondence.
- b. Letters.* Use only common abbreviations found in standard dictionaries. Do not use military abbreviations, brevity codes, acronyms, or military jargon in letters addressed to persons outside the Department of Defense. Military personnel will use their full rank (for example, Lieutenant General, Major General, Captain, Sergeant First Class, and so forth) for letters.
- c. Abbreviation guidelines.*
 - (1) Established abbreviations are acceptable in all but the most formal writing. For reading ease, use only well-known abbreviations or those you think would be known by the recipient.
 - (2) When a word or title that is not well known will be used more than once in a document, place the abbreviated form in parentheses after the first time the word or title is used. Thereafter, only the abbreviated form is used. Do not place the abbreviated form of a word or title after the spelled out version of the word or title if the word or title will not be used more than once.
 - (3) Do not place a period after abbreviated words in addresses, for example, St (street), Blvd (Boulevard), and so forth. The word *Fort* can be abbreviated (Ft) when used with a location.

1–17. Acronyms

Use military and civilian acronyms in memorandums, if appropriate. Do not, however, use military acronyms when writing to individuals or organizations who would not be familiar with their use. When an acronym that is used more than once is not well known or is not contained in AR 310–50, spell out the word or title the first time it is used and follow it with the abbreviated form. Thereafter, the acronym may be used. Above all, do not overuse acronyms.

1–18. Letterhead

- a.* Letterhead identifies the originating agency and provides the agency’s complete standardized mailing address. The letterhead does not show the organizational structure of the agency, nor should it do so. Therefore, do not make internal office designations part of the letterhead.
- b.* Computer-generated letterhead will be used for all official correspondence and will conform to the following:
 - (1) Use only the approved letterhead template provided by US Army Publishing Agency at www.usapa.army.mil.
 - (2) No other seal, emblem, decorative device, distinguishing insignia, slogans, or mottos will be used unless approved by the Secretary of the Army.
 - (3) All computer-generated letterhead will be printed on white paper.

(4) Letterhead will be printed with black ink.

1-19. Paper

Paper used for Army correspondence will be the standard 8 ½ - by 11-inch size. Continuing efforts will be made to conserve paper and to minimize the use of high cost premium grade paper by adhering to the following:

a. Original pages. Use computer-generated letterhead for the first page of all formal memorandums and letters except when an approved form is prescribed. Use plain white paper for continuing pages.

b. Copies.

(1) Use photocopies of original pages when sending outside the originating agency.

(2) Use photocopies for record copies if necessary. Type, stamp, or write clearance or coordination ladders only on record copies.

1-20. Type fonts and sizes

When creating official correspondence, use type fonts and sizes that make the correspondence easy to read and understand. The following guidelines will provide the best results:

a. A font with a point size smaller than 12 or larger than 14 should be avoided. When possible, a 12-point size will be used.

b. Preferred type fonts are Times Roman and Times New Roman.

c. Unusual type styles, such as script, should not be used to create official correspondence.

1-21. Ink color

Use black or blue ink to sign communications. Black ink will be used to stamp dates and signature blocks.

1-22. Using one side of paper

Prepare original correspondence using only one side of a sheet of paper; however, correspondence should be reproduced on both sides of the paper.

1-23. Copies

a. Record copy. Make one record or file copy of correspondence after original has been signed and dated. Stamp or write "record copy" or "file copy" along the edge of the right margin. Maintain file copies in accordance with Army recordkeeping system requirements.

b. Reading file copies. If reading files are used, maintain in accordance with Army recordkeeping system requirements.

c. Copies furnished. Use "copies furnished" to keep other than the prime addressee informed of an action. Make copies after original has been signed and dated.

1-24. Classified and special handling correspondence

a. General. Information that requires protection against unauthorized disclosure in the interest of national security shall be classified. Correspondence containing classified information will be safeguarded as prescribed in AR 380-5, Department of the Army Information Security Program. The contents of a classified communication will be revealed only to individuals who have the appropriate security clearance and whose official duties require such information.

b. Marking classified correspondence. See chapter 8 and AR 380-5 for detailed instructions on marking and downgrading instructions.

c. Use of FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (FOUO) marking. See AR 25-55, The Department of the Army Freedom of Information Act Program, for the proper use and marking of FOUO material.

1-25. Identification of writer

Normally, when writing any type of correspondence, the writer will be identified by military rank or civilian prefix, name, telephone number, and if appropriate, facsimile number and e-mail address. This information is generally placed in the last paragraph of the correspondence.

1-26. Identification of originating office

a. Office symbols are used to identify the office of origin for memorandums and electronically transmitted messages within the DA. Use the office symbols when addressing or replying to memorandums.

b. Office titles are used to identify the office of origin for letters. See paragraph 3-7a(2)(b).

1-27. Expression of date

a. Dates on memorandums. Express dates on memorandums in only these two ways: 1 January 2000 or 1 Jan 00. The four digits for the year will be used only when the month is spelled out or when date stamps reflect abbreviated months and four-digit year.

b. Dates on letters. Express dates on letters and refer to dates within letters only in this way: January 1, 2000.

c. Separating date elements. Avoid separating any of the three date elements (day, month, and year) from each other, but if it is absolutely necessary, the four-digit year may be carried over to the next line when the month is spelled out.

1–28. Expressing time

Military time will be expressed in a group of four digits, ranging from 0001 to 2400 based on the 24-hour clock system. The first two digits represent the hour after midnight and the last two digits represent the minutes. For example, 1:37 p.m. civilian time is expressed as 1337 military time. The word *hours* will not be used in conjunction with military time. Use civilian time in letters.

1–29. Suspense date

a. Use a suspense date on memorandums when a reply is required by a certain date. (See fig 2–2.) Suspense dates should be reflected in the body text and appear in bold. Do not use suspense dates on letters.

b. Consider the following time factors in setting a suspense date on correspondence:

- (1) Number of days required to transmit the communications.
- (2) Number of days needed to complete the action.
- (3) Number of days required to transmit the reply.

1–30. Addressing

Address correspondence and envelopes as prescribed in AR 25–51, Official Mail and Distribution Management, and chapter 5 of this regulation.

1–31. References

List references in the first paragraph of the correspondence. Enclose copies of references that are not readily available to the addressee. List and number references in the order they appear in the correspondence. When references do not appear in the text of the correspondence, list them in ascending date order (oldest to most recent). Include the following information as a minimum:

a. Publications. When listing publications, include the number, title, and date, for example, AR 25–50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence, 21 Nov 88; and (for a supplement and change) USASC, Suppl 1, 3 Mar 95, to AR 710–2, Inventory Management Supply Policy Below the Wholesale Level, 31 Oct 97; and Change 2, 15 Oct 99, to DA Pam 27–9, Military Judges’ Benchbook, 30 Sep 96.

b. Correspondence. When referencing correspondence, include the type of correspondence, organization of origin, office symbol, date, and the subject of the correspondence, for example, Memorandum, HQ USAMC, AMCIO–F, 20 Feb 88, subject: Training for AMC Personnel; and Message, HQ TRADOC, ATPL–TD–OR, 101623Z Sep 84, subject: Correspondence Management. When referencing e-mail or facsimiles, use the name of the sender and the office symbol (if included), for example, E-mail, HQ TRADOC (ATPL–TD–OR), Mr. Sam Jones, 3 Nov 96, subject: Correspondence Management; and Fax, HQ FORSCOM, Ms. Ella Johns, 25 Feb 97, subject: Copier Management.

c. Referencing classified or unclassified material. (See chap 8 for portion marking.) Use the following guidelines when referencing unclassified material in a classified document or referencing classified material in a classified or unclassified document.

Note. When the reference contains classified information or is required to be placed within a classified document, portion-mark the reference and the subject of the reference with the appropriate classification symbol. See AR 380–5 for guidance.

(1) When referencing a classified document in unclassified correspondence, show the classification of both the referenced material and the subject, for example, Secret message, HQ TRADOC, ATCG, 201623Z Sep 94, subject: Correspondence Management (U).

(2) When referencing unclassified correspondence in a classified document, show the classification of the referenced material and the subject, for example, (U) Unclas message, HQ TRADOC, ATPL–TD–OR, 201623Z Sep 84, subject: Correspondence Management (U).

(3) When referencing a classified document that has a classified subject in classified correspondence, show the classification of both the reference and its subject, for example, (C) Secret message, HQ TRADOC, ATCG, 201623Z Sep 94, subject: Correspondence Management (C).

(4) When drafting an unclassified document and the subject of the reference(s) is classified, the document must show the classification assigned to the referenced subject. The document then becomes classified to the level of the reference cited and must be marked appropriately. (See AR 380–5 and chap 8 for proper marking of classified correspondence.)

(5) When drafting an unclassified piece of correspondence that contains a mixture of classified and unclassified references although all subjects are unclassified, show the classification marking for each reference. Here are examples of references:

- (a) (U) Secret message, HQ TRADOC, ATCG, 201623Z Sep 94, subject: Correspondence Management (U).
- (b) Unclas memorandum, HQ TRADOC, ATCG, 20 Sep 94, subject: Correspondence Management (U).
- (c) (U) Conf message, HQDA, DAPC-ZX, 201624Z Sep 94, subject: Correspondence Management (U).
- (6) When preparing messages or when referencing correspondence on messages within messages, see AR 25-11 for guidance.
- (7) When drafting unclassified correspondence that contains unclassified references, do not mark it to indicate its unclassified status.

d. Paragraphs of regulations or publications.

(1) When citing a regulation or publication, cite its number, name, and date: DA Pam 600-67, Effective Writing for Army Leaders, June 1986.

(2) When referencing a specific paragraph in a regulation or publication, cite the regulation or publication number, name, paragraph, and date, for example, DA Pam 600-67, Effective Writing for Army Leaders, paragraph 3-1a, June 1986. If the regulation has been listed as a reference in the first paragraph of the memorandum, additional references need only include the paragraph number and the number of the regulation, for example, DA Pam 600-67, paragraph 3-1a.

e. Telephone conversations or meetings. When referencing telephone conversations or meetings, first cite the communication, then the individuals' headquarters or office of location, the date, and the subject, if applicable:

(1) Reference telephone conversation between Mr. Smith, this office, and Ms. Jones, TRADOC, 23 Jan 95, subject: Office Copiers.

(2) Reference meeting between Ms. Jones, TRADOC, and Mr. Smith, this office, 23 Jan 95, subject: Office Copiers.

f. Referencing material that has the same subject. The term "subject as above" or the acronym "SAB" may be used in lieu of stating the subject in memorandums. This does not apply to letters.

1-32. Authority lines

Chapter 6 explains in detail the composition and proper use of authority lines.

1-33. Complimentary close

Chapter 3 explains in detail the composition and proper use of complimentary close.

1-34. Signature blocks

Chapter 6, section II, explains in detail the composition and proper use of signature blocks for military and civilian personnel.

1-35. Postscripts

A postscript (P.S.) is an informal technique to add an afterthought to a communication; do not use in official correspondence.

1-36. Page and paragraph numbering

See chapters 2 and 3 for exact guidance on paragraph and page numbering and placement of the page number.

1-37. Underlining, using boldface type, and italicizing for emphasis

Use underlining, boldface type, and italics only to emphasize a specific or important fact. Overuse of these methods for emphasis (like overuse of the exclamation point) defeats its own purpose. In general, substitute more specific or forceful words to gain emphasis.

1-38. Distribution formulas

Develop a distribution formula that is easy to understand and use. Ensure that it is a fast and cost-effective way to distribute information to a great number of addresses. Do not use internal distribution formulas for correspondence external to your command or installation. (See AR 25-51.)

1-39. Identifying and listing enclosures

Use enclosures for memorandums and letters. Number and attach all enclosures in the same order in which they appear in the body of the correspondence. Place the identification of each enclosure in the lower right corner of the first page, in pencil, before making copies. Specify enclosures in the text. See paragraph 4-2 for proper listing of enclosures. Attachments to enclosures are referred to as enclosures to enclosures (for example, enclosure 3 to enclosure 2).

1-40. Nine-digit ZIP Code (ZIP+4 Code)

Use the ZIP+4 Code on all return envelope addresses and on all "FOR" addresses. The ZIP+4 Codes will be used on all letterhead.

1–41. NATO correspondence

Correspondence for NATO purposes is governed by Standardization Agreements. See guidance in appendix F.

1–42. Recordkeeping requirements

This regulation requires the creation, maintenance, and use of the specific record FN 25–50a (Delegation of signature authority), in accordance with AR 25–400–2.

Section IV

Effective Writing and Correspondence: The Army Writing Style

1–43. Goal

The goal of all Army correspondence is effective communication.

1–44. Standards for Army writing

a. Effective Army writing transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

b. Good Army writing is concise, organized, and right to the point. Two essential requirements include putting the main point at the beginning of the correspondence and using the active voice (for example (*main point up front*), “You are entitled to jump pay for the time you spent in training last year”).

c. The standard English sentence order, subject-verb-object, works best. It speeds communication and helps the reader understand the main point.

d. Active writing—

(1) Emphasizes the doer of the action.

(2) Shows who or what does the action in the sentence, or puts the doer before the verb.

(3) Creates shorter sentences. Eliminating the passive voice reduces the number of words in a sentence.

(a) Passive: The PT test was passed by SGT Jones (eight words).

(b) Active: SGT Jones passed the PT test (six words).

e. The passive voice is easy to recognize. A verb in the passive voice uses any form of “to be” plus the past participle of a main verb (for example, am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been), plus a main verb usually ending in “en” or “ed” (for example, were completed, is requested).

1–45. Constructing military correspondence

a. *General techniques.* Focus first on the main point to construct basic military correspondence. Use of the active voice is the basic style of Army writing.

b. *Specific techniques.* Meeting the standards for correspondence requires specific techniques. Use these additional rules of correspondence construction to improve effectiveness.

(1) Use short words. Try not to use more than 15 percent over two syllables long.

(2) Keep sentences short. The average length of a sentence should be about 15 words.

(3) Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are no more than 10 lines.

(4) Avoid jargon.

(5) Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

(6) Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of this office, this headquarters, this command, all individuals, and so forth.

(7) Write one-page letters and memorandums for most correspondence. Use enclosures for additional information.

(8) Avoid sentences that begin with “It is ...,” “There is ...,” or “There are ...”

1–46. Packaging correspondence

a. *Structure.* The simplified formats in this regulation are specific ways of structuring particular kinds of correspondence. Packaging, however, applies to all Army writing.

b. *Framework.* Packaging is the general framework of military writing style. All formats start with this standard structure and are tailored to each type of correspondence.

c. *Packaging.* Structure correspondence for easy quick reading:

(1) First, open with a short, clear purpose sentence.

(2) Next, put the recommendation, conclusion, or more important information as the main point. (These first two steps can be combined in some correspondence.)

(3) Last, clearly separate each section. Use short paragraph headings or section titles.

Student Handout 3

Extracted Material from DA Pam 600-67

This Student Handout Contains

This student handout contains 10 pages of extracted material from the following publication:

DA Pam 600-67, Effective Writing for Army Leaders, 2 June 1986

Cover Page	not numbered
Chapter 1 thru 5	pages 1 thru 9

Disclaimer: The training developer downloaded the extracted material from the U.S. Army Publishing Directorate Home Page. The text may contain passive voice, misspellings, grammatical errors, etc., and may not be in compliance with the Army Writing Style Program.

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Department of the Army
Pamphlet 600-67

Personnel—General

Effective Writing for Army Leaders

Headquarters
Department of the Army
Washington, DC
02 June 1986

Unclassified

Chapter 1 Introduction

1-1. Purpose

This pamphlet is a leader's manual. It –

- a. Provides accessible information on what kind of staff writing to demand and how to have it produced.
- b. Explains in detail what good Army writing is and how to establish uniform Army writing standards.
- c. Describes two quantifiable tools to reinforce better writing.
- d. Provides examples of the new standard for Army writing.

1-2. References

a. *Required publication.* AR 600-70, The Army Writing Program, is a required publication. (Cited in para 2-1d.)

b. *Related publication.* (A related publication is merely a source of additional information. The user does not have to read it to understand the pamphlet.) AR 340-15, Preparing and Managing Correspondence, is a related publication.

1-3. Why there is an Army Writing Program

a. Too much Army writing does not communicate well. It confuses rather than clarifies; it is wordy rather than concise; it hides the main idea rather than getting to the point.

b. We all recognize the particular style described in a above as "Army" writing. The Army has developed this style collectively. That means that, collectively, we can build a better style.

c. Information overload and the complexity of the modern Army demand a more effective style and a new standard for writing.

1-4. Defining the standard

a. According to AR 600-70, the standard for Army writing is writing you can understand in a single rapid reading, and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

b. Good Army writing is clear, concise, organized, and right to the point.

Chapter 2 Leadership and Writing

2-1. Why we need a leader writing pamphlet

- a. Leaders lose too much time grappling with poor writing.
- b. Poor writing hinders decisions.
- c. Only leaders can make this new style happen.
- d. Paragraph 2e of AR 600-70 requires all commanders to uphold a common standard.

2-2. A different kind of writing pamphlet

a. This is a leader's manual, not a thick staff officer's guide. This pamphlet provides accessible information on what kind of writing to demand and how to get your staff to produce it.

b. Most significantly, the Army has set a standard for good writing and developed staff writing rules to reach that standard. You'll find those in this pamphlet as well.

2-3. Your role as an Army leader

This pamphlet has three primary sections and will assist you as an Army leader to –

- a. Issue the guidance to establish uniform, effective writing standards.
- b. Be a mentor to your subordinates using specific tools.
- c. Show the new standards using sets of examples.

Chapter 3 Issuing the Guidance

3-1. Style Rules

Take these guidelines and publish them as your office writing rules to establish the new Army writing rules to establish the new Army writing standard. Require all people who write for you–

- a. Put the recommendation, conclusion, or reason for writing—the "bottom line"—in the first or second paragraph, not at the end.
- b. Use the active voice.
- c. Use short sentences (an average of 15 or fewer words).
- d. Use short words (three syllables or fewer). (See the clarity index in paragraph 4-3.)
- e. Write paragraphs that, with few exceptions, are no more than 1 inch deep.
- f. Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- g. Use "I," "you" and "we" as subjects of sentences instead of "this office," "this headquarters," "all individuals," and so forth, for most kinds of writing.

3-2. Two essential changes

These new writing guidelines mandate two critical changes that leaders must demand. The first change alters the structure of all Army writing; the second change transforms the style.

a. Structure—main idea first.

(1) Require all staff writing to begin with the main idea. The greatest weakness in ineffective writing is that it doesn't quickly transmit a focused message. Too much Army writing hides the main point. Insist, as business writers do, on the "bottom line" first. Have subordinates start with the information they would keep if they had to get rid of all the rest.

(2) Require specific packaging of all writing. Focusing first on the main point changes the overall construction of Army writing. This restructuring, called packaging, is the framework of the new writing style. Packaging is not format. Formatting begins after packaging to tailor the writing to a specific purpose. To package–

(a) Open with a short, clear purpose sentence.

(b) Put the recommendation, conclusion, or most important information (the main point) next. (Some writing combines the purpose and the main point.)

(c) Clearly separate each major section. Use paragraphs, headings, or section titles.

(d) Use a specific format if one is appropriate.

b. Style – the active voice.

(1) The major style change that makes Army writing clear, direct communication is using the active voice rather than passive voice. Many Army writers overuse the passive voice and create sentences that are indirect and unfocused, and that slow communication. The passive voice hides the doer of the action, blocking communication. Active example: Army beat Navy. Passive example: The Navy has been beaten by Army.

(2) The active voice is direct, natural, and forceful.

(3) The active voice does more than make sentences clearer – it shortens sentences. Eliminating the passive voice reduces a piece of writing by about 20 percent.

(4) The passive voice is actually very easy to recognize: it uses one of the eight forms of to be plus a verb usually ending in –en or –ed. Example: am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been plus the –en, –ed word (is requested, were eaten).

(5) When you see verb constructions like the examples in (4) above, you know the writing is passive. Although sometimes the passive is appropriate, most of the time it is not. Examples: The passive voice is abused in Army writing. When vagueness is wanted, the passive voice is selected by many writers. A direct style, on the other hand, is created by the active voice.

(6) When you see writing in the passive voice, have the writers change it to active voice. Tell your subordinates to put the subject first in sentences and they will become active writers. Example: Army writing abuses the passive voice. Army writers select the

passive voice when they want to be vague. The active voice, on the other hand, creates a direct style.

Chapter 4 Being a mentor

4-1. General

Despite clear staff writing guidelines and focusing on only two essential changes, some of the writing you see won't meet the new standards. Most supervisors have little trouble identifying poor writing. Many, however, have problems knowing how to fix it or counsel someone else on how to fix it. Use the tools discussed in paragraphs 4-2 and 4-3 to give your subordinates specific, quantifiable feedback.

4-2. The quick-screen edit

This editing tool identifies major violations of the Army standard for writing. To use the quick-screen edit, simply do the following:

- a. use a highlighter, pencil or pen.
- b. In a single, rapid reading highlight, circle, or underline—
 - (1) The “bottom line,” the purpose of the piece of writing.
 - (2) Any forms of the verb to be used with a past participle (a verb ending in “-en” or “-ed”). This identifies the passive voice.
 - (3) Any unnecessary long words or jargon.
 - (4) Spelling, punctuation, or grammar mistakes.
- c. Have your people revise the four targeted areas. In the revision—
 - (1) Move the “bottom line” to the beginning of the writing if it is not there already.
 - (2) Change only the other highlighted problems.
 - (3) Check the writing for packaging.
- d. See figure 4-1 for an example of highlighting, using the quick-screen edit. (The reverse type in fig 4-1 represents use of highlighting.) Figure 4-2 shows the revised example.
- e. This quick-screen edit is a quick, effective screen. It's quick because you only read it once. It's effective because you highlight specific errors. It's a screen because you highlight only those errors that are distracting.
- f. With this technique, you show subordinates exactly what to revise without requiring a complete rewrite.

4-3. The clarity index

Some writing problems do not lend themselves to a quick-screen edit. A second tool, the clarity index, pinpoints two other major reasons why writing that arrives on the desk is often confusing and difficult to read.

- a. Long words and long sentences make writing difficult to read. Such writing does not meet the new standards of Army writing. The clarity index provides a yardstick to measure how readable writing is. If you suspect that writing is not effective, this yardstick is helpful to quantify the problem.
- b. The clarity index is based on word and sentence length. Selecting a sample of 200 words or less, use the formula below. (For graphic representation of the formula, see fig 4-3.)
 - (1) Count the number of sentences.
 - (2) Count the number of words.
 - (3) Divide the number of words by the number of sentences to

get the average sentence length. (The target average is 15 words per sentence.

- (4) Count the number of words that have three syllables or more.
 - (5) Divide the number of long words by the total of words to determine the percentage of long words. (The target is 15 percent.)
 - (6) Add the average sentence length to the percentage of long words.
 - (7) The sum is the clarity index. (The target is 30.)
- c. If a writer eliminates long words and long sentences without changing meaning, writing becomes clearer. The writer is not producing simplistic papers or insulting the reader's intelligence. Instead, time-savings and understanding increase.
 - d. Use the clarity index once to quantify the density of a piece of writing for subordinates. Then have them periodically monitor their own writing. See figures 4-4 and 4-5 for examples of how to compute a clarity index.
 - e. Use the following Rules of thumb for the clarity index:
 - (1) Below 20, writing is too abrupt.
 - (2) Over 40, writing is difficult to understand.
 - (3) Aim for an index of 30.

Chapter 5 Showing the New Standards

5-1. Establishing the guidelines

- a. The two essential changes – packaging and active writing – and the seven style techniques create a new standard for Army writing.
- b. The quick-screen edit and the clarity index help enforce the new standard.

5-2. Setting the examples

- a. The examples in figures 5-1 through 5-6 demonstrate the results of applying the leadership guidelines in this pamphlet to Army writing. Read and compare the examples. Do not accept writing like that labeled “poor writing.” Only accept writing like that labeled “good writing.” Use figures 5-1 through 5-6 as examples for your subordinates.
- b. The memorandum at figure 5-1 has a clarity index of 42. That's too high. The paper is far too long, is filled with jargon, the passive voice, and is not focused. Packaging in figure 5-2 brings the recommendation to the top and eliminates unnecessary verbiage. The example in figure 5-2 has a clarity index of 23.
- c. Much of figure 5-3 is error-riddled or Army jargon. It's an attempt to sound “serious” and military. Writing like this slows communication and sends the wrong message about the writer. Note the difference in figure 5-4.
- d. The other examples of standards in this pamphlet reflect the dramatic difference brevity makes to bring about more effective writing. Although the example at figure 5-5 is short, it has a more basic problem – packaging. Notice that figure 5-6 does not look markedly shorter, although it is. This document's legal nature does mean some things cannot be cut out. It's much improved, however, because the “bottom line” is up front and the paragraphs are short. Packaging speeds communication.

A microcomputer can help this office speed up actions which is very important to getting all missions accomplished. By using the data base software, we can keep track of all training and not allow repetitive training. We can use the work processor to do our administrative actions and speed up our ability to do work. We need such an instrument at this time.

Figure 3-1. Example of writing without packaging

-
1. I request a microcomputer for this office.
 2. We need a microcomputer to:
 - a. Monitor training.
 - b. Increase the amount of work we can do.
 - c. Handle our administrative jobs.

Figure 3-2. Example of writing with packaging

1. The provisioning of government furniture in overseas quarters is permitted by the Army if it is more advanteous than shipping personal furniture. New cost comparison studies have been conducted by this headquarters, they show that this headquarters is entitled by these studies to buy furniture.

2. Requests must be prepared by this headquarters immediately to get the quarters furniture we now are authorized by the new purchasing data.

- provisioning--jargon
- is permitted--passive voice
- advanteous--misspelling and jargon
- have been conducted--passive voice
- headquarters, they--a comma cannot separate two sentences
- is entitled--passive voice
- must be prepared--passive voice
- are authorized--passive voice
- Requests ... data--the "bottom line"

Figure 4-1. Example of a quick-screen edit highlight

1. We need to prepare requests immediately to get the furniture new purchasing data authorizes.
2. The Army permits buying overseas quarters furniture if it is cheaper than shipping personnel furniture. We have conducted new cost comparison studies that entitle us to buy furniture.

Figure 4-2. Example of revised writing

- A. Number of sentences ____
- B. Number of words ____
- C. Number of long words ____

$$B \div A = \text{words/sentence} \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$C \div B = \% \text{ long words} + \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Clarity Index} = \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Figure 4-3. Computing clarity index

Example: Summary of Action

1. Herewith is the Summary of action concerning the elimination case of the captioned officer. You will recall that when I briefed you on this case, I suggested that the Vice Chief be informed of my recommendation since he, as CG FORSCOM, initiated the Board of Inquiry and ultimately recommended approval of that Board's recommendation for elimination under other than honorable conditions. You left the matter of briefing the Vice Chief up to me and advised that after I had made up my mind in that regard you would make your decision in the case.

2. I asked for and had an interview with the Vice Chief. I explained that I wanted him to know about my recommendation to you in the case since he had initiated the Board of Inquiry and had ultimately recommended approval of that Board's recommendation for the elimination of LTC Jones with an under other than honorable conditions discharge. The Vice Chief was grateful for my courtesy but made no comment as to whether he was in agreement or nonconcurred with my recommendation.

- A. Number of sentences 6
- B. Number of words 176
- C. Number of long words 29

$$B \div A = \text{words/sentence } 29$$
$$C \div B = \% \text{ long words } + 16$$
$$\text{Clarity Index} = 45$$

Figure 4-4. Clarity index of original writing

Sample Solution: Summary of Action

Here is LTC Jone's case summary.

I did decide to meet with the Vice Chief. I felt that since General Smith, as CG FORSCOM, started the case and recommended discharging Jones, he ought to get the update.

The Vice Chief appreciated my visit but did not comment on my recommendations.

- Total words: 50
- Number of sentences: 4
- Words per sentence: 12
- Number of long words: 9
- Percentage of long words: $6 \div 50 = 12\%$
- Clarity index: $12 + 12 = 24$

Figure 4-5. Clarity index of revised writing.

MEMORANDUM THRU DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS AND PLANS FOR VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

SUBJECT: Reserve Component Mobilization Exercises

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to reply to your not to the Director of the Army Staff which requested an evaluation be made to determine the feasibility of conducting mobilization exercises for NG and USAR units.
2. A feasibility study of such exercises has been initiated. Representatives from the NGB and OCAR have participated in a preliminary planning session, and FORSCOM has provided informal comments and suggestions.
3. It appears feasible to conduct an exercise of this nature within the current year; however, funding restraints, available planning time, and personnel and training disruptions will tend to limit the scope and participation. In line with these restraints, considerations applicable to such an exercise in the immediate future are:
 - a. Exercise should be conducted in conjunction with scheduled annual training (AT). Alert of participants should be made just prior to departure from home station for AT. This procedure should minimized individual disruptions while permitting the unit to exercise its mobilization plans and actions during a period normally allocated for preparation for AT. Further, this method would make use of funds already allotted for movement of unit.
 - b. Announcement of the exercise and its objective should be made in advance; however, selected participants should be alerted at a point in time which would allow realistic implementation and evaluation of their mobilization procedures. Early announcement of objectives, followed later by actual selection and alert of participants, would require all concerned to plan an prepare for the exercises even if not required to participate. Valuable planning and evaluation could be accomplished during this pre-exercise phase prior to the alert of participants.
 - c. In order to prohibit serious disruption of planned AT and pre-programmed testing schedules for RC units, close examination is required in the selection of participants. Units should be selected that have mobilization stations and equipment pools at the same location or in close proximity to each other. On the surface this appears a token approach; however, training time and funding limitations indicate that this is the most viable option within the near time frame.
 - d. Only active and semi-active installations previously programmed to support AT should be used. Funding restrictions and training considerations preclude opening or greatly expanding support facilities not already programmed for AT.
 - e. While total transportation requirements for units should be planned and determined during the pre-alert phase, costs and other restraints on movements may necessitate only partial or selected movement of equipment of the participating units.
 - f. Units to participate must be initially limited in number and size. These should include both USAR and NG units with priority of selection going to affiliated and early deploying (D+60) units. The selection of RC units to participate should be made by FORSCOM in coordination with NGB and OCAR.
4. Subject to further analysis, it appears feasible to conduct a mobilization exercise in conjunction with next year's AT. FORSCOM is receptive to the concept as outlined, but desires to examine the result of its Mobilization Evaluation Exercise which terminated 30 January, prior to the recommending or developing specific exercise objectives. Therefore, this is an interim reply.

Figure 5-1. Memorandum—Example of poor writing

MEMORANDUM THRU DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS AND PLANS FOR VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

SUBJECT: Reserve Component Mobilization Exercises

1. Purpose. To answer this question: Can we conduct mobilization exercise for NG and USAR units this year?
2. Recommendation. Yes, we can, but with these constraints:
 - a. That FORSCOM sees the results of the last such exercise before planning begins.
 - b. That FORSCOM, together with NGB and OCAR, choose participating units.
 - c. That we use this year's training and testing money.
 - d. that the exercise is well-timed.
3. Discussion.
 - a. FORSCOM wants to help develop exercise objectives.
 - b. FORSCOM, NGB, and OCAR should—
 - (1) Select priority units first.
 - (2) Select units whose mobilization stations and equipment pools are close together.
 - (3) Not disrupt scheduled training and testing.
 - c. The budget does not include enough money to—
 - (1) Open new support facilities.
 - (2) Expand existing support facilities.
 - (3) Not disrupt scheduled training and testing.
 - d. Timing of the exercise should—
 - (1) Not change soldier's summer training periods
 - (2) Follow the actual mobilization time sequence.
 - (3) Permit as many units as possible to participate in the planning phase, even though they may not execute their plans.

Figure 5-2. Memorandum—Example of good writing

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HHB, 3/13th Field Artillery
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857

MACC-D-XO

12 March 1986

SUBJECT: Request to be Assigned to Participate in JTX "Frostbite"

Commander
3d Battalion
13th Field Artillery
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857

1. It has recently come to my attention that this Battalion stands in dire need of a volunteer to participate on a voluntary basis in an evaluative capacity on Joint Training Exercise "Frostbite" to be held in the State of Alaska on or about this summer time-frame.
2. I graduated fourth in a class of seventy-three from the U.S. Army Northern Warfare School on 17 August 1985 and was awarded the distinction of a distinguished graduate. I learned the latest in cold weather tactics while on patrol in the DMZ last winter which make me current in that area. In looking at the training forecast, it doesn't seem that I will be mission-essential during that training cycle. Much can be learned by seeing how other units operate in the boonies.
3. The S-3 indicated to me that anyone interested should submit a copy of their last physical. As you can see, I have no previous cold-weather injuries and, therefore, would perhaps be less susceptible to such injury.
4. It is my opinion that I am fully qualified to participate in this Joint Training Exercise at this point in time.

GERALD A. SANDERS
1LT, FA
FIST Chief

Figure 5-3. Military letter—Example of poor writing

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HHB, 3/13th Field Artillery
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857

MACC-D-XO

12 March 1986

SUBJECT: Request for JTX "Frostbite" Assignment

Commander
3d Battalion
13th Field Artillery
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857

1. I request to represent the Battalion on JTX "Frostbite" in Alaska this summer.
2. I feel qualified for this assignment since I have some expertise in cold-weather operations. I was an evaluator during JTX "Team Spirit" in Korea last winter, and am a distinguished graduate of the Northern Warfare School.
3. I have attached a copy of my latest physical examination.

Encl

GERALD A. SANDERS
2LT, FA
FIST Chief

Figure 5-4. Military letter—Example of good writing

DA form 4697 (Report of Survey), block 26:

I have examined all available evidence as shown in exhibits A to G and as indicated below have personally investigated the same and it is my belief that the article (s) listed hereon and/or on attached sheets, total cost \$433.50 was not damaged in an accidental manner. Something like this does not just happen; therefore, the soldier is responsible if negligent. As SP4 Farmer states in his statement (Exhibit B) the tailgate of the M113 was down when Private Thomas laid his M16 down on it to don his protective mask, (Exhibit A), because he thought he smelled CS. This act was in direct contravention of the Division, Brigade, Battalion, and Company Field SOP which states in part that "at no time will equipment be placed on the ramp of M113 personnel carriers" (Exhibit G). It also is expressly prohibited by the proper masking procedure which is to hold the rifle between the legs while masking (Exhibit F, "Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks," p. 37). When the squad leader (SSG Young) told the driver to raise the ramp (Exhibit C), he didn't know that Thomas had set his weapon down on the ramp. It was dark and nobody could see anything and Thomas was still adjusting his mask. Well, one thing led to another and the next thing you know Thomas' M16 is only good for shooting around corners. Such actions show negligence and make SP4 Farmer liable for restitution. (Exhibit D—statement from DS maintenance saying the M16 is irreparably damaged beyond repair).

Figure 5-5. DA Form 4697 (Report of Survey), block 29—example of poor writing

DA Form 4697 (Report of Survey), block 26:

I have investigated the evidence and find PVT John T. Thomas as negligent. PVT Thomas damaged his M16 by carelessly leaving it on an M113 ramp. Private Thomas admits that he laid his M16 on the tailgate of the M113 to put on his protective mask. By doing so, he violated two specific directives. Private Thomas neither followed proper masking procedure (Exhibit F, "Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks," p.37) nor obeyed his field SOP that "at not time will equipment be placed on the ramp of personnel carriers" (Exhibit G). His squad leader, SSG Young, attests (Exhibit C) that Private Thomas knew the SOP.

Direct support maintenance confirms that the M16 (total cost—\$433.40) is damaged beyond repair (Exhibit D).

Figure 5-6. DA Form 4697 (Report of Survey), block 26— Example of good writing

Student Handout 4

Army Writing Style Programmed Text

**This Student
Handout
Contains**

This student handout contains 52 pages of material designed to provide you a review of some of the basic rules of grammar, punctuation, and word choice.

RECOVERABLE PUBLICATION

YOU RECEIVED THIS DOCUMENT IN A DAMAGE-FREE CONDITION. DAMAGE, IN ANY WAY, TO INCLUDE HIGHLIGHTING, PENCIL MARKS, OR MISSING PAGES WILL SUBJECT YOU TO PECUNIARY LIABILITY (STATEMENT OF CHARGES, CASH COLLECTION, ETC.) TO RECOVER PRINTING COSTS.

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Introduction

Introduction

AR 25-50 states, "Effective Army writing transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage . . . use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation." During the Army Writing Style lesson we do not have the time or the resources to teach these skills – you should already be familiar with them. Since it may have been a while since you attended any formal schooling, the lesson developer prepared this programmed text to provide you a review of some of the basic rules in grammar, punctuation, and word choice. This programmed text does not cover every rule and its application; we simply provide it to you as a review. It is up to you to be familiar with the rules of grammar, punctuation, and word choice.

In some cases the references regarding grammar, punctuation, and word choice contradict each other; therefore, for consistency in this lesson and throughout the rest of this course, this programmed text provides the rules by which your instructor will evaluate your work on the Army writing style. The lesson developer used *The Gregg Reference Manual*, Ninth Edition and *English Simplified*, Ninth Edition in preparing this programmed text. You may use this programmed text during the written examination.

NOTE: DO NOT WRITE IN THIS PROGRAMMED TEXT; THIS IS A RECOVERABLE STUDENT HANDOUT. If you desire to keep a copy of this programmed text, you may make a copy or download it at <http://usasma.bliss.army.mil/ANCOC/>. Whether you make a copy of your own or write your answers on a separate sheet of paper, compare your response with the suggested response in the programmed text. Work at your own pace and take breaks as needed. You must complete this programmed text prior to the Army Writing Style lesson.

ARMY WRITING STYLE PROGRAMMED TEXT

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1. To complete this programmed text turn the page and start with frame 2. After you complete frame 2, turn the page and complete frame 3. Continue this process until you reach frame 50; it will direct you back to this page, frame 51.

51. Select the correct verb in the following sentence:

The operational missions of the Army (include, includes) not only war, but also military operations other than war (MOOTW).

101. Clause A: After the staff analyzes and compares its courses of action (COA),

Clause B: it identifies its preferred COA.

Clause A is (a) (an) _____ clause.

Clause B is (a) (an) _____ clause.

151. SSG Green inspected PVT Grooper and found that his boots needed shining, that his uniform needed pressing, and that his hair needed trimming.

The underlined clauses are _____ clauses.

201. We removed the and. Punctuate the sentence now:

Your character helps you know what is right it links that knowledge to action.

251. We normally add an apostrophe and an s, except when the word is _____ and ends in _____.

2. The sentence is our basic unit of spoken or written thought. It is a group of words representing a complete thought and containing a subject and a predicate. For the purpose of this lesson we only review the complete subject and the complete predicate.

52. include (disregard the intervening phrase "of the Army")

(The operational missions include **not** The operational missions includes)

102. a dependent

an independent

152. dependent

202. Your character helps you know what is right; it links that knowledge to action.

252. plural

s

3. The complete subject is the part that names the person or thing the sentence speaks about.

The complete predicate tells what the subject does, what someone or something does to the subject, or what or how the subject is.

53. Select the correct verb in the following sentence:

The ability to integrate and synchronize all available assets to defeat any enemy tactically (give, gives) our Army great credibility and respect that enhances our ability to accomplish all missions to include MOOTW.

103. Training will remain the Army's top priority, and it is the cornerstone of combat readiness.

How many independent clauses are there in this example.

153. Let's see how well you remember the punctuation rules you've reviewed. Punctuate the sentences in the following frames (as applicable) and justify your answer:

Moral courage is the willingness to stand firm on your values principles and convictions.

203. You could also make two separate sentences by replacing the semicolon with a period and capitalizing the first word of the second independent clause.

Remember, do not try to replace the semicolon with a comma; this will make it a run on sentence.

253. sergeants; leaders; mentors

Each of the above words is _____ and ends in s, so you would add only an _____ to show possession.

4. SSG Bannister counseled PFC Cooper for being late to training.

54. gives (disregard the intervening clause “to integrate and synchronize all available assets to defeat any enemy tactically”)

(The ability gives **not** The ability give)

104. two

154. Moral courage is the willingness to stand firm on your values, principles, and convictions.

Use commas to separate three or more words, clauses, or phrases in a series.

204. Remember, do not try to replace the semicolon with a comma. This will make it a run on sentence.

This shows the previous sentence divided into two sentences.

254. plural

apostrophe

5. What is the complete subject of the sentence in frame 4?

What is the complete predicate of the sentence in frame 4?

55. Try another one.

Major training events such as a situational training exercise (STX), EXEVAL, or deployment exercise (provide, provides) feedback to assist commanders in assessing the effectiveness of their leader, individual soldier, unit, and maintenance training programs.

105. Training will remain the Army's top priority because it is the cornerstone of combat readiness.

We changed *and* to *because*. Now how many independent clauses are there?

155. Managing risk is subjective because its basis is individual judgment.

205. Punctuate the following sentence using the semicolon:

True leaders seek out opportunities they're always looking for ways to increase their professional knowledge and skills.

255. Do not use an apostrophe in the *possessive case* of *possessive pronouns* (*his, hers, its, ours, yours, theirs*) or with *whose*.

6. SSG Bannister (complete subject)
counseled PFC Cooper for being late to training (complete predicate)

56. provide (disregard the intervening phrase “such as a situational training exercise (STX), EXEVAL, or deployment exercise”)
(Major training events provide **not** Major training events provides)

106. one Training will remain the Army’s top priority.

156. No punctuation required.
(independent clause precedes the dependent clause)

206. True leaders seek out opportunities; they’re always looking for ways to increase their professional knowledge and skills.

256. Thus far, we have reviewed how to use the apostrophe to show possession. Next we’ll review using the apostrophe to make contractions.

7. The _____ is the part that names the person or thing the sentence speaks about.

The _____ tells what the subject does, what someone or something does to the subject, or what or how the subject is.

57. Now let's look at another rule. A compound subject (more than one subject) joined by *and* requires a plural verb.

107. You should apply Army values, your knowledge, and your experience to any decision you make, and you should prepare yourself to accept the consequences of your actions.

The word *and* joins two _____ clauses.

157. After completing ANCOC you should be ready to be a platoon sergeant or an operations NCO.

207. Correctly punctuate the following sentence:

Army schools teach you basic job skills but they are only part of the learning picture.

257. A contraction is simply the abbreviated form of two words that you have added together to form only one.

When you join the words *is* and *not* into *isn't*, you have formed a _____.

You put the apostrophe in place of the omitted letter or letters.

8. complete subject
complete predicate

58. Wrong: SSG Stafford and SSG Knight *is* platoon sergeants.
Right: SSG Stafford and SSG Knight *are* platoon sergeants.

108. independent

158. After completing ANCOC, you should be ready to be a platoon sergeant or an operations NCO.
(the dependent clause precedes the independent clause)

208. Army schools teach you basic job skills, but they are only part of the learning picture.
Did you remember that if you join two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction you must use a comma?

258. contraction

9. Next we'll review the eight parts of speech in traditional grammar: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

59. Select the correct verbs in the following sentence:

Units and individuals (establish, establishes) and (sustain, sustains) their tactical and technical training proficiency.

109. Earlier we reviewed the conjunction as a part of speech. Now we'll look more closely at coordinating conjunctions.

159. Wire is both secure and reliable but it imposes strict limits on the mobility of the user.

209. Remember the first rule for using the semicolon is to put it between two _____ not joined by a _____ conjunction.

259. Form contractions for the following:

does not

let us

we will

I would

could have

were not

10. A noun is a word that names a person, place, or thing (including a quality or idea).

60. establish, sustain

110. You should apply Army values, your knowledge, and your experience to any decision you make, *and* you should prepare yourself to accept the consequences of your actions.

When we use the word *and* in this way, we are using it as a coordinating conjunction.

160. Wire is both secure and reliable, but it imposes strict limits on the mobility of the user.

(two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction)

210. independent clauses

coordinating

260. doesn't

let's

we'll

I'd

could've

weren't

11. Identify the nouns in the following sentence:

Maintenance is a vital part of every training program.

61. Let's try another.

Soldiers and leaders at all levels continually (study, studies) our profession in preparation to fight and win our Nation's wars.

111. When you join words, phrases, and clauses of equal importance, you normally use a _____ conjunction.

161. We will now review the use of commas with restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses and phrases.

211. Another rule for using the semicolon involves sentence elements that have commas in them.

261. We also use apostrophes to make plurals of letters and symbols. Form the plural of letters and symbols by adding an apostrophe and an s.

SSG Jackson received two A's and two B's on her Army writing style papers.

Use +**'s** and -**'s** on the test.

-
12. Maintenance (thing)
part (thing)
program (thing)
-

62. study

112. coordinating

162. A restrictive clause or phrase is essential to the meaning of the sentence. It fully or partially identifies (restricts) the word it modifies. It answers the question “which one?”

212. CSM Hoopster is the president of the soldier of the month board; the other members on the board are 1SG Smith, A Company; 1SG Webster, B Company; and 1SG Williams, HHC.

The underlined portions make up a series.

262. Do not put an apostrophe with the s to form the plural of abbreviations or acronyms such as NCO, SGT, and MACOM.

NCOs; not NCO's SGTs; not SGT's MACOMs; not MACOM's

13. A pronoun substitutes for or takes the place of a noun.

Examples: *I, my, mine, me, we, our, ours, us, you, your, yours, he, his, him, she, her, hers, it, its, they, their, them.*

63. An exception to this rule is that we will use a singular verb when two or more subjects connected by *and* refer to the same person or thing.

113. Examples of _____ conjunctions are: *and, or, but, nor, so, yet, and for.*

163. If we can't remove a clause or phrase without changing the meaning of the sentence, then we call that clause or phrase _____.

213. Earlier we saw that we use the **comma** to separate words in a simple series, but the series in frame 212 is a complex series that contains commas within the series.

263. Use only a lower case *s* to form the plural of acronyms.

The division CSM and subordinate CSMs evaluate proficiency on individual tasks that support collective tasks.

14. We call the noun that a pronoun stands in for the antecedent of that pronoun.

64. My first sergeant and mentor is my friend. (One person is both first sergeant and mentor.)

114. coordinating

164. restrictive

214. CSM Hoopster is the president of the soldier of the month board; the other members on the board are 1SG Smith, A Company; 1SG Webster, B Company; and 1SG Williams, HHC.

This example illustrates the use of a semicolon when the sentence contains commas within the items of the series.

264. Use an apostrophe and an *s*, however, to show possession.

The CSM's driver will be PCSing later this month.

15. Identify the pronoun and antecedent in the following sentence:

Keeping equipment ready for the fight is as important as training soldiers to be proficient in its use.

65. Select the correct verb in the following sentence:

The XO and NBC Officer (is, are) inspecting protective masks in the arms room.

(The XO is the NBC Officer.)

115. The platoon sergeant oversees training, but he doesn't intervene unless something's wrong. The underlined word is a _____.

The platoon sergeant oversees training, but he doesn't intervene unless something's wrong. The underlined portion is (a) (an) _____.

165. All soldiers on guard duty must report to the Sergeant of the Guard (SOG).

If we remove the underlined phrase would it change the central thought of the sentence?

215. Correctly punctuate this sentence:

On the USASMA crest the torch symbolizes leadership education and training the book represents knowledge and instruction and the sword and quill represent both the combat and combat service support backgrounds of our students.

265. Give the example below a try.

Many (NCO's, NCOs) from several (MACOM's, MACOMs) attended the conference. The SMA designated each (MACOM's, MACOMs) CSM as a group leader. Each group leader solicited input from the (NCO's, NCOs) in his group. The SMA particularly liked one (NCO's, NCOs) suggestion from group 12.

16. its (pronoun)
equipment (antecedent)

66. is (XO and NBC Officer is the same person.)

116. coordinating conjunction
independent clause

166. It most definitely would.

The phrase on guard duty answers the question “which soldiers?”

So this is a restrictive phrase.

216. On the USASMA crest, the torch symbolizes leadership, education, and training; the book represents knowledge and instruction; and the sword and quill represent both the combat and combat service support backgrounds of our students.

NOTE: You may or may not put a comma after the word crest; either is correct.

266. NCOs MACOMs
 MACOM's
 NCOs NCO's

17. A verb expresses action or state of being. Identify the verbs in the following sentence:

The best training is tough, realistic, and both intellectually and physically challenging; it motivates soldiers and inspires excellence.

67. Another subject-verb agreement rule is that singular subjects joined by “*or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, or not only . . . but also*” are singular and require a singular verb.

117. Because you must be familiar with the rules of grammar, punctuation, and word choice, you must complete this programmed text before class.

The underlined portion is (a) (an) _____.

167. The equipment at the railhead will accompany the unit to Southwest Asia.

If we delete the underlined phrase, the meaning changes; therefore, we call it a _____.

217. We can use the semicolon in another instance also.

We can use it to set off conjunctive adverbs. Some grammar books refer to conjunctive adverbs as transitional expressions. For the remainder of this programmed text we will use only the term conjunctive adverb.

267. Next we will review two uses of the question mark.

As mentioned earlier, we use the question mark after a direct question.

Example: According to FM 22-100, what must a good leader BE, KNOW, and DO?

-
18. is (verb – state of being)
motivates (verb – action)
inspires (verb – action)
-

68. Neither the supply sergeant nor his clerk has a copy of the hand receipt.

118. dependent clause

168. restrictive phrase
(It answers the question “which equipment?”)

218. The words *however*, *although*, *therefore*, and *nevertheless* are examples of conjunctive adverbs.

The conjunctive adverb is normally in the middle of the sentence.

268. We can also enclose a question mark in parentheses to express doubt or uncertainty about a word or phrase within a sentence.

Example: SSG Johnson joined his unit in Afghanistan May 2003(?).

We are indicating uncertainty about the date, so we use a question mark in parentheses.

19. An adjective modifies a noun or occasionally a pronoun.

69. Let's try one.

Not only A Company but also B Company (is, are) in need of a first sergeant.

119. Now that we know how to identify dependent clauses, independent clauses, and coordinating conjunctions, we can review some rules for properly using the comma.

169. A clause or phrase that merely adds information or facts that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence is _____.

219. Technology may be invaluable; however, effective leaders understand its limits.

However is a _____. We precede it with a _____ and follow it with a _____.

269. Now let's move on to quotations marks. As the name implies, we normally use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations.

General George S Patton Jr. said, "If a man does his best, what else is there?"

This leads to another topic: using quotation marks in conjunction with other punctuation.

20. An adverb usually modifies a verb, but it can also modify an adjective or another adverb.

70. is

120. When a coordinating conjunction joins two independent clauses, put a comma before the conjunction.

170. nonrestrictive

220. conjunctive adverb

semicolon

comma

270. Always put *periods* and *commas* *inside* closing quotation marks.

Always put *colons* and *semicolons* *outside* closing quotation marks.

Place *question marks*, *exclamation points*, and *dashes* *inside* the quotation marks when they belong to the quotation and *outside* when they don't.

21. Identify any adjectives and adverbs in the following sentence:

Exercise objectives should be very specific, relevant, realistically obtainable, and measurable.

71. The final agreement rule we will review pertains to having both a singular and plural subject. If the subject contains both a singular and plural word connected by *or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, or not only . . . but also*, the verb agrees with the nearer part of the subject.

121. Leadership is both art and science, and it requires constant study, hard work, and frequent practice.

Since we have two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, we place a _____ before the _____.

171. SSG Jones, along with his family, PCSed to Ft. Bliss, Texas.

If we omitted the underlined phrase, we wouldn't change the meaning; therefore, we call it a _____.

221. Let's see if you have it.

We put a _____ before a _____
and put a _____ after it when it joins two independent clauses.

271. Correctly punctuate the following sentences:

Patton said If you can't get them to salute . . . how are you going to get them to die for their country

I hit every target exclaimed SSG Pyle

-
22. Exercise (adjective – modifying the noun objectives)
specific, relevant, obtainable, measurable (adjectives – modifying the noun objectives)
very (adverb – modifying the adjective specific)
realistically (adverb – modifying the adjective obtainable)
-

72. Neither the *first sergeant* nor his *platoon sergeants* have copies of the new SOP.
(The verb *have* agrees with the nearer subject, *platoon sergeants*.)
-

122. comma
coordinating conjunction
-

172. nonrestrictive phrase
-

222. semicolon
conjunctive adverb
comma
-

272. Patton said, “If you can’t get them to salute . . . how are you going to get them to die for their country?”
“I hit every target!” exclaimed SSG Pyle.
-

23. A conjunction is a word or phrase that joins or connects words, phrases, or clauses.

73. You try one.

Neither FM 22-100 nor any other FMs (contain, contains) step-by-step solutions for every ethical problem you will face.

123. When we have two _____ joined by a _____, put a comma before the conjunction.

173. The NCO Corps, or backbone of the Army, is a great strength of the U.S. Army.

What is the dependent phrase? Is it restrictive or nonrestrictive? Does it change the meaning of the sentence?

223. However, when the conjunctive adverb is the first word of a sentence, simply follow it with a comma.

Note in this example a comma follows the conjunctive adverb, *However*.

273. Let's try some more. Correctly punctuate the following sentences:

PFC Smith asked What time is formation

SSG Evans replied excitedly It's at 1400 and you'd better be there on time

PFC Smith asked SSG Evans if he knew that the range detail meeting was at the same time.

24. A coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so*) joins words of the same kind and same importance.

A subordinating conjunction (*if, because, although, when, unless, etc.*) joins a dependent clause to an independent clause.

74. contain

(The verb *contain* agrees with the nearer subject, FMs.)

124. independent clauses

coordinating conjunction

174. “or backbone of the Army” is the dependent phrase.

It is nonrestrictive.

No, it would not change the meaning.

224. The next mark of punctuation we will review is the colon.

Keep in mind that the colon is in no way related to the semicolon.

274. PFC Smith asked, “What time is formation?”

SSG Evans replied excitedly, “It’s at 1400 and you’d better be there on time!”

PFC Smith asked SSG Evans if he knew that the range detail meeting was at the same time.
(no other punctuation needed, this is an indirect question)

25. Identify the conjunctions in the following sentences:

A well planned, efficiently run rehearsal will reinforce earlier training, and it will increase proficiency in the critical tasks you are evaluating.

Because of its importance, you should never underestimate the value of the rehearsal.

75. Now that we've reviewed parts of speech and subject-verb agreement, we will review punctuation and some other sentence structure rules.

125. SSG Jones lives off post but prefers to live on post.

In this example, the word *but* does not join two independent clauses, so we don't need a comma.

175. Now we can state the rule for using the comma with restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses and phrases.

225. We can use a colon to introduce a list that follows a grammatically complete sentence.

Often *the following* or *as follows* precedes the colon.

275. Let's look at some other uses of quotation marks. We may also use quotation marks to enclose words used in a special sense or for a special purpose.

The urinalysis test can detect methamphetamines, or "speed."

26. and

Because

We will review conjunctions in detail later in this programmed text.

76. Once again, this programmed text is only a basic review. We cannot review every punctuation mark and every rule that applies to it. We will only address those that seem to be the most troublesome.

126. Okay, time for you to give it a try. Turn the page and correctly punctuate the sentences in frame 127.

176. Use commas to set off nonrestrictive clauses and phrases.

DO NOT use commas to set off restrictive clauses or phrases.

226. In assessing the unit, commanders use the following ratings: T – trained, P – needs practice, and U - untrained.

Notice that “In assessing the unit, commanders use the following ratings” is a grammatically complete statement. Also notice that *the following* is the key phrase indicating that a list follows and that the colon introduces the ratings.

276. We can also use quotation marks in the definition of words.

Warrior Ethos is what “compels soldiers to fight through all conditions to victory no matter how much effort it takes.”

Notice the defined word or phrase is in italics (or underline); the definition is in quotation marks.

27. A preposition is a connective that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and some other word in the sentence.

77. Let's begin by looking at the period.

127. I am in ANCOG so the first squad leader is the acting platoon sergeant

Good leaders establish goals for their subordinates and provide feedback on the accomplishment of those goals.

177. Punctuate the following sentences:

SSG Lawson accompanied by his wife attended the dining in.

All soldiers who were late for formation must report to the first sergeant.

227. Correctly punctuate the following sentence:

A training objective consists of the following three parts task condition(s) and standard.

277. The last punctuation mark we'll review is the hyphen. Before the use of computers we used the hyphen in word division at the end of a line. Computers have a feature called "text-wrapping" that eliminates the requirement for word division.

If for some reason you need to divide a word with a hyphen, check the dictionary to ensure that you put the hyphen between syllables.

28. Some prepositions show relationships in direction (*to, from, toward, down, up, at*).

78. We put a period at the end of declarative sentences. We define a declarative sentence as a sentence that makes a statement.

128. I am in ANCOC, so the first squad leader is the acting platoon sergeant. (Did you remember the period?)

The second sentence requires no punctuation. We don't have two independent clauses, so the sentence does not require a comma.

178. SSG Lawson, accompanied by his wife, attended the dining in. (accompanied by his wife is a nonrestrictive phrase)

All soldiers who were late for formation must report to the first sergeant. (no punctuation needed; "who were late for formation" is a restrictive clause and essential to the sentence)

228. A training objective consists of the following three parts: task, condition(s), and standard.

278. We also use the hyphen to form certain compound words such as:

self-development

Use the dictionary to determine compound words.

29. Other prepositions show relationships in time (*before, during, after, until, till*).

79. Soldiers train to standard.

Since this is a _____ sentence, we end it with a _____.

129. The first rule we reviewed concerned independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction. The second rule about commas concerns both dependent and independent clauses.

179. Occasionally, we can also use parentheses to set off nonrestrictive clauses and phrases. So the question should come to mind: *When do we use parentheses, and when do we use commas for nonrestrictive clauses?*

229. We can also use the colon to introduce a second independent clause that explains or illustrates the first clause.

279. Use a hyphen to join words used as a single adjective before a noun, but do not use a hyphen between an *-ly* adverb and an adjective.

Battle-focused training (adjective before a noun)

Quarterly training brief (no hyphen between the adverb *Quarterly* and the adjective *training*)

30. Still other prepositions, such as *of*, *for*, *about*, *with*, *except*, and *but* (when it means except), show many different kinds of relationships between the words they relate.

80. declarative
period

130. When a dependent clause precedes an independent clause, **use a comma** to separate them.
Don't put a comma between clauses if an independent clause precedes a dependent clause.

180. Use parentheses to set off a nonrestrictive clause or phrase when dashes would be too emphatic and commas might create confusion.

230. As a leader you should empower your subordinate leaders: give them a task, delegate the necessary authority, and let them do the work.

280. We also use a hyphen when writing out two-word numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine and two-word fractions.

fifty-six thirty-four one-fourth

31. Identify the prepositions in the following sentence:

The rehearsal will improve each leader's understanding of the concept of the operation, the fire plan, anticipated contingencies, and possible actions and reactions for various situations that may arise during the operation.

81. You also put a period at the end of imperative sentences. An imperative sentence is a sentence that expresses a command or a request.

Fall in. Report. Halt.

131. Clause A: Because their leadership is face-to-face,
Clause B: direct leaders see the outcomes of their actions almost immediately.

Clause A is _____ and clause B is _____. The comma goes after the _____ clause.

181. Many of the components, *for example, the motor*, come from outside suppliers.

The comma in this sentence might cause confusion. The next sentence illustrates the nonrestrictive clause set off with parentheses instead of commas.

Many of the components (*for example, the motor*) come from outside suppliers.

231. Now you try one. Correctly punctuate the following sentence:

The three levels of Army leadership are as follows direct organizational and strategic.

281. Punctuate with a hyphen, as appropriate, the examples below:

court martial	two thirds	decision making
hands on training	in process review	decision making process

32. of
for

82. Use a period to end indirect questions.

132. dependent
independent
dependent

182. To continue with our review of the comma, we will next review parenthetical expressions. Parenthetical expressions interrupt the flow of the sentence and are not essential to its meaning. Some examples include *on the other hand*, *by the way*, *coincidentally*, *in fact*, *indeed*, *naturally*, *of course*, *in my opinion*, etc.

232. The three levels of Army leadership are as follows: direct, organizational, and strategic.

282. court-martial two-thirds decision making
hands-on training in-process review decision-making process
Remember, when in doubt use a dictionary.

33. An interjection is a word that shows emotion. Unlike the other kinds of words, the interjection has little or no grammatical connection with the rest of the sentence.

83. The platoon sergeant asked if the first sergeant was still in the company area or if he had left for the day.

This sentence does not ask a question directly; therefore, it is an _____ question and uses a _____ at the end of the sentence.

133. Clause A: You should never underestimate the value of the rehearsal
Clause B: because of its importance.

Since clause A is _____ and precedes clause B, which is _____, we **don't put a comma** between them.

183. SSG Jones, in my opinion, is the best choice as the new platoon sergeant.

The underlined parenthetical expression interrupts the sentence and is not essential to the sentence; therefore, we use _____ to set it off.

233. Try another one. Correctly punctuate the following sentence:

Fostering a climate of dignity and respect begins with your example how you live Army values shows your people how they should live them.

283. Now that we've reviewed subjects, predicates, parts of speech, and punctuation let's review something else that can be a problem, word choice. There are many words in the English language that sound alike; the only way to be sure you use the correct word is to check the dictionary and become familiar with their meanings.

Let's look at some of these words. The list is only an example; it is not all inclusive.

34. We should punctuate mild interjections with a comma and punctuate strong interjections with an exclamation mark.

84. indirect
period

134. independent
dependent

184. commas

234. Fostering a climate of dignity and respect begins with your example: how you live Army values shows your people how they should live them.

284. accept, except to, too, two its, it's lie, lay whether, weather
than, then their, there, they're affect, effect your, you're forth, fourth

The spell check tool on your computer will only identify misspelled words, not incorrect words.

35. Identify the interjections in the following sentences:

Well, SSG Cousins might know where we can get the new field manual.

Wow! SSG Hammer ran two miles in 8 minutes.

85. The Commander wants to know if we are ready for the NTC rotation.

Since this is an _____ question, we put a _____ at the end of this sentence.

135. Correctly punctuate the following sentences:

If something should happen to you the next leader in the chain will take over.
Organizational leaders know themselves but they also know their soldiers.
The soldier said the operation went well because of the way they trained.

185. Here are some other examples of parenthetical expressions: *to tell the truth*, *on the whole*, *in the first place*, and *for example*.

You may occasionally choose to omit the commas from short parenthetical expressions (such as *also*, *too*, and *perhaps*) if you feel they do not interrupt the flow of your sentence.

235. Next we'll review the apostrophe and its use in a sentence.

285. Select the correct word in the following sentences:

Everyone was present (accept, except) SSG Jones.

Decision making is knowing (weather, whether) to decide, then *when* and *what* to decide.

36. Well

Wow

86. indirect

period

136. If something should happen to you, the next leader in the chain will take over.
(dependent clause precedes the independent clause)
Organizational leaders know themselves, but they also know their soldiers.
(two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction)
The soldier said the operation went well because of the way they trained.
(no punctuation - the independent clause precedes the dependent clause)

186. The last rule concerning the comma deals with sentence elements that might be incorrectly read together.

To assist, SSG Jones gave PFC Johnson the number to AER.

Without the comma after assist, the above sentence might have been puzzling.

236. One of the uses of the apostrophe is to show possession or ownership.

286. except -- excluding

whether -- used to introduce alternate possibilities

37. Now that we've reviewed subjects, predicates, and parts of speech, let's continue by reviewing a topic that causes problems for many: subject-verb agreement.

87. Where is the 1SG?

This sentence asks a question directly; therefore, it is a direct question and requires a question mark.

We will cover this in more detail later in this programmed text.

137. Next, we will consider a series of words in a sentence. In a sentence, a series is three or more words, phrases, or clauses, all used in the same way.

Use commas to separate three or more words used in a _____.

187. As you know nothing came out of the meeting.

Does this sentence need punctuation?

237. Possessive nouns show "belonging to." If a squad leader has (possesses) a leader book, the leader book belongs to the squad leader. It is the squad leader's leader book.

287. Let's try some more. Select the correct word in the following sentences:

SSG Creighton was quicker (then, than) SGT Jones.

People of integrity consistently act according to (principals, principles).

38. In sentences, subjects and verbs have matching forms to show their grammatical relation. We call this relation agreement.

88. Use the period, or rather a series of three periods, to indicate omissions from quoted material.

When we use three periods in this manner, we call it an ellipsis.

138. series

188. As you know, nothing came out of the meeting.

Yes, since it could be misread.

238. Possessive nouns always add an apostrophe (').

Singular possessive nouns normally also add an s ('s).

288. than -- used in comparing

principles -- a rule or a truth

39. The subject-verb must agree in person. The first person means the person(s) doing the speaking: I or we. The second person means the person(s) spoken to: you. The third person means the person(s) or things(s) spoken about: he, she, it, they, or any such noun.

89. Patton said, "Leadership . . . is the thing that wins wars."

The ellipsis, three periods, indicates that we have _____ material after the word "leadership."

Note the equal space between each period in the ellipsis.

139. We usually use the conjunction *and* or *or* to join the last two words in a series.

189. Does this sentence need punctuation? If so, punctuate it correctly.

In the morning formation is at 0800.

239. If a word does not end in *s*, we add an apostrophe plus an *s* ('*s*) to show possession.

SGT Smith's leader book; the sergeant's character; the battalion's area of responsibility

In each case, we show possession by adding an _____ and an _____ to the base word.

289. Keep up the good work.

(Two, too, to) many people think that it takes (two, too, to) people (two, too, to) change a light bulb.

(Its, It's) only a matter of time before you will be a first sergeant.

40. Wrong: I *is* late for duty.

Right: I *am* late for duty.

90. omitted

140. Normally, putting a comma before the conjunction is optional. For military writing, however, we will always put a comma before the conjunction in a series.

Example: You must be familiar with grammar, spelling, and word choice. (Notice the comma before the conjunction *and*.)

190. Yes, it requires punctuation; there is a chance someone could read it incorrectly.

In the morning, formation is at 0800.

240. apostrophe

s

290. **Too** many people think that it takes **two** people **to** change a light bulb.

It's only a matter of time before you will be a first sergeant.

Check the dictionary if you need to.

41. The subject-verb must also agree in number. Singular number refers to one thing, and plural refers to more than one.

91. If you put an ellipsis at the end of a declarative sentence, add another period to complete the sentence.

Patton said, "Moral courage is the most valuable"

141. Punctuate the following sentence correctly:

High morale comes from good leadership shared hardship and mutual respect.

191. This concludes the review on the comma. We will now move on to the semicolon.

241. Next we'll review the rule for words that are singular but that end in s.

291. Let's try two more. Select the correct word in the following sentences:

(Your, You're) the Army's leaders, and on (your, you're) shoulders rests this mission: win our wars.

(There, Their, They're) are 52 soldiers in the second platoon and as the platoon sergeant you are responsible for (there, their, they're) training.

42. Singular subjects must take singular verbs; plural subjects must take plural verbs.

92. Now that we know how to use the period, let's look at some rules for developing correct sentences.

Let's briefly review sentence structure.

142. High morale comes from good leadership, shared hardship, and mutual respect.

192. In reviewing the semicolon, we must recall one of the rules that we reviewed earlier in this programmed text.

We place a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two independent clauses.

242. The words boss, witness, and SSG Phillips are examples of words that end in s, but are singular, not plural.

292. **You're** the Army's leaders, and on **your** shoulders rests this mission: win our wars.

There are 52 soldiers in the second platoon and as the platoon sergeant you are responsible for **their** training.

43. Choose the correct verb in the following sentences:

NCOs (train, trains) soldiers to the standards published in mission training plans (MTPs) and soldiers training publications (STP).

The commander (define, defines) responsibilities and authority of his NCOs.

93. Earlier in this programmed text we reviewed conjunctions and the definition of clauses and phrases. Now we will review clauses in more depth.

143. The rule we have been reviewing also applies to clauses and phrases in a series. By definition, a phrase is a group of two or more words without a subject and a predicate; used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

We use a comma to separate _____ or more phrases.

193. The semicolon signals a greater break in thought than the comma but a lesser break than the period. It is closer to a period than to a comma in most of its uses and is often interchangeable with the period.

243. When we wish to show possession with a singular word that ends in _____, we will do the same as we did with the previous rule for showing possession, we will add an _____ plus an _____.

293. This brings us to another rule. In Army writing, we generally spell out numbers under 10 and use figures for numbers 10 or higher except when 2 or more numbers appear in a sentence and 1 of them is 10 or higher, then use figures for both numbers.

Notice that we have expressed all the numbers in the sentence above as figures.

44. train
defines

94. A dependent clause, even though it has a subject and verb, will not stand alone (will not be a complete sentence) when detached from its sentence.

What makes it dependent is a connecting word, such as *if, because, although, when, and unless*.

144. three

194. Discipline holds a team together and the warrior ethos motivates its members.

In this example, we have independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.

244. s
apostrophe
s

294. Be aware that there are some exceptions to this rule. Let's try a couple using the rule on the previous page.

AR 25-50 and *The Gregg Reference Manual* will give you more tips on using numbers in your documents.

45. Let's try some more. Choose the correct verb in the following sentences:

Leaders (determine, determines) current training proficiency levels.

Each evaluation (apply, applies) only to a portion of the total proficiency of an organization at a specific time.

95. A clause that is not a complete sentence is (a) (an) _____ clause.

145. Leadership is about living up to your ultimate responsibility, leading your soldiers in combat, and winning our nation's wars.

In this example, we have a series of _____ so we must separate them using _____.

195. Discipline holds a team together; the warrior ethos motivates its members.

In this example, we deleted the word *and* and replaced it with a _____.

245. Punctuate each of the following singular nouns to show possession:

boss witness SSG Phillips

295. This programmed text has (54, fifty-four) pages and contains (300, three hundred) frames.

There are (15, fifteen) desks in the supply room. Of those desks, (10, ten) are serviceable and (5, five) are unserviceable.

46. determine
applies

96. dependent

146. phrases
commas

196. semicolon

246. boss's witness's SSG Phillips's

296. This programmed text has **54** pages and **300** frames.

There are 15 desks in the supply room. Of those desks, 10 are serviceable and 5 are unserviceable.

47. When establishing agreement between subject and verb, disregard any intervening phrases or clauses.

97. Clause A: Because actions are the essence of leadership,

Clause B: let us begin the discussion with them.

Which clause is dependent? Why?

147. Thus far, we have said that we should separate words or phrases in a _____ with _____.

The same rule also applies to clauses used in a _____. We separate them using _____.

197. We may use a semicolon between two independent clauses if we don't join them with a coordinating conjunction.

247. Now pronounce each of these examples:

boss's

witness's

SSG Phillips's

297. Well, you're almost done. Hopefully this review has been of some assistance to you. Remember, your writing is a direct reflection of you.

48. We will review phrases and clauses later. For now, just remember:

A phrase is a group of related words but it does not contain a subject and verb.

A clause is a group of related words that does contain a subject and verb.

98. Clause A. It contains a subject and verb, but is not a complete sentence.

148. series commas

series commas

198. You may **NOT** use a comma in place of the semicolon; this would create a run-on sentence (comma splice).

248. Did you find any of the possessives hard to pronounce? You probably found it difficult to pronounce SSG Phillips's. This leads us to an exception to the rule of adding an apostrophe plus an s to singular nouns ending in an s.

If the addition of an extra syllable makes a word ending in an s hard to pronounce, add the apostrophe only.

298. In addition to correct punctuation, grammar, and word choice, one more key to successful writing is proofreading what you write.

Read it slowly. Do not read what you think it says, but read what you have actually written.

49. Select the correct verb in the following sentence:

The training assessment of mission essential tasks (enable, enables) the commander to develop the commander's training vision.

99. A clause that contains a subject and verb and is a complete sentence is (a) (an) _____ clause.

149. A clause, by definition, is a group of words that does include a subject and a verb.

199. Your character helps you know what is right and it links that knowledge to action.

The underlined portions are _____ joined by a coordinating conjunction.

What mark of punctuation would you use in this sentence?

249. So based on that rule, the correct possessives are:

boss's witness's SSG Phillips'

Another example: The decision is not up to the general; it is Congress's decision.

299. Whenever possible, have someone proofread your writing.

50. enables (disregard the intervening phrase “of mission essential tasks”)

(The training assessment enables **not** The training assessment enable)

(turn to page SH-4-5, frame 51)

100. independent

(turn to page SH-4-5, frame 101)

150. A group of words that contains a subject and a verb but is not a complete sentence is a dependent clause.

(turn to page SH-4-5, frame 151)

200. independent clauses

comma (. . . right, and . . .)

(turn to page SH-4-5, frame 201)

250. Finally, if the word is plural and ends in s, we add only the apostrophe.

(turn to page SH-4-5, frame 251)

300. There is one last thing that you should always remember. Your proficiency, or lack thereof, in punctuation, grammar, and word choice will make an impression on your reader. You are the one who decides whether that impression will be positive or negative.
