



Department of Teacher Education and School Research,
University of Oslo

Centre for Materials Science and Nanotechnology

Wadahl Hotel, 18 January, 2011

true opinions [...] have only to be awakened by questioning to become knowledge
- *Socrates*



www.skrivekurs.uio.no

- ▶ *raise questions*
- ▶ *draft answers*
- ▶ *review & improve*

∞ The Five Paragraph Method ∞

~ a tool for Academic Writing and Speaking ~

Course aim:

The main aim of this workshop will be to offer the participants tools *to exercise, to get started and to get on* with their academic writing. A selection of simple and common procedures will be presented, that will be highly relevant to the early stages of writing, and to support active rewriting and collaboration. It's a kind of writers gym: to get fit for writing.

With some exercise in this method you will always be able to write a couple of pages in half an hour.

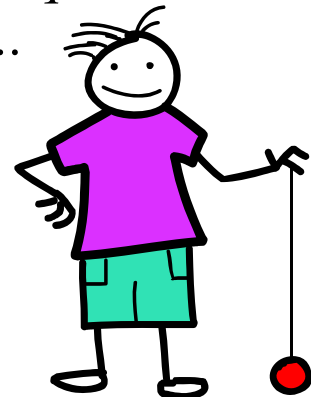
k.h.flyum@iis.uio.no



BIG or SMALL writing?

- ✓ *For adults; writing = experience + habit*
- ✓ In education writing is most often used for BIG tasks, such as compulsory *reports*, preparatory *tests*, and the *final exams*.
- ✓ After *training* like that for many years, you get into the *habit* of expecting writing to be big, and very serious. And then you keep on writing:
 1. **alone**
 2. **in the last moment**
 3. **with no time for improvement**
 4. **without looking back**
- ✓ *The aim of my writing workshops is to demonstrate SMALL writing activities that are easy to integrate into the daily labor over time: small writing and small steps. Here you get small tools; to get going, to write drafts, to pose research questions, to improve drafts and for restructuring...*

- ✓ *... small gym gadgets, to get hooked on?*





Get on writing

~ *a dialectical method* ~

Freewriting and idea forming – in 7 steps:

1. Freewriting
2. Topic sentence (the main aim)
3. The Question
4. Alternative questions
5. Review and evaluate
6. Choose
7. Explain



Each step in this exercise set is an independent *turn*; a minor writing strategy – so the entire set is a kind of collapsible pocket tool.

... and then ...

just do it: articulating a main question / problem statement is done in 7 minutes



The five paragraph sketch

~ to write the next first draft ~

In half an hour or so you will produce 1-2 typed pages – even on a rainy day. And that's a start:

- ✓ Write five sentences;
 - 1 *first*: one to state the issue.
 - 2,3,4 *then*: make three more, with points to develop the first; each point one sentence.
 - 5 *and finally*: close it all off with a sentence, to get a responsible grip at the end.
- ✓ And then you expand these sentences into paragraphs, by explaining each sentence.

= a five paragraph sketch, with
a beginning – a middle – and an end

<i>Presentation</i> (Ethos)	<i>Body</i> (Logos)	<i>Conclusion</i> (Pathos)
Prove you are considerate!	Prove you are sensible!	Prove you are responsible!



Response responsibilities

first + aid: tutorial peer review

Two *rules of thumb*, when giving constructive comments (e.g. to develop a first draft):

1. Learn to *notice what is achieved*
2. Learn to *make good guiding questions*

✓ NB!

When giving response:

- ✓ avoid giving *too much* response
- ✓ avoid *empty praise, bragging* and *pedantry*

When receiving response:

- ✓ *do not reply*, but
- ✓ *take notes*

✓ NB!! Cooperation should be established early





Q.E.D.*

= the five paragraph method =

I knew what I could make you do, and now you know too:

1. You can:
 - a. write 5 minutes at full force, on any topic; no excuses - no regrets; you can *freewrite*
 - b. articulate a *topic sentence*
 - c. turn any phrase into a *Question*
2. You can: for any topic
 - a. *name the topic*
 - b. *make 1-2-3 points to develop the topic*
(1. first; 2. second; 3. last, but not least)
 - c. *Conclude or summarize*
3. You can: give and receive review



Let this serve as your base & point of departure.
Now you just need to *exercise*, so you get to know what you can achieve.

exercise still is the way to mastery



... a bit about peer review ...

from *sense about science*

A SHORT EXPLANATION OF PEER REVIEW

When a researcher, or team of researchers, finishes a stage of work, they usually write a paper presenting their *methods, findings and conclusions*. They then send the paper to a scientific journal to be considered for publication.

If the journal's editor thinks it is suitable for their journal they send the paper to other scientists who research and publish in the same field asking them to:

- Comment on its *validity* – are the research results credible; are the design and methodology appropriate?
- Judge the *significance* - is it an important finding?
- Determine its *originality* - are the results new? Does the paper refer properly to work done by others?
- Give an opinion as to whether the paper should be *published, improved* or *rejected* (usually to be submitted elsewhere).

This process is called *peer review*. The scientists (*peers*) assessing the papers are called referees or reviewers.

[emphasis added]

(<http://www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/pdf/ShortPeerReviewGuide.pdf>)



The Contract

~ finding a Q to the A ~



Lay down a clear measure of evidence:

Question	→	Answer (= dialectic process)
<i>Claim</i>	→	<i>Proof</i> (\approx logical probation)
<i>Hypothesis</i>	→	<i>Test</i> (\approx empirical probation)
<i>Problem</i>	→	<i>Solution</i> (\approx technical recipe)

(any text or part of text may be read as an A to some Q)

Opinions on well wrought academic writing:

- ✓ *it has a form that is less difficult than its content*
- ✓ *it avoids annoying its reader with minor flaws, such as typos, ambiguities, and loose ends (e.g. “unsubstantiated opinion”)*
- ✓ *it appreciates the tradition, and joins the dialogue (address the issue with valid shared references (doxa))*
- ✓ *it consider the opposite position closely (ref. the infamous dissoi logoi exercise of arguing opposite sides of an issue)*



Four phases of writing

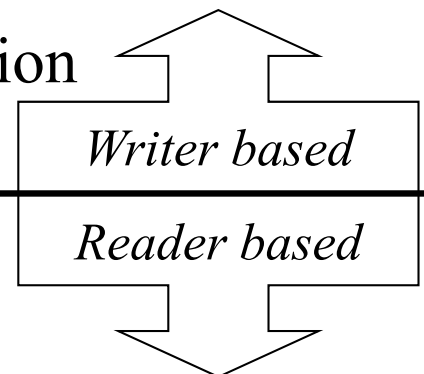
~ *the writing process* ~

www.skrivekurs.uio.no

1. *Pre-writing phase: forming the idea*
 - ✓ Writing to collect: notes, journals, summaries, commentaries
 - ✓ Free writing: doodles and drafts
 - ✓ Keywords, mindmaps, visualization
 - ✓ Plans: rough disposition and workplan

2. *Writing phase: idea representation*

- ✓ First draft
- ✓ First response



3. *Re-writing phase: improvement*

- ✓ Tuition and peer review
- ✓ Edit and develop the topic & text

4. *Completion phase: correction*

- ✓ Proofreading
- ✓ Review (*recipient reading*)

k.h.flyum@iis.uio.no



Five-to-get-going sketch

~ *the Project Note* ~

www.skrivekurs.uio.no

1. *What is the **field** you will explore?*

Presentation (brief)

2. *What is your **main question**, and why?*

Problem statement

3. *Which **means of proof** do you need?*

Material

4. *How do you want to **make use of them**?*

Method

5. *What do you hope to **achieve**?*

Conclusion (brief)

k.h.flyum@iis.uio.no



Five-to-go-on sketch

~ the Progress Report ~

- 1. What project are you working on, and how did it come about?*
- 2. What has happened up to now?*
- 3. What is most important just now?
(your most recent efforts)*
- 4. What do you think will happen next?
(next major challenge / obstacle)*
- 5. ... and what do you hope to achieve?*



IMRaD

~ *the Scientific Article* ~

This is currently the most influential format for reporting articles in scientific journals. Here it is operationalized by *questions* and brief *freewriting*:

When done with a project, you'll easily answer me:

✓ **Introduction**

1. *What did you do?*

✓ **Materials and Methods**

2. *What did you use, and how?*

✓ **Results**

3. *What happened?*

... *and* ...

✓ **Discussion**

4. *What does the result mean?*

5. *What have others said?*



Bureaucratic sketch

~ *Commercial Report?* ~

www.skrivekurs.uio.no

1. Presentation: Task / aim / mandate
2. Proposal
3. Main argumentation
(*pro*)
4. Exploration/discussion/evaluation
(*pro & con*)
5. Conclusion
(*≈ 2 above*)

k.h.flyum@iis.uio.no



Literature/theory sketch

~ *criticism - review - discussion* ~

1. *Presentation*

2. *What does the first source say?*
(... on one side ...)

3. *What else does the other say?*
(... on the other side ...)

4. *Compare and evaluate*
(... so what to believe ...)

5. *Conclusion*
(... all in all ...)

Training tip 1:

summarize/paraphrase brief articles by writing one period to each paragraph (book \approx 1 para./chap.).

Training tip 2:

This sketch is similar to a very common IMRaD-introduction:

1. Researcher A has investigated ...
2. Researcher B has investigated ...
3. Then what is left (for me) to investigate is ...



5 x types of sketches

A little game of sorts, putting 5 textual forms into play (these are *not* real genres, just exercise schemes):

www.skrivekurs.uio.no

1. Argue

Presentation	First	Second	Third	Conclusion
--------------	-------	--------	-------	------------

2. Tell

Presentation	At first	Then	Finally	Conclusion
--------------	----------	------	---------	------------

3. Thematize

Presentation	From 1. angle	From 2. angle	From 3. angle	Conclusion
--------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	------------

4. Discuss

Presentation	For	Against	Weigh/ judge	Conclusion
--------------	-----	---------	--------------	------------

5. Compare/contrast

Presentation	It is like this ...	That is similar to ...	And by that we see ...	Conclusion
--------------	---------------------	------------------------	------------------------	------------

k.h.flyum@iis.uio.no



What did you learn?

- ✓ ½ - 3 minutes oral comment?
- ✓ 3 - 15 minutes oral presentation?
- ✓ 1,5 - 2 typed pages in 30-45 minutes?
- ✓ 30 - 45 minutes oral lecture / presentation?
- ✓ 8 - 10 typed pages on a rainy day?!? **NO!#α!!**
- ✓ Tools to write, to collaborate and to organize?

The five paragraph method works, and I think that is mainly because it is manageable: it *fits the human attention capacity*. (Short term memory can handle 7+/-2 units. So we will always find recipes with 5 or fewer units more manageable.) In addition the method *fits the human attention span*. And (last, but not least,) most instrumental text models will quite easily be adapted to the method.



Department of Teacher Education
and School Development, University of Oslo



www.skrivekurs.uio.no

A brief introduction to arrogance and vanity

*Classical rhetoric
for
modern academics*

k.h.flyum@iis.uio.no



to serve enlightenment

Why do we need argumentation and discussion?

1. ***To avoid bloodshed*** [democracy]
exercising our conflicts with words
2. ***To develop consensus*** [e. g. parliamentarism]
(common ground in *questions of contention*)
3. ***To educate citizens*** [school]
able to present their own case
4. ***To remove doubt*** [academia]
(safer ground in *questions of doubt*)
5. ***To illuminate the issue*** [civic discourse]
- for the common good



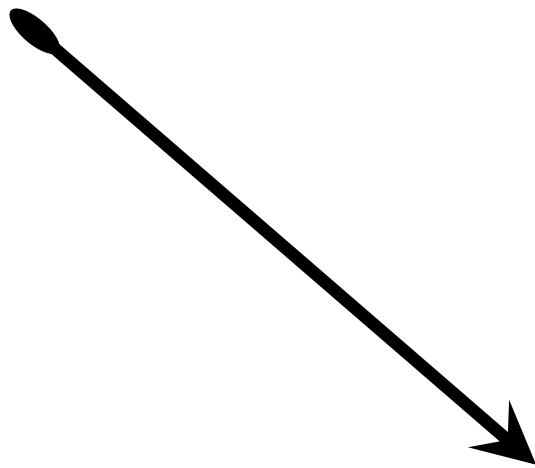
*And then a basic democratic competence emerge:
to accept both counterarguments and defeat with
dignity*



A very simple aim...

✓ *Peitho*; persuasion:

The word strikes like the path of an arrow; from what the audience already feel, mean, believe and know (*doxa*) ...



... to what you want them to feel, mean, believe and know



The 5 phases of speech

Proof to the issue at hand must be:

1. Found: **inventio** (*heuresis*)
2. Sorted: **dispositio** (*taxis*)
3. Articulated: **elocutio** (*lexis*)
4. Remembered: **memoria** (*mneme*)
5. Delivered: **actio** (*hypokrisis*)



3 main rhetorical dimensions

Rhetoric investigate and evaluate

- **Kairos** the situation/exigence
- **Doxa** the given knowledge & language
- **Aptum** the adaptation to audience

Kairos also concern courage:
... as the moment of daring; the leap of faith





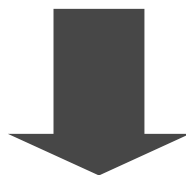
Pistis (trust)

The 3 kinds of rhetorical proof
delectare, docere et movere:

✓ **Ethos** *(the speaker)*
Show the audience your *consideration*,
and you will win their *trust*



✓ **Logos** *(the word & issue)*
Give the audience *reasonable* reasons:
explanations and descriptions, and they
will repeat them (they are *convinced*)



✓ **Pathos** *(the audience)*
Give the audience *motivation*, and you
will win their *will to act*



Memoria

The need for memory-aids vary; e. g. with your confidence or the restraints of the situation.

You may:

- 1. Memorize**
(by heart, or read off the page)
- 2. Extemporize with supports**
(using bulleted lists, slides or cuecards)
- 3. Improvise**
(using free direct speech or dialogue)



Actio

Delivery is mostly about gaining *presence!*

- ✓ To stand firm
- ✓ To hang loose
- ✓ To *not* flinch; fumble; pant; waver or rush
- ✓ To breathe
- ✓ To see
- ✓ To enjoy the moment
- ✓ To end in / on time
- ✓ To ask and answer
- ✓ To alternately *speak to* or *talk with*
- ✓ To throw the manuscript away?

... *and last, but not least:*

✓ ***To Hide the Art***