

# The Effectiveness of Drama-Based Instruction in Jordanian EFL Students' Writing Performance

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## Abstract

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Despite a plethora of research on the utility of drama in the foreign language classroom (e.g., Boudreault, 2010; Gorjian, Moosavinia, & Jabripour, 2010; Zafeiriadou, 2009; Ziltener, 2011), less research addresses its effect on skill development (e.g., Al-Rabadi & Bataineh, 2015; Bataineh, Al-Rabadi, & Smadi, 2013). This study examines the potential effectiveness of drama in improving Jordanian EFL eighth-grade students' writing performance. A purposeful sample of two intact sections of 80 male students was selected from a secondary school in Irbid, Jordan. Using a quasi-experimental design, the two sections were randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group. The groups were pre-tested, treated, and post-tested. The instructional material comprised a story entitled *The Boy from the Past* from the students' own textbook, Action Pack 8. While the control group was taught per the guidelines of the Teacher's Book, the experimental group was taught a nine-week dramatization of the story, focusing on five aspects of writing, namely, thesis statement, unity, completeness and coherence, wording and cohesion, and organization. The findings reveal statistically significant differences in the students' performance on all five aspects in favor of the experimental group. The research concludes with relevant implications for writing instruction and teacher education.

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**Keywords:** coherence, cohesion, drama, writing instruction

## Introduction

Through our collective experience as educational practitioners, we have noticed a general weakness in writing among students. Because writing, often dubbed the neglected skill, constitutes a challenge for language teachers and learners alike (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003; Duncan, 1991) and the weakness reported for the majority of Jordanian EFL students in writing (Al-khreshah, 2010; Rababah, 2003), this study is an attempt to look at drama as an alternative means of instructional delivery which can potentially improve writing instruction in the Jordanian EFL classroom.

Drama-based instruction is an umbrella term for a host of instructional tools (Cawthon & Dawson, 2009), such as role-play, simulation, scenario enactment, interactive games, improvisation, mime, song, and charades, designed to be used alongside the prescribed curriculum. Drama-based instruction is alternatively referred to as strategic interaction (Di Pietro, 1987), creative dramatics (Wan Yee, 1990), drama activities (Dougill, 1994), creative drama (Dodge, 1998), drama or drama techniques (Chauhan, 2004; Maley & Duff, 2001), and drama in education for language learning (Healy, 2004).

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Drama as a resource in the classroom has been around since the beginning of the twentieth century, but most of its manifestations escaped documentation (Zafeiriadou, 2009). Calls for the use of drama in the language classroom were made as early as the 1970s, with steadily growing developments in the 1980s. Via (1987) was probably the first to defend the use of drama-based techniques in language teaching and learning, but the unprecedented subsequent interest in drama is most likely the result of the shift to communicative language teaching approaches, which have singled out communicative competence as the ultimate goal of language instruction.

Thus, drama as a classroom resource is a fairly recent concept. Over the past three decades, a plethora of research has hailed drama as a potentially powerful tool in education at large and language education in particular (Bournot-Trite, Belliveau, Spiliotopoulos, & Seror, 2007; Farrington, 2005; Kardash & Wright, 1987; Maley & Duff, 2001; McCaslin, 1990; Moore & Caldwell, 1993; Needlands, 1993; Paran, 2006; Phillips, 2003; Via, 1987; Wagner, 1998; Wan Yee, 1990; Whiteson, 1996), probably because it works through the learner's experiential sense, as they see, hear, say, and do. In Via's (1987) words:

[f]ew would disagree that drama has at last established itself as a means of helping people learn another language. A great deal of our everyday learning is acquired through experience, and in the language classroom drama fulfills that experiential need. (p. 110)

### **Benefits and Challenges of Drama in Language Learning**

The literature (see, for example, Aita, 2009; Dodson, 2002; Farrington, 2005; Maley & Duff, 2001; Peregoy & Boyle, 2008; Wray & Medwell, 1991) suggests numerous academic and personal benefits for drama in the language classroom. Not only does it naturally integrate the basic language skills, but drama also integrates the verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication, attends to the cognitive and affective domains, fosters awareness of self and others, builds learner autonomy, ownership and self-esteem, and brings to life fully contextualized, fluent classroom interaction in the target language through its focus on meaning and exploratory learning under the instructor's supervision and facilitation.

The use of drama in language teaching and learning has probably been facilitated by the fact that virtually no special training is needed for either the teacher or their students (Rauen, 1990), as drama is not used "for the benefit of an audience, but to bring internal and interpersonal rewards (such as self-confidence and mutual understanding in the foreign language)" (p. 273).

Drama encompasses any activity in which one engages in portraying oneself or another person in an imaginary situation (Holden, 1981). Role play is defined as a drama-based technique which requires a person to take on a role that is real or imaginary in a hypothetical situation (Wan Yee, 1990). In the language classroom, role play is an activity which gives the students opportunities to practice the language aspects of actual real-life roles (Livingstone, 1983).

Drama-based instruction in general and role play in particular lend themselves beautifully to learner-centeredness (Aldavero, 2008; Maley & Duff, 2001; Phillips, 2003). Role play allows learners, even those with limited proficiency, to abandon their traditional role as passive recipients of teachers' input to become active participants in the teaching/learning process. Some research (e.g., Maley & Duff, 2001; Phillips, 2003) even suggests that drama activities may motivate language learners and teachers alike.

Thus, through drama, true learning is most likely to occur (Fogg, 2001; Poorman, 2002), as the learner is no longer a passive recipient of the teacher's input, but rather an active meaning-maker who does more than simply process given information (Jarvis, Odell, & Troiano, 2002). No longer do teachers feel inclined to spoon-feed their students, but instead allow them the opportunity to "communicate totally" as drama bridges the gap between the classroom and the world beyond (Holden, 1981, p. 7), which would not only maximize student activity and motivation (Matsuzaki-Carreira, 2005) but also increase learning (Fogg, 2001; Rieg & Paquette, 2009), foster positive attitudes (Gorjian *et al.*, 2010), and cater for diverse levels of proficiency (Livingstone, 1983).

Nevertheless, the literature points out the challenges facing drama-based instruction, especially with language learners who are almost always familiar with traditional, teacher-centered approaches. Student-centered drama-based approaches are often foreign to these learners, as their English learning has most likely been confined to grammar and reading skills (e.g., Liu, 2000; Louis, 2002; Stinson, 2009).

Like other drama-based instructional tools, role-play is potentially powerful in the language classroom. As students learn from one another, they learn cooperation, empathy for others, decision-making skills, and knowledge exchange (Boudreault, 2010), not to mention that role play fosters interpersonal skills (through active participation, initiative and leadership, team dynamics, and compromise) which may be readily transferred into real-life exchanges (Ettkin & Snyder, 1972; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992).

Previous research (e.g., Catterall, 2002; Miccoli, 2003; Podlozny, 2000; Yau, 1992) suggests that writing development may be more effectively supported by drama-based instructional tools than more conventional instructional delivery (e.g., discussion, modeling). As drama is used to supplement instruction, it may serve as a catalyst for simultaneously addressing different student proficiency levels. In an improvisation, for example, less-able students may work in groups on easier roles whereas more-able students recreate more complex characters over time. Besides, using drama potentially maximizes learners' exposure to and exploration of the linguistic and conceptual aspects of the written text, which may allow—otherwise reluctant—learners a new entry point to writing (Gasparro & Falletta, 1994; Rowe, Fitch, & Bass, 2003), as they role play and argue from a certain character's point of view (Radavich, 1986).

Furthermore, drama lends itself not only to learner-centered instruction but also to skill integration. Unlike traditional teacher-centered instruction, which essentially seeks passive recipients of formal knowledge about the target language, learner-centered instruction seeks learners' active involvement in the instructional process, as learners participate actively in activities which are designed to capitalize on both their needs and interests (Nunan, 1988). Similarly, drama lends itself readily to the integration of the four language skills, as one activity flows naturally to the next with the learners verbally expressing their ideas, listening to others' opinions, reading related texts, and working on projects (Annarella, 2000; Stevick, 1990).

Even though the ability to transfer what is learned to new contexts is an indicator of learning (Darling-Hammond & Austin, 2003; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), the literature suggests that transfer is not necessarily an automatic outcome of learning and that language learners often struggle with transferring learning to new situations in and outside the language classroom. This challenge is doubly serious for foreign language learners, as they are essentially expected to produce grammatically accurate, albeit often isolated, sentences. The traditional EFL classroom hardly allows learners opportunities to use language in a real communicative manner which involves the exchange of ideas, emotions, and feelings (Chauhan, 2004), and, thus, students who may easily conjugate verbs in a foreign language may find themselves unable to remember how to use these verbs correctly in conversation (Darling-Hammond & Austin, 2003).

Thus, curricular objectives in using drama may include fostering creativity, inventiveness, curiosity, questioning skills, and self-perception. Guided imagery, for example, is one dramatic technique which can be used as a pre-reading experience, a prewriting or brainstorming experience, as the beginning of the writing process, and as an aid to develop listening and speaking skills (Raquel, 2011). Drama also has the potential to facilitate the ESL/EFL learner's cognitive development in creative thinking, problem solving, writing, and negotiating (O'Neill & Lambert, 1982; Sutton, 1998).

### **Effects of Drama on Writing**

For the purpose of this paper, we have opted for reviewing research on the effect of drama on writing, which we found to be relatively meager compared to that on other skills. Further, we could not find much local research on the effect of drama on students' writing. A thorough survey of the literature in both English and Arabic revealed only two studies, by Al-Rabadi and Bataineh (2015) and by Bataineh *et al.* (2013), which is the reason this section is essentially limited to a review of research on other student populations.

Drama has been reported to have a positive effect on writing performance of young and adult learners alike. Cremin, Goouch, Blakemore, Goff, and Macdonald (2006), Dicks and Le Blanc (2009), Rowe, Fitch, and Bass (2003), and Ziltener (2011) reported the positive effects of drama on children's writing.

At the tertiary level, Janudom and Wasanasomsithi (2009), Kao and O'Neill (1998), Liu (2000), and Ryan-Scheutz and Colangelo (2004) examined the effects of drama on the written output of ESL university students. They reported positive effects for instructional drama on ESL development in general and writing achievement in particular, as it facilitated students' engagement with language, promoted peer collaborations, and created a positive class atmosphere.

Similarly, Bataineh *et al.* (2013) and Al-Rabadi and Bataineh (2015) examined the effects of literature-based instruction on Jordanian tertiary-level students' oral and written communicative performance. Using a host of qualitative and quantitative instruments (e.g., pre- and post-tests, interviews, observation, journal writing, and role-play evaluation of oral proficiency), they reported significant differences in students' communicative performance, in favor of literature-based instruction.

The research reviewed in this section suggests that drama can be a useful technique for teaching writing, as it potentially enables students to practice their writing in a comfortable, non-threatening atmosphere. Relative to the plethora of international research on drama-based instruction, the little local research reviewed above needs to be supplemented to be better able to assess the topic in this particular context and, simultaneously, bridge the existing gap in the literature.

This study is meant to examine the potential effectiveness of drama-based instruction in improving Jordanian eighth-grade students' writing performance. This and similar research is needed since a sizable number of Jordanian learners are reported to be weak in writing (Al-khresheh, 2010; Rababah, 2003). This study may also help teachers by introducing a technique that may improve their writing instruction.

### **Research Questions**

This study aims at investigating the effects of using drama as an instructional technique on eighth-grade students' writing performance, both overall and on certain aspects. More specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent, if any, does drama-based instruction affect Jordanian EFL eighth-grade students' overall writing performance?
2. To what extent, if any, does drama-based instruction affect Jordanian EFL eighth-grade students' writing performance in the aspects of thesis statement, unity, completeness and coherence, wording and cohesion, and organization?

### **Methodology**

#### **Participants**

A purposeful sample of two intact eighth-grade sections, of 40 students each, was drawn from a school for boys in Jordan. The two sections were randomly divided into an experimental and control group with a coin toss. The two groups were given the same material, a short story entitled *The Boy from the Past* taken from their own textbook, Action Pack 8.

#### **Data Collection**

##### ***The Control Group***

Per the instructions of the Teacher Book, the teacher began by asking the students to read the episode silently, during which he wrote the difficult vocabulary on the board. He then asked a student to read the episode aloud, after which he asked the class to guess the meaning of some vocabulary which he wrote on the board. Next, he

asked comprehension questions about the episode and the students responded. Subsequently, the teacher explained the grammatical structures in each episode.

### ***The Experimental Group***

The teacher divided the students into groups to role play the dramatized scenes, after which he asked general questions about those scenes (e.g., the main idea, characters) and offered explanations whenever needed. He also directed the activities and provided assistance to both individuals and groups. The teacher followed set procedures for each session. For example, if the lesson was about the *thesis statement*, the teacher explained how to write paragraphs which are clearly connected to the thesis statement, provided model paragraphs, and helped the students produce their own paragraphs.

As for writing, the presentation varied from one episode to another. For example, in the third episode, the teacher divided the students into small groups. The students in each group wrote and discussed five questions about that episode. The teacher elicited a few questions from the students and wrote them on the board for a whole-class discussion.

### **Instructional Materials**

For the experimental group, *The Boy from the Past* was rewritten into thirteen scenes in dialogue format and taught through dramatization in fifteen sessions over a period of nine weeks. However, the control group was taught traditionally using the techniques suggested in the *Teacher's Book*. Both groups were taught by one cooperating teacher who had been trained by the researchers.

### **Instruments**

The instruments were the writing performance pre-and post-tests and occasional classroom observation by the researchers. The purpose of the pre-test (Appendix A), whose content was slightly different from that of the post-test, was to assess student writing and establish equivalence between the two groups. In the post-test (Appendix B), additional content was added along the aspects of thesis statement, unity, coherence and completeness, wording and cohesion, and organization and assigned weights, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1  
*Weights of the Writing Components in the Post-Test*

Component	Score
Thesis statement	5
Unity	3
Completeness and Coherence	5
Wording and Cohesion	29
Organization	8
Total	50

Unstructured classroom observation, albeit discontinuous, was done to gain deeper insights and to have better ability to make sense of the quantitative data collected through the tests. A total of six sessions were attended by the researchers, three of which were at intervals marking the second, fifth, and eighth weeks of the treatment.

The dramatized script, lesson plans, and pre- and post-tests were all checked for validity by a jury of experts from the colleges of Education and Art at Yarmouk University, Jordan. The validation jury was asked to examine the items with regard to purpose, comprehensibility, clarity, and wording. The jury's suggestions were all taken into account and the modifications were made prior to the use of the instruments for training and data

collection. The reliability of the pre- and post-tests was computed using Chronbach Alpha, which yielded overall reliability coefficients of 0.77 and 0.78, respectively.

The observation was done without a validity or reliability check because no formal checklist was designed to carry it out. One researcher was present at every stage of the treatment (6 sessions) to observe and gain insights into the dynamics of the sessions, interaction among the participants, and attitudes towards drama-based instruction.

### Findings and Discussion

The study examined the effect of drama-based instruction on Jordanian eighth-grade students' writing performance, as opposed to the traditional method (outlined in the Teacher Book). To ensure equivalence between the experimental and control groups, they sat for the pre-test just before the beginning of the treatment, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2  
*Means, Standard Deviations and T-Test of the Groups' Writing Performance on the Pre-Test*

Group	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Experimental	6.20	1.59	0.314	78	0.75
Control	6.10	1.24			

n= 40

Table 2 shows no statistically significant differences between the overall writing performance of the control and the experimental groups (at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) on the pre-test, which indicates equivalence among the students of the two groups.

At the conclusion of the nine-week treatment, the post-test was administered to the two groups, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3  
*Means, Standard Deviations and T-Test of the Groups' Writing Performance on the Post-Test*

Group	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Experimental	31.58	5.25	5.27	78	0.00
Control	25.63	4.83			

n=40

Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations of the two groups' overall writing performance on the post-test. The experimental group outperformed the control group, with means of 31.58 and 25.63, respectively. Table 3 also shows a statistically significant difference (at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the two groups' overall writing performance on the post-test, which can be attributed to drama-based instruction.

These findings reveal the effectiveness of drama-based instruction in improving the participants' overall writing performance. The researchers observed that not only has drama-based instruction provided students with valuable opportunities for practice, cooperation, and reflection on their writing, but it also reduced anxiety and allowed them opportunities to grow as writers. They also observed that as the program went on, more students started approaching the teacher with queries and drama-related feedback.

To answer the second research question, which seeks to determine the potential effect of drama-based instruction on the students' performance (on the aspects of thesis statement, unity, completeness and coherence,

wording and cohesion, and organization), the means, standard deviations were computed, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

*Means, Standard Deviations and t-test of the Students' Performance on the Five Aspects on the Post-Test*

Component	Group	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Thesis Statement	Experimental	3.08	1.10	2.74	78	0.007
	Control	2.45	0.93			
Unity	Experimental	1.63	0.54	2.40	78	0.019
	Control	1.35	0.48			
Completeness and Coherence	Experimental	2.80	1.26	2.53	78	0.013
	Control	2.13	1.11			
Wording and Cohesion	Experimental	17.58	4.60	2.80	78	0.006
	Control	14.88	3.98			
Organization	Experimental	6.50	1.26	5.55	78	0.000
	Control	4.83	1.43			

n=40

Table 4 shows higher means for the experimental group on the various components of the post-test. It also shows statistically significant differences between the writing performance of the experimental and control groups on all five aspects, in favor of the former, as detailed below.

### Thesis Statement

The findings reveal statistically significant differences in the students' mean scores on the *thesis statement* component, in favor of drama-based instruction. Five weeks into the treatment, the researchers noticed that the students could not only begin their writing with correct thesis statements relatively effortlessly but also identify thesis statements written by the researcher or their peers. A case in point is the two groups' performance on this aspect on the post-test. Whereas the majority of the experimental group students correctly judged the sentence, *my family moved to the United States from Jordan*, as an acceptable thesis statement, many of their control group counterparts incorrectly judged the fragment, *the importance of the writing class in high school*, as an acceptable thesis statement.

This result may be readily explained, as the teacher diligently drew students' attention to the significance of the *thesis statement* from the onset of the treatment. The novelty of the treatment and the students' interest in and enthusiasm for the lessons may have also added to their superior performance to that of the control group.

### Unity

The results reveal a statistically significant, albeit smaller, difference in students' performance on the *unity* component. For instance, on the post-test, most of the experimental group students correctly identified, *several weeks later, Leonov's spacewalk was followed by that of U.S.*, as the off-topic sentence whereas many of those in the control group incorrectly identified the sentence, *one Voshkhod cosmonaut experimented with weightlessness by taking a spacewalk*, as the off-topic sentence.

These researchers believe that the slight improvement is brought about by the relative difficulty of *unity* in writing, which may signal a need for more effort on the part of the teacher and students on this aspect. Probably, if the teacher had emphasized *unity* a bit more during the treatment, the students' scores on the *unity* component of the test may have improved further.

### **Completeness and Coherence**

The findings show statistically significant differences in the students' scores on the *completeness and coherence* component, in favor of the experimental group. For example, many of the students in the experimental group chose *I don't exactly know how old Tim's father is* as the best answer for the first question about completeness and coherence, while many of the students in the control group opted for the erroneous *My husband will phone the tour company and ask for the price of the trip to Egypt*. The researchers believe that this improvement is an indication of the participants' growth as writers over the course of the treatment. In other words, they became better and more confident writers, which may be readily attributed to drama-based instruction.

### **Wording and Cohesion**

The findings show statistically significant differences in the students' scores on *wording and cohesion* as a result of drama-based instruction. Even though marked improvement was observed in the students' scores on the overall test and on the various components, *wording and cohesion* improved most. The researchers believe this was caused by the intensive practice involved in drama-based instruction which, in turn, signals the students' growth in writing over the course of the treatment.

### **Organization**

The findings reveal statistically significant differences in the students' scores on *organization*, which can be attributed to drama-based instruction. Significant improvement was observed as most of the experimental group students, for example, chose the correct, *It seemed like an ordinary day when she got up that morning, but Lynda was about to embark on the worst day of her life* to be the first sentence whereas many of their control group counterparts chose the erroneous, *First, she fell in the bathtub because her mother forgot to rinse out the bath oil*. This result makes a lot of sense as drama-based instruction lends itself readily to *organization* which is an inherent component of the activities.

To sum up, the findings reveal significant differences both in the overall writing performance and on the five aspects under study between the control and experimental groups, in favor of the latter, which suggests that drama-based instruction positively affects students' writing performance. These findings are consistent with the findings of the previous literature reviewed within (e.g., Al-Rabadi & Bataineh, 2015; Bataineh et al., 2013; Boudreault, 2010; Gorjian et al., 2010; Ziltener, 2011) which show drama as a useful technique for creating better writers and developing more confident, expressive language learners.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Research**

As this research confirms previous findings (e.g., Bournot-Trites et al., 2007; Even, 2008, 2011; Paran, 2006; Stinson & Winston, 2011; Wan Yee, 1990) that drama-based instruction is beneficial for language teaching and learning, it may be imperative to raise awareness of the utility of this technique among school administrators and other stakeholders alike. Research suggests that, despite this acclaim, school administrations view drama as an essentially "frivolous" (Gaudart, 1990, p. 245), "expendable frill" (Wagner, 1998, p. 8), and "superfluous activity that detracts from the serious business of language learning" (Belz, 2002, p. 14).

Thus, more short- and long- term research should be conducted not only to further probe the potentials, challenges and complexities of drama use in the foreign language classroom, but also to champion drama-based instruction and raise awareness of its utility amongst school administrations and other key stakeholders.

The majority of the research reviewed within focuses on either younger learners (e.g., Bournot-Trites et al., 2007; Dicks & Le Blanc, 2009; Ziltener, 2011) or tertiary contexts (e.g., Janudom & Wasanasomsithi, 2009; Kao & O'Neill, 1998; Miccoli, 2003). These researchers call for the expansion of this research through multi-sourced classroom-based investigations, which would further our understanding of the actual effects of drama-based instruction on learners' language development and classroom dynamics.

Furthermore, an investigation into the perceptions and attitudes of teachers and students, who are essentially versed in traditional teaching and learning, towards drama-based instruction is highly recommended,



as these attitudes may constitute one of the challenges facing wider implementation of drama-based instruction in the foreign language classroom in Jordan and beyond.

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**Appendix A  
The Pre-Test**

Indicate whether or not the following thesis statements are good statements and, whenever you can, explain why you think so.

a. My family moved to the United States from Jordan.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

b. Because the American school system is different from many other school systems, students often have difficulties in adapting.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

c. Life in Jordan is hard.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

d. Although I do not speak English well, there are many ways for me to interact with other students and make friends.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

e. The importance of the writing class in high school.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

Consider the following thesis statement (written in italics). Do you think it is a strong thesis statement? If not, how can it be improved?

To become successful writers, students should follow some important steps. Just attending is not enough. *There is a need for a good background in grammar and vocabulary, skills in writing essays, and skills in editing.* Learning to be a successful writer involves a lot of hard work.

.....  
.....  
.....

III. Choose the answer which best completes the sentences below it.

1. \_\_\_\_\_, but I'd guess he must be about sixty.

- a. My husband will phone the tour company and ask for the price of the trip to Egypt
- b. I don't remember how much the shop assistant told us those jeans cost
- c. Frank weighed himself and was horrified to see he was eighty kilos
- d. Tom maybe heavier than you, but don t forget that he is also taller
- e. I don t know exactly how old Tim's father is

2. \_\_\_\_\_, most citizens of the sultanate actually live in poverty.

- a. Since the Sultan of Brunei is one of the wealthiest people in the world
- b. Considering that the largest concentration of urban population is in Brunei's capital

- c. Because Brunei earns billions of dollars a year from petroleum export
  - d. When Queen Elizabeth paid on an official visit to the Sultan of Brunei in 1998
  - e. Although the average income in Brunei is among the world's highest
3. The cost of living in Alaska is extremely high, \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. because nearly everything has to be imported
  - b. whereas Eskimos live in ice house called igloos
  - c. due to the fact that only about 500,000 people live there
  - d. unless you really enjoy extremely cold weather and snow
  - e. because nearly everything has to be imported
4. In Africa, summer starts in the middle of December, \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. however the inhabitants do not have much opportunity to take advantage of this
  - b. while in Europe, the season begins in the middle of June
  - c. when vast stretches of land were frequently covered in snow
  - d. but they're going to change this system so as to be like the rest of the world
  - e. though the modern twelve-month calendar is of little use to them
5. \_\_\_\_\_, so the family of the victim were outraged.
- a. They won their case and the burglar had to go to jail
  - b. The girl completely recovered from the brutal attack
  - c. They were relieved to see the murderer locked up in prison
  - d. The murderer was only given a two and a half year prison sentence
  - e. The judge had given the robber a harsh punishment

IV. Fill in the blanks in the text below with the appropriate word from the list.

nevertheless	in addition	as a rule	however	due to
on the whole	as a result of	to begin with	furthermore	for instance
in general	as well as			

Many young people choose to continue their education at colleges or universities in English-speaking countries such as Britain, Australia or America. \_\_\_\_\_, while studying overseas has clear advantages, it is not without its problems. In this essay, both points of view will be considered \_\_\_\_\_, studying overseas has significant academic benefits. \_\_\_\_\_, the standard of education is very high \_\_\_\_\_ the up to-date equipment and resources that are available in colleges and universities. \_\_\_\_\_, the quality of teaching is also high, as teachers and lecturers are well-qualified professionals who are aware of all the latest developments in their fields of interest. \_\_\_\_\_, the qualifications which a student obtains are usually valid anywhere in the world. \_\_\_\_\_ the obvious academic benefits, students also gain experience of another culture, improve their language skills and meet many new people. \_\_\_\_\_ living away from their families, they become more independent, tolerant and emotionally mature, all of which aids their personal development.

\_\_\_\_\_, in some cases, studying abroad can have quite negative effects. \_\_\_\_\_, if students are insufficiently prepared academically, they might have difficulties understanding lectures or writing assignments. \_\_\_\_\_, young students may have problems adjusting to a different culture with its unfamiliar climate, food and lifestyle. \_\_\_\_\_ this, they may experience much loneliness and home sickness. A final problem could be that some students adapt so successfully to Western culture that they have problems readjusting when they finally return home.

\_\_\_\_\_, although there can be problems in studying abroad, most students, with appropriate preparation and support, should be able to overcome these obstacles \_\_\_\_\_, the advantages of an overseas education far outweigh any of the disadvantages described above.

**Appendix B**  
**The Post-Test**

I. Indicate whether or not the following thesis statements are good statements and, whenever you can, explain why you think so.

1. My family moved to the United States from Jordan.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Because the American school system is different from many other school systems, students often have difficulties in adapting.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Life in Jordan is hard.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Although I do not speak English well, there are many ways for me to interact with other students and make friends.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

5. The importance of the writing class in high school.

acceptable

unacceptable

.....  
.....  
.....

II. Read the following paragraph and answer the questions below

Each of the Russian manned space exploration projects had specific major goals. For example, the Vostok project was designed to test whether or not human beings could survive and function in outer space. For another example, the Voshkhod project was intended to find out whether people could work in the weightless environment of space. One Voshkhod cosmonaut experimented with weightlessness by taking a "spacewalk." That is, he floated in a spacesuit outside his Voshkhod spacecraft, connected to it by a tether. The cosmonaut to do this was Alexei Leonov. Several weeks later, Leonov's spacewalk was followed by that of U.S. astronaut Ed White. Finally, the Soyuz project, with three cosmonauts, had goals of testing spacecraft and spaceflight skills so that people could fly long missions in Earth orbit.

1. Find the sentence that is off-topic.

.....  
.....

2. Why did you choose that sentences?

.....  
.....

3. How can you improve the paragraph?

.....

.....

III. Fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate reference word from the list below.

in addition	besides	finall y	firs t
and	althoug h	also	

Writing a paper is often difficult and many times rewarding \_\_\_\_\_, I don't always know what to write about, so I often need to research, talk to people, \_\_\_\_\_ think about what I know before I come up with a strong topic \_\_\_\_\_ writing a paper takes time and energy. Time is needed to select and narrow a topic, to generate information and structure ideas, to knock out draft after draft, \_\_\_\_\_ to edit for my usual typos and mechanical errors. \_\_\_\_\_ the time involved, energy (and lots of food to produce it) is needed so I can produce my best work. \_\_\_\_\_ writing a paper is sometimes difficult, it can be very rewarding. I enjoy seeing words which say exactly what I want them to. I \_\_\_\_\_ feel proud when everything "clicks." \_\_\_\_\_ knowing that I've done my best work and earned a good grade too are strong personal rewards.

IV. Analyze the following paragraph for cohesion (reference and conjunctions).

The Wind and the Sun

The Wind said to the Sun, "I am much stronger than you." "You are not," replied the Sun. "I can prove my strength," said the Wind. "See that man? I will blow off his hat and coat. Watch me do it now!" He blew with all his might, but the harder he blew the more the man wrapped his coat around him. Then the Sun had a turn. His happy beams calmed the air, warmed the earth and made the man feel so hot that he took off his hat and coat. It is better to be gentle than rough.

1. Reference

The Wind: \_\_\_\_\_

The Sun \_\_\_\_\_

That man \_\_\_\_\_

2. Connectives

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

V. Choose the answer which best completes each of the sentences below it.

1. \_\_\_\_\_, but I'd guess he must be about sixty.
  - a. My husband will phone the tour company and ask for the price of the trip to Egypt
  - b. I don't remember how much the shop assistant told us those jeans cost
  - c. Frank weighed himself and was horrified to see he was eighty kilos
  - d. Tom maybe heavier than you, but don t forget that he is also taller
  - e. I don t know exactly how old Tim's father is
2. \_\_\_\_\_, most citizens of the sultanate actually live in poverty.
  - a. Since the Sultan of Brunei is one of the wealthiest people in the world
  - b. Considering that the largest concentration of urban population is in Brunei's capital
  - c. Because Brunei earns billions of dollars a year from petroleum export
  - d. When Queen Elizabeth paid on an official visit to the Sultan of Brunei in 1998
  - e. Although the average income in Brunei is among the world's highest
3. The cost of living in Alaska is extremely high, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. because nearly everything has to be imported

- b. whereas Eskimos live in ice house called igloos
  - c. due to the fact that only about 500,000 people live there
  - d. unless you really enjoy extremely cold weather and snow
  - e. because nearly everything has to be imported
4. In Africa, summer starts in the middle of December, \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. however the inhabitants do not have much opportunity to take advantage of this
  - b. while in Europe, the season begins in the middle of June
  - c. when vast stretches of land were frequently covered in snow
  - d. but they're going to change this system so as to be like the rest of the world
  - e. though the modern twelve-month calendar is of little use to them
6. \_\_\_\_\_, so the family of the victim were outraged.
- a. They won their case and the burglar had to go to jail
  - b. The girl completely recovered from the brutal attack
  - c. They were relieved to see the murderer locked up in prison
  - d. The murderer was only given a two and a half year prison sentence
  - e. The judge had given the robber a harsh punishment

VI. Arrange the following sentences in chronological order by adding numbers 1-8 in the space provided.

- a. \_\_\_ As she walked out the door, she dropped all of her school books and her math homework flew away.
- b. \_\_\_ Then she spilled orange juice on the outfit she had spent hours putting together for school pictures.
- c. \_\_\_ It seemed like an ordinary day when she got up that morning, but Lynda was about to embark on the worst day of her life.
- d. \_\_\_ That night, she cried herself to sleep.
- e. \_\_\_ First, she fell in the bathtub because her mother forgot to rinse out the bath oil.
- f. \_\_\_ When she changed, she messed up the French braid her mother had put in her hair.
- g. \_\_\_ Lynda's side of the car was damaged the most, and she ended up with a broken arm.
- h. \_\_\_ Once she made it to the car she thought everything would be all right.

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### About the Authors

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