

WRITING DEVELOPMENT

In her book, *The Writing Revolution* Judith Hochman tells us that students' problems with reading comprehension, as well with writing essays, occur because they have not been taught systematically to write ... to which her book gives a step-by-step guide.

The Writing Development exercises here are adapted from her programme.

The Wild West

1. Fragments and Sentences I

Starting at the very beginning, do you know the difference between a 'fragment' and a 'sentence'?

1. In the following, which are the fragments and which are the sentences?

- Geronimo died in 1909
- still very much a part of the culture of my childhood in the 1950s
- a dangerous wagon train journey attacked by 'Indians'
- make notes on the moral culture portrayed in the film
- a still from a 1930s film showing a re-enactment/ interpretation of an attack on a Wagon Train
- riding round in circles whooping ... and waiting to be shot

2. Convert the fragments into sentences in the simplest way possible.

If you found Tasks 1&2 difficult, or did not know how to distinguish between a 'fragment' and a 'sentence', go to your English teacher and ask them to explain. How can you expect to write a good essay if you do not even know what a 'sentence' is?

The building blocks of a basic expository sentence are: Who? What? When? and Where? You do not need all four elements in every sentence, but being able to do so will help your writing more interesting and more concise.

3. Identify the Who, What, When and Where of the following sentence:

- The last Apache Warrior of the 'Wild West died in 1909.

4. Use the information on this age to make half-a-dozen more simple Who, What, When and Where sentences.

To do task 4, you will have needed to take elements from different parts of my text, and probably to infer information for yourself. Did you notice how familiar you became with the content! Transferring the information in a text into simple Who, What, When and Where sentences is one way to improve your understanding of a text AND to end up with a set of simple notes.

You will have noticed that I write in dense, complex sentences. If you do the Writing Development exercises attached to the webpages in this unit, you will learn the tricks to be able to do so.