

HIST326 Writing Workshop

One of the most important skills you will develop as a history student is your ability to write clearly and effectively. To this end, we are going to devote the entirety of today's section to improving your essay writing skills. I am not merely going to lecture at you, however. Instead, I have prepared a worksheet that we are going to work through together. Please bear in mind that we have students of varying abilities in this class, so what is obvious to you may not be obvious to another student. At the same time, there is no one in this class (myself included) whose writing cannot improve, so I expect everyone to participate. The more you put into this exercise, the more you will take away from it. You might be surprised at how much you learn.

Essay Structure:

The three basic structural components of an essay are the _____, the _____, and the _____.

The _____ performs the following functions:

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Argument:

The central argument of an essay is called the _____. It should have the following properties:

Which of the following theses is best?

- 1) Native people were not environmentalists.
- 2) By questioning whether Natives were the continent's first "environmentalists," Krech measures indigenous peoples against a twentieth century concept completely foreign to their understanding of the world.
- 3) The environment was central to Native societies.
- 4) Native people sometimes developed sustainable relationships with their environment, and sometimes did not.

Why?

Grammar:

- 1) What are the basic components of a sentence?

- 2) What is a comma splice?

- 3) What is a sentence fragment?

4) What is a run on sentence?

5) How do you use a semicolon?

6) As much as possible, we should avoid the passive voice. What is it?

7) We should not use contractions in academic writing. What are they?

8) Pronouns can cause a lot of confusion. When and how should we use them?

9) Using the correct verb tense is a key to good writing. What are some of the most important rules regarding verb tense?

10) What are some rules of thumb for incorporating quotes into our essays?

Let's work together to identify the grammar problems in each of the following sentences before rewriting them in proper academic prose.

1) Salmon were harvested by the Heiltsuk.

2) The Salish altered their environment, they made it more productive.

3) The Haida valued one resource above all others. Salmon.

4) As I will demonstrate in this essay, Native people interacted with their environment in a multiplicity of ways, some of which were sustainable (although they understood sustainability in a different way from modern conservationists) and some of which were not, but this is not to say that Native people did not have a relationship to the land and the sea that differed fundamentally from that of Europeans, who also possess divergent levels of environmental consciousness.

5) One Sliammon recounted stories of ancestors building stone fish traps in nearby waterways. "It allowed us to pick and choose which salmon we harvested."

6) Natives were not environmentalists. They deplete the resources they depend on for food. They will sometimes go hungry.

7) Natives and Euro-Americans both seek to preserve B.C.'s fisheries; in different ways, though.

8) A Salish informant told the anthropologist she was the last person who knew her stories.

9) You can't write about Native people as if they're all the same. You've got to recognize how diverse they are.

10) The Heiltsuk; however, never left their weirs in place more than two weeks.

11) Salmon was often caught with a dip net.

12) The British ship was forcibly taking the Native captive away from his home on the Northwest Coast. He desperately wanted to escape it.

13) By this point the Tlingit had shifted the placement of their weirs, they had adopted tribal pulse fishing.

14) The Tlingit; however, altered their technology over time.

15) The weirs were built in late summer.

16) The Heiltsuk believed that if you didn't treat salmon with respect, they wouldn't come back.

Citations:

All university level essays should include citations. History essays require footnotes. The first time you cite a source you should include the author's full name, the full title of the book, the city of publication, the publishing company, the date of publication, and the page number.¹ Each subsequent time you cite a source, you should include the author's last name, an abbreviated title, and the page number.² For information on how to cite other forms of evidence, you can visit the following website:

<http://www.aresearchguide.com/7footnot.html>

¹ Miles A. Powell, *Footnotes Make Instructors Happy: Six Steps to Successful Citation* (Vancouver, BC: Dr. Powell's Publishing Co, 2013), 1.

² Powell, *Footnotes Make Instructors Happy*, 2.