

Grade 9 November Part 2

Writing skills: In school, at work and for life

The ability to write well is probably the most important skill a person can develop.

In school, every subject demands good writing ability. All teachers demand that students write well. Most teachers will actually penalize them for poor or improper writing.

To enter the world of work, a person may be required to write a letter of application. At the very least, he will have to fill out an application form neatly and correctly.

Once on the job, he may be asked to write reports or estimates. Imagine the impression an auto mechanic gives of his company if he can't spell a customer's name or misspells important words on the work order.

For family or friends a neat, error-free, well thought out note or card is a special gift. It can be held, re-read, enjoyed over and over, a gift to treasure. No e-mail or text message can compare.

Writing skills are so easily accomplished!

All it takes is:

- Good organization
- Good spelling
- Good grammar
- Neatness

Each day, you can practice these skills. If you begin early in Grade 9 to improve your writing you will be a better writer by year's end.

First, get organized

Begin by keeping your notes in order. Use each teacher's daily outline to organize. Once you have the outline down, write your notes out in proper sentence and paragraph form.

You may not realize it, but by writing your notes in this fashion each day, you are actually beginning to study. You are reinforcing what you have learned and will be less likely to forget it. You are also developing skills--outlining, organizing, explaining--that can be used right away in your personal writing and later in the world of work.

Second, be a good speller

An important part of writing is proper spelling. Purchase a dictionary and use it regularly. The more you use it in the beginning, the less you will have to later on. The rules of grammar and spelling you are learning will become useful tools when using a computer. Grammar and spell check signs will no longer be crutches. They will be reminders of things already known.

In particular, be certain that important technical terms of the subject are spelled correctly. You can be sure that teachers will ask you to use these on tests and in essays. Develop a special subject dictionary at the end of each notebook. Add to and review it frequently.

Third, use good grammar

Good grammar is not really difficult. It is simply using appropriate words in proper sentences. It does not have to be flowery language in complicated structures.

Make your writing natural. Begin by writing the way you speak. This is natural for you. It will capture your individuality. Once you have your thoughts down, review what you have written and correct any spelling or grammatical errors that might have occurred.

Fourth, be neat

Good writing is neat writing. Nothing spoils good ideas and opinions more than sloppy handwriting, with words scratched out or scrunched in. Take care. Think before you write your final product. Take time. Put your ideas down neatly. Take pride in your writing. It is a picture of who you are.

"Success or failure is determined more by mental attitude than by mental capacity." – Walter Dill Scott