

“A Life in the Day of...”

The title is a play of words, reversing the order of the common phrase ‘a day in a life of’. This series’ aim is to give the reader an insight into the various aspects of the interviewee’s life. The layout always follows the same pattern: first we are given the name of the interviewee and an accompanying photo. Then we are provided with a brief synopsis (summary) of the person, in bold type and telegraphic style. Lastly, there’s the main body of the text. These repeated visual characteristics inform the reader that the text they are reading is part of a series of texts and help the reader to get closer to the content (not having to negotiate an unfamiliar layout). The main body of the text is an interview transformed into a first-person account, as if written by the subject: this creates the impression of the protagonist actually addressing to the reader (without having the mediator- the interviewer). The language is often direct, informal and full of idiomatic English which reinforces the idea that the protagonist is chatting about him/herself sharing her/his everyday life. The content is organised in a regular pattern: each one begins with references to the early morning routine of the person and tends to end with some comment on the close of the day. The information given is never chronological, it’s actually in random order, which again reinforces the idea of the intimate dialogue between the writer and the reader. The interviewee is opening up about his/her thoughts, memories etc. However, the protagonist doesn’t talk a lot about his/her daily routine.

Obituary

An obituary is an article that appears in a newspaper or on the internet following the death of a well-known personality. The heading of the obituary is simply the name of the person who has died and is followed by a sub-heading, also in bold type but in a smaller font, which identifies the role(s) in which the person concerned made an important contribution to society.

The sub-heading is most usually a complex noun phrase formed by a noun (the head of the noun phrase), often preceded by adjective(s) and/or noun modifier(s), followed by a non-finite or a finite clause. The sub-heading may be followed by a summary of biographical details in abbreviated form (without main verbs), in bold type. Alternatively, there can be a briefer summary with dates of birth and death, at the end of the obituary, in italics. The opening paragraphs of an obituary usually give an explanation of the cause of death. More importantly, they develop the information already given schematically. These paragraphs therefore concentrate and elaborate on the reasons why the person will be remembered.

The organisation of the content follows a recognisable pattern: the body of an obituary never begins with birth and/or childhood details about the dead person (different from a biography; in an obituary the latest news are presented first so that the readers can choose how far they want to read). The paragraphs in the middle of the obituary deal with the most important details of the subject’s early life and career. The family is mentioned but has not an important role on this text type unless it was an important factor on the subject’s career.

This text type is often written by a friend or colleague: someone who knew personally the subject. Its aim is to present the dead person’s achievements, possible mistakes and weaknesses. The writing of the cause of death is done carefully, in order to respect the subject’s privacy.

The language is formal, avoids contractions, colloquial language, the first person...

the text uses linguistic elements that help construct an imposing image of the person's public relevance: superlatives and forceful adjectives; direct quotes, either from the subject or from

people whose opinion about the subject are authoritative; contrasts illustrative of obstacles or exceptional behaviour; rhetorical devices, such as repetition or inverted word order.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

It is an account of your achievements, talents, interests and goals often included in job or university applications or on resumes.

Personal statements for university and jobs have similar content, but university personal statements are usually longer and more detailed. University personal statements are typically three or four paragraphs. When included in job applications and resumes, these statements are generally a single paragraph. Employers and universities may have their own requirements, so make sure to heed any word or character limits.

Firstly, write an introduction that reflects you and your personality. It should say why you are interested in the job or degree and, if appropriate, your recent experience with the job type or course topics. Starting a personal statement with sentences that show who you are can help encourage the recipient to read further.

For a job application, consider addressing what first interested you in the position's listing. Use a single, strong sentence to mention the most relevant aspects of your personality and interests in the role or company. For a university application, discuss what parts of the program or school align with your passions. Your university introduction should be a full paragraph.

Your achievements and experience: Write about your degrees, certifications, awards, years of industry experience and positions you have held that relate to the job's responsibilities or the university's educational offerings.

Your relevant skills and talents: Describe the talents and skills you have learned during university or on your career path. Consider mentioning specific skills discussed in a job listing or values the school is looking for in students.

What you would bring to the organization: Discuss why you feel you would be an asset to the company or university. You can mention your experience or eagerness to learn specific skills, perform tasks or earn credentials in a field.

Your professional or academic goals: Write about how the job or course you are applying for fits into your dreams for the future. Consider selecting a specific goal the job or course can help you achieve.

Two sentences should be sufficient for the body of your job personal statement. You may choose two or three of the previously listed elements to discuss in those sentences to keep it comprehensive while also being brief. If your university personal statement is a general prompt asking about your interest and goals, the body of your college personal statement should be one or two paragraphs.

Write a strong conclusion. It should be a clear restatement of why you applied and what you hope to achieve with the experience.

It should also persuade the reader to take action on you as a candidate, either reading through the rest of your resume or reviewing your other academic credentials.

Approach to academic writing

Before you write, you need to consider your audience. The audience for most graduate students

will be an instructor, who is presumably quite knowledgeable about the assigned writing topic and will have expectations with which you need to be familiar. Other possible audiences include advisors, thesis committees... Your understanding of your audience will affect the content of your writing.

Audience, purpose and strategy are interconnected. If the audience knows less than the writer, the writer's purpose is often instructional. If the audience knows more than the writer, the writer's purpose is usually to display familiarity, expertise, and intelligence (in particular for the graduate student writer).

what strategy can a graduate student use to make a successful display? For example, a good impression with the concluding paragraph: final impressions are important. The last paragraph could begin with a reminder to the audience of what the writer has done in the assignment.

Clarity, cohesion and coherence

When engaged in the writing process, you should always aim to express your points clearly so that the reader is never left with a sense of ambiguity, unease or has to interpret what you really want to say. Text which successfully guides the reader from beginning to end is said to be coherent and allows the writer to explain his/her point of view across time and space. When writing in English you should always organise your text through paragraphs which form related blocks of writing which when put together will form your final text and provide a structure to it. PARAGRAPH: each one has one principal idea, has 3-7 sentences approximately and the first word of each paragraph is indented. It deals with one main idea, topic or theme. In any piece of writing all the sentences used will be concerned with one overall topic. The sentences which make up your paragraph need to be linked effectively and it's achieved by the use of transition sentences or phrases. Dividing your work up in paragraphs allows the reader to understand where and when a paragraph begins and ends. The first method is called 'indentation' which is the small space between the left margin of the page and the first word of a paragraph.

LEXICAL COHESION/nets

One of the most salient characteristics of successful writing is the controlled and careful selection of lexis. The lexis and how a writer's choice of vocabulary are fundamental and contribute to the register of a text, helping identify the text-type for the reader. This characteristic of lexical choice is central to academic English, which has its own set of lexical items used repeatedly to indicate to the reader the academic nature of the text s/he is reading.

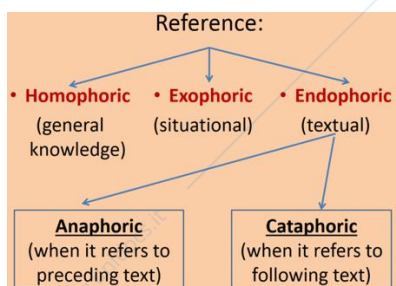
TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND SENTENCES

Using transitional words and phrases helps render the text far smoother and more coherent, ensuring the text flows from the first supporting point to the last, thereby helping the reader follow the content more easily.

- also, besides, furthermore, in addition, moreover, again: ADDITION
- accordingly, as a result, consequently, hence, otherwise, so then, therefore, thus, thereupon: CONSEQUENCE

- after all, all in all, all things considered, briefly, by and large, in any case, in any event, in brief, in conclusion, on the whole, in short, in summary, in the final analysis, in the long run, on balance, on the whole, to sum up, to summarize, finally: **SUMMARIZING**
- as a rule, as usual, for the most part, generally, generally speaking, ordinarily, usually: **GENERALISING**
- in essence, in other words, namely, that is, that is to say, in short, in brief, to put it differently: **RESTATEMENT**
- by the same token, conversely, instead, likewise, on one hand, on the contrary, on the other hand, rather, similarly, yet, but, however, still, nevertheless, in contrast: **CONTRAST/COMPARISON**
- at first, first of all, to begin with, in the first place, at the same time, for now, for the time being, the next step, in time, in turn, later on, meanwhile, next, then, soon, the meantime, later, while, earlier, simultaneously, afterward, in conclusion: **SEQUENCE**
- for example, for instance, for one thing: **ILLUSTRATION**
- likewise, similar, moreover: **SIMILARITY**

GRAMMATICAL COHESION



Operating alongside these lexical cohesive devices, we often can find a system of grammatical referencing, which helps bind the words of a text together.

Below, the two main grammatical cohesive features are outlined:

BACKWARD REFERENCE: The most common cohesive device in texts is the backward reference to something that has been mentioned before. The technical term for this type of reference is anaphora. Three very common instances of anaphoric reference are:

1. Use of a pronoun to refer back to an already-mentioned noun.
2. Use of the definite article to qualify a noun that has already been introduced with the indefinite article.
3. Substitution of an already mentioned noun by a synonym or hyponym.

Here are examples of each:

- My sister's on the phone. **She** says she needs the drill **that** she lent us.
- When I looked out of the window yesterday I saw a man and a woman standing by the gate. **The** man was wearing a hooded jacket and **the** woman was carrying a baseball bat.

- There was so much delicious **food** on display, but I'm on a diet so I had to stick to the **salad**.

FORWARD REFERENCE: Another frequently used cohesive device is forward reference or cataphora. Here are examples of cataphoric reference:

- Perhaps I shouldn't tell you **this**, but when I was young I had hair down to my waist!
- Please send your reply to the **following** address.
- As soon as she had mentioned his name, **Lucy** knew she had made a mistake.

TENSE USAGE IN THE LENNY KRAVITZ TEXT

Although the most frequently used tense in this article is the PRESENT, since it is supposedly an account of daily life and daily routines, there is, nonetheless, a surprising variety of other tenses used. Some examples are:

The **PRESENT SIMPLE** predominates, since habitual, repeated actions are being described (he lives with.., I often head over.., a chef comes...)

The **PRESENT CONTINUOUS** is used to describe Lenny Kravitz's present state of mind and to recount continuous actions (I'm feeling pretty happy..)

The **PRESENT PERFECT** is used very rarely in this text. The first time is in relation to a present continuous, so that the defining reference to the present which this tense always has is established. (my new album has ended up helping me get through...)

The other example is in the same paragraph where the relation to the present state is still active: it represents the use of the present perfect with a superlative: (it's the best thing that I've ever written).

Lenny Kravitz also uses what seems to be the future, but is really the **MODAL will**, for expressing habitual actions (..but the odd time I'll cook for my kid). These examples suggest a possible rather than a regular habitual action.

It is important to consider how the different tenses interweave in the fabric of the text to make it more interesting and more stimulating to read.

TOPIC SENTENCES

Every paragraph will have a sentence that signals to the reader the subject of the paragraph that s/he is about to read. The opening sentence is often called the topic sentence. Topic sentences also act as links between the paragraphs of a text and are, therefore, an essential element in the structure of a text. Topic sentences, therefore, play two crucial textual roles:

- they act as a form of courtesy to the reader, by guiding him/her through the text's content
- they create a solid scaffold to help hold the text together.