

ENGLISH COMPOSITION SUGGESTIONS.

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1. *Importance of Practice.*—However valuable as guides the rules of grammar and rhetoric may be, they alone cannot make a good writer. It would be just as reasonable to expect the theory of music without practice to make a fine performer, or merely knowing the rules of base-ball or cricket to make a good player.

2. *Subject.*—If possible, choose some subject in which you will feel an interest; and then, without thinking of a change, do your best with the subject chosen.

3. *Preparation.*—Study the subject in all its branches and bearings; think about it whenever you have opportunity; and, if you have any inclination to do so, write down any ideas you may have and save them for future use.

4. *Comprehensiveness.*—Let your treatment cover the whole subject, and include all that is necessary to a complete knowledge of all its branches and relations. Develop its outlines boldly.

5. *Analysis.*—After you have studied a subject carefully and fully, the proper arrangement of its different parts will be likely to suggest itself. Then make a systematic analysis, arranging the paragraphs so that each shall follow naturally and easily from the preceding. Description, explanation, and arrangement naturally precede conclusions, appeals, and estimates of results.

6. *Originality.*—As far as possible, use your own ideas instead of the ideas of others. *Do not be afraid to express your own views and experiences*, however, much they may differ from the views and experiences of others. After you have carefully and thoroughly studied a subject, you have just as much right to form an opinion about it as anybody else has. No one ever has become a great writer by imitating another. Whatever value your writings ever have, will be the result of either your own thinking or your own expression.

7. *Commonplace and Repetition.*—Avoid

saying what every person would be expected to know, and be careful not to use the same idea twice.

8. *Clearness.*—Express every thought so plainly that no one can fail to understand what you mean.

9. *Correctness.*—Be correct in every statement, and use only correct forms of expression.

10. *Illustrations.*—Illustrate your subject by such drawings as you have inclination and ability to make. If you cannot make very fine pictures, make as good ones as you can.

11. *Spelling.*—There is no excuse for mistakes in spelling. If you are not sure that you know how a word is spelled, find out before you write it.

12. *Punctuation.*—Never neglect to use all the proper marks of punctuation, if you know what they are. If you do not know, find out. It is best to punctuate each sentence when you write it.

13. *Sentences.*—Be sure that every sentence contains one separate, distinct, and independent thought completely expressed. ~~Do~~ Do not make your sentences long and incomprehensible by crowding a number of ideas together and burying them in a tangle of modifying clauses. *Be sure that every sentence means something.*

14. *Paragraphing.*—Include in the same paragraph all the sentences relating to a distinct branch of the subject. ~~Avoid~~ Avoid with equal care the mistake of making your paragraphs too short and that of making them too long. Except in conversations, one sentence should very seldom form a separate paragraph. In most cases, a paragraph ought not to occupy less than half a page nor more than two pages.

15. Write the title on the first ruled line. Leave a vacant line between that and the first paragraph. Begin the first line of each paragraph about an inch from the edge of the paper; and the other lines about half an inch from the edge. ~~Take~~ Take ample time for copying your work. At least half of the credit given will depend on the clearness and accuracy of your expression, and the mechanical execution of your