



Kim is one of the Writing Center senior tutors. She is also the student supervisor for our Writing Center Facebook page.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN "GOOD" AND "WELL"

By Kimberly Dingess, *Writing Tutor*



Incorrect usage of "good" and "well" is a common grammatical error made in both writing and speaking. Here is how they are supposed to be used:

"Good" is an adjective, meaning it describes a noun (a person, place, or thing). Ex: Sara did a good job on her assignment. In this case, *good* is describing the word *job*, which is a noun.

"Well" is an adverb, meaning it describes verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Ex: Sara did well on her test. Here, *well* is not describing the test, but how Sara *did*. *Did* is a verb, so you must use *well*.

STARTING OFF RIGHT

By Susan Atkinson, *Writing Tutor*

Getting started on a paper can be incredibly frustrating for a student, especially if you have limited time to work on it. In class writing, essay questions on tests, and even those "short answer" responses that require at least three full sentences can make the best writer's palms go sweaty with anxiety. How do you handle an essay under time constraints, or beginning any essay for that matter?

There are a few tips that you can adopt to meet your needs. The first, like any good comp teacher will tell you, is to pick your topic; sometimes this is sneakily called a "thesis" or "purpose statement." Whatever the name, you simply pick what it is you want to write about. Make sure that your topic meets the requirements of the assignment, but make it interesting for you. Have you been assigned to write about the effects of media technology but really love gender studies? Then focus on the effect of smart phones on Asian-American women. Personalize it.

Another good thing to do is to make a road map. Teachers love to call these "outlines." Planning out what you want to say will save you time and stress and help keep you focused on your topic. If times allows, take 5 to 15 minutes and jot down your topic, your main points, and your concluding point that ties them all together before you start. Going back to this road map will give you something to say when you feel lost for words; you can simply move to the next point. It will also help you self-check at the end to make sure that your essay hasn't wandered away from your point and that you have really developed all the details of your supporting points.

The last thing to remember for any piece of writing, timed or not, is to not worry about grammar until the end. Worrying about grammar before you've fleshed out your topic will just kill the entire paper. You will focus so much on having commas in the right places or capitalizing correctly that you will neglect the real substance of your paper, the topic, for the veneer of it, the grammar. And the teacher will still count off because now you have perfect grammar while saying nothing worth hearing. So do yourself a favor: leave checking the grammar until the end and make sure that you have something worth writing about first.

QUOTES FROM THE TUTORS

By Susan Atkinson, *Writing Tutor*

As the first round of papers and projects begin to crop up on MC's campus, the Writing Center tutors wish to share a few helpful hints about recurring issues we often address in the Center. The following quotes are about some of our most common topics we cover:

- "Having trouble coming up with a good topic? Start reading. Anything really will work. Start reading and eventually you'll find something interesting. Reading will make you a better writer and help you find some good topics."
—Wesley Traxler
- "If you don't know how to organize the main points of your paper, start with an outline or treat the paper like a story to help you get the flow."
—Haley Hawsey
- "Often writers struggle with transitions because their organization is skewed. If you organize well, there is almost no need for those transitional words you learned in high school like "since," "therefore," "furthermore," and "however."
—Susan Atkinson

FUNNY BUSINESS

Our tutors are good friends and like to laugh and joke while they're at work. These are some of our funniest one liners.

- "I don't have time to die."
—Gwen Matuscheskwi
- "The rain is my ginger power's kryptonite."
—Kim Dingess
- "I'm a passivist, mostly because I'd lose any fight I got into."
—Wesley Traxler
- "True love is the water heater that needs to be replaced every time it breaks."
—Frank Summerlin
- Wesley: "You know when you do nothing for days on end and everything starts blending together?"
Kim: "I don't know what kind of life you lead, but I've got crap going on all the time."

RUMINATIVE WRITING

By Nathaniel Stickman, *Writing Center Graduate Assistant*



Do not go gently into that night – of writing that is. And don't quite rage either. Writing is not just something to be done, like raking the leaves or blowing your nose; it involves more complex processes. One of those is waiting. Sounds simple, but do recall, writing is not just something to be done. It involves, in fact, much to be undone.

So what do I mean here by "waiting"? Gather your ideas, gather your sources, bring out your dead. Take a subject and chew on it for a while – come to terms with it, maybe take it out and draft an outline with it, but no further than this. Okay, maybe a little further now. Look at its supporting sources, get an idea of what can be done, but – and I mean it this time – no more.

This is a major part of composing a paper, and one that is easy to neglect, but your best ideas are not usually your first. The big fish take their time in biting. Leave your line out in the deep waters for a while; don't give in to nibbles. When it comes time to prepare the platter, you will have the better ideas to serve.

WHAT TUTORS ARE READING:

- *Greatest Human Strength: Willpower* by Roy F. Baumeister
- *Theories of Falling* by Sandra Beasley
- *They Eat Dogs, Don't They* by Christopher Buckley
- *Erasing Hell* by Francis Chan
- *The Sound and the Fury* by William Faulkner
- *The White Bone* by Barbara Gowd
- *Blown for Good: Behind the Iron Curtain of Scientology* by Marc Headley
- *Not Fifty Shades of Grey* by E. L. James
- *The Four Loves* by C. S. Lewis
- *Railsea* by China Mieville



WRITING CENTERED

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

WHAT'S NEW AT THE WRITING CENTER

By Dr. Steve Price, *Writing Center Director*

Last year at the MC Writing Center, we had almost 2000 visits for the entire year. That's a lot of writers visiting our small space in Jennings 304, so many that we often spread onto the balcony, into adjacent TA offices, and sometimes even into empty classrooms (like the afternoon when cold sleet on the balcony made it impossible to sit out there any longer). Jennings 304—formerly the faculty office of Dr. Eaves—served us well, but judging from the scuff-marks on the walls, the tattered couch, and the almost-falling-off lock on the door, it was time for a new space . . .

This August, the MC Writing Center found that new space on the first floor of the Leland Speed Library! Suddenly, we have a reception desk (and 3 new receptionists), a new couch, multiple tables, and computers. Tables are spread out, and the tutors now have room to work in pairs, or small groups, or writers can even head off and work on their own. While I miss seeing the energetic, excited tutors in Jennings 304 (I swear I can still hear the echoes of Sarah C. yelling at Kyle J.), I love watching how we're claiming and shaping the new space: how Micah comes back after his shift to study, how Ariel Jade and Jeremy are talking on the couch between sessions, how Mallory's friends stop by the reception desk to say hello.

Some special thanks are deserved for the new space: The move to the library would never have been possible without all the work of Lingshan Song, Assistant Director of the writing center, who spent much of her summer planning. And, Kathleen Hutchison and Wanda Mosley, from the Leland Speed Library, have welcomed us into the new space, and we love our collaboration with them.

"New" is the key word at the writing center this fall. Please stop by the writing center this fall and say hello to our four great returning tutors (Kim, Heather, Susan, and Haley), our ten new tutors (Tori, Jeremy, Larry, Kelsey, Ariel Jade, Stephanie, Micah, Frank, Wesley, and Brittney), our three new receptionists (Mallory, Gwen, and Caroline), and our new graduate assistant (Nathaniel). And, of course, come by to see our new space!



Most of the tutors and Dr. Price showing off our new Writing Center space in the LRC of the library.

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THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

By Kimberly Dingess, *Writing Tutor*

We live in a very technologically advanced society. And while it is oftentimes believed that technology can distract us from our academic work, sometimes it can actually help. Here are a few apps that help me when I'm writing:

Dictionary/Thesaurus. I use this app just about everyday. It comes in pretty handy when I find myself having used the same word several times in a row, or if I just don't like the sound of a sentence.

Notes: This app comes standard on iPhones, but any sort of application that allows you to take notes is helpful. Notes allows me to remember those random bursts of epiphany that I get when there's no paper around with which to write them down. Also, it keeps me from losing them or wondering where it was that I wrote them down.

Dropbox. Ever left your house or your dorm and forgotten your laptop with that paper on it you need to work on? Well, that's where Dropbox can help. With Dropbox, you're able to access your files from any computer with internet so you can continue working on them.



Larry, one of the Writing Center tutors, loves to explore new resources and applications.

WRITING CENTERED

By Ariel Jade McCullough, *Writing Tutor*

Here at the Mississippi College Writing Center, we are very writing centered (pun intended). But seriously, we tutors and other staff members of the WC are completely dedicated to and passionate about writing and all issues (good or bad) that go along with the writing process. We are here to help YOU and each other write to the best of our abilities. We are prepared to help with everyday writing issues as well as your specialized questions or problems. As WC tutors, we strive to aid you in the development of yourself as a writer, in addition to the betterment of your individual piece of writing.

WRITING CENTER SERVICES

Our purpose is to help writers at any stage in the writing process. We confidentially work with writers on a variety of writing issues from brainstorming and pre-writing, to researching and evaluating sources.

We serve two types of writers: walk-ins and scheduled writers. You may drop in for a single visit, make an appointment before you come, or even establish regular appointments.

This year the Writing Center has moved to a bigger and better space in the LRC of the library. And yes, we still have candy. Come by and see us soon. We look forward to working with you!

Visit the Writing Center in LRC, Leland Speed Library.

MONDAY/WEDNESDAY: 9 AM — 8 PM
 TUESDAY/THURSDAY: 9 AM — 8:30 PM
 FRIDAY: 9 AM — 3 PM



Call 601-925-7289
 E-mail writingcenter@mc.edu
 Drop by the Writing Center!