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Academic Skills through Cases in American Studies

Edited by N. Anthony Brown



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‘Academic Skills through Cases in American Studies’ is aimed at ESL college students at the Intermediate-high through Advanced levels of language proficiency. It is designed around eight country-specific (U.S.) cases that develop academic skills tested on international exams. The book covers major topics in the areas of academic reading, speaking and writing. Thus, the targeted learning outcome is two-fold: 1) to explore topical issues in American studies and 2) to master key academic skills. The content of the articles in each unit is selected according to the language needs of students majoring in economics, sociology, political science, and the like.

The book can be used both as a supplement to a course in American Studies or as a separate curriculum within an academic skills course.

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Introduction

The study of academic skills has a way of diminishing enthusiasm among students and instructors alike. While mastering such skills is an essential cornerstone for achieving academic success, it also bears a more pragmatic purpose, i.e., all international language tests revolve around reading and writing skills. There is no denying that academic skills training plays an essential role in college curricula, however, some participants occasionally fear that classroom time will be spent on boring activities, such as completing multiple choice exercises. Thus, the purpose of the book you are holding in your hands right now is to make the process of exploring the world of academic skills exciting and worthwhile.

Hence, the first premise of the present work is that academic skills should be structured around material that motivates students the most, namely case studies. Owing to its primary focus on language through case studies, this book deliberately deviates from conventional methods of approaching such an activity. In some articles, the structure of a case breaks certain rules so as to emphasize reading and writing, rather than the actual case study. The true value of this approach, however, lies in raising up-to-date and challenging issues that can serve as a background for students to master critical thinking skills.

Eight cases relevant to contemporary American society make up this book and facilitate both in-class discussion and independent homework. Background knowledge tests precede each article, thus making each topic accessible to readers both content- and language-wise. Reading and writing assignments follow standardized academic skills formats and cover essential subjects. Thus, the book serves as a valuable supplement in one's training for international language exams and for enhancing one's overall academic experience.

The authors would like to express our deepest gratitude to our contributors — Matt Mehr, UT, David Waltman, WA, and Bret Martineau, UT, — along with our editor — Professor N. Anthony Brown, UT, for making this book a reality.

Enjoy the book!

Ekaterina V. Talalakina and Irina V. Yakusheva



Unit 1:

American Society

CASE: Abercrombie Elite Recruitment

Background Knowledge Test

Task 1: Select the most appropriate answer(s) and explain your reasoning. (Use the Internet to check unfamiliar concept and/or terms.)

1. Discrimination means
 - a) depriving African-Americans of their rights
 - b) harassing women at the workplace
 - c) taking legal action against ethnic minorities
 - d) treating one particular group less favorably than another
2. Equal treatment to all U.S. citizens is guaranteed by the
 - a) Constitution
 - b) 13th amendment in the Bill of Rights
 - c) 14th amendment in the Bill of Rights
 - d) local courts
3. The first members of American society to fight for their rights were
 - a) women
 - b) African-Americans
 - c) gays
 - d) Native Americans
4. Affirmative Action means
 - a) going on rallies and organizing protests
 - b) taking action to discriminate against minorities
 - c) setting minority quotas at the workplace and ensuring minority representation at schools
 - d) positive discrimination
5. Color-blindness refers to
 - a) a disability that makes affected people a minority
 - b) discrimination against black people
 - c) preferential treatment of the majority
 - d) disregarding somebody's racial characteristics

6. Religious minorities in the U.S. include
 - a) Protestants
 - b) Muslims
 - c) Catholics
 - d) Jews
7. Ethnic minorities in the U.S. include
 - a) Caucasians
 - b) Hispanics
 - c) Asians
 - d) African-Americans
8. Groups that do NOT represent a minority in the U.S. include
 - a) same-sex couples
 - b) Indians
 - c) blue-collar workers
 - d) disabled people
9. College fraternities and sororities are
 - a) religious student organizations
 - b) exclusionary student organizations
 - c) professors' labor unions
 - d) none of the above
10. 'Bona fide occupational qualification' (BFOQ) refers to
 - a) discrimination at the workplace
 - b) equal opportunity employment
 - c) non-discriminatory criteria established for recruitment purposes
 - d) all of the above

Vocabulary Anticipation

Task 2: Read the title of the article. What do you expect to read about? Circle the words that you anticipate encountering in the text. (Use a dictionary to check the meaning of unknown words.)

demand	cute	minorities	strategy
to relegate	applicants	to hurt	confessions
to exploit	fraternity	to favor	to entrust
to market	to underscore	bill	preference
exclusive	customers	science	law
ironically	dormitory	to exert	recruiters
to promote	to ban	Caucasian	customs
saturation	attitude	nature	lawsuit

Beauty at Work

by David W. Waltman

¹According to Mike Jeffries, CEO of a prominent American retailer, his company's strategy is to "... go after the attractive all-American kid with a great attitude and a lot of friends. ²A lot of people don't belong [in our clothes], and they can't belong. Are we exclusionary? ³Absolutely. ⁴Those companies that are in trouble are trying to target everybody: young, old, fat, skinny." ⁵Mr. Jeffries' statement implies his company is not among those he considers to be 'in trouble'. ⁶Financially speaking, he is probably correct. ⁷Abercrombie & Fitch, however, which Mr. Jeffries has led since 1992, is frequently in trouble precisely because it does *not* target everybody, especially in hiring and promoting its employees.

⁸In 2004, Abercrombie & Fitch agreed to pay \$40 million as part of a class-action settlement for a lawsuit brought by women and minorities. ⁹Plaintiffs such as Eduardo Gonzalez, who led the suit, said that Abercrombie managers encouraged him to apply for the overnight stocking crew when he came looking for a job. ¹⁰When Mr. Gonzalez was interviewed in a group with 13 other applicants, he said the manager clearly favored the two white people among them. ¹¹Other employees were told they were 'not cute enough' to work directly with customers and were relegated to positions in the back of the store out of sight. ¹²While Abercrombie did not admit fault in the settlement, they agreed to hire 25 'diversity recruiters' and to include more blacks, Hispanics and other minorities in their advertising and catalogs. ¹³They also agreed to stop recruiting at college fraternities and sororities, where they found many of their 'all-American', mostly Caucasian, employees.

¹⁴While Abercrombie has agreed to be more inclusive, is that what their customers want? ¹⁵The company was originally founded in 1892 as an elite sporting goods store, with expensive shotguns, tents and fishing rods, but went bankrupt in 1976. ¹⁶The name was acquired by another sporting goods company who then sold Abercrombie & Fitch to the Limited in 1988. ¹⁷When Mike Jeffries took over as CEO in 1992, the company was struggling to differentiate itself from competitors like Eddie Bauer and American Eagle. ¹⁸Fifteen years later, Abercrombie had become the most successful retailer in the teen and young adult clothing market and they did so by following Mr. Jeffries' strategy. ¹⁹A certain group of Americans, particularly upper-middle class and rich teenagers and college students, seem to appreciate the exclusivity and elitism Abercrombie came to represent. ²⁰In fact, these customers appreciated the 'Abercrombie look' enough to drive 54 straight quarters of growth before the 2008 recession.

²¹It's also reasonable to ask whether Abercrombie was really doing anything outrageous by hiring only young, good looking employees. ²²Are ballet companies chastised for hiring only young, athletic and attractive dancers? ²³Are football clubs penalized for hiring only fit people? ²⁴There are countless industries that hire people because of how they look, including television stations, fashion agencies, restaurants, and performing arts organizations. ²⁵These companies hire beautiful people in response to customer demand. ²⁶In many cases, they would not succeed otherwise. ²⁷So why is Abercrombie different?

²⁸One argument, according to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, may be that attractiveness is not a 'bona fide occupational qualification' (BFOQ) for retail employees. ²⁹In at least two cases, including *Diaz v. Pan Am. World Airways* and *Wilson v. Southwest Airlines Co.*, courts have ruled that mere customer preference for females does not make femininity a BFOQ for flight attendants. ³⁰Courts have also stated, however, that there are occupations in which customer preference is

relevant, such as for Playboy Bunnies (*St. Cross v. Playboy Club*).³¹ In a 2006 interview, Mike Jeffries told Salon.com that sex appeal was critical to Abercrombie's success, stating "*That's why we hire good-looking people in our stores because good-looking people attract other good-looking people, and we want to market to cool, good-looking people.*"³² *We don't want to market to anyone other than that.*"

³³If Abercrombie & Fitch wants to market to a certain demographic, should they be prohibited from employing people from that demographic to sell their products? ³⁴Victoria's Secret models are world famous for their attractiveness and appearance, and are clearly selected on that basis. ³⁵But in a Victoria's Secret store, one finds all sorts of employees, many of whom clearly wouldn't qualify as models. ³⁶Under the Civil Rights Act, it may be argued that attractiveness is a BFOQ for being a Victoria's Secret model, but it is not for sales staff in their stores.

³⁷Unlike Victoria's Secret, however, Abercrombie refers to their sales staff as 'models' and only uses store employees for their catalogs and advertising. ³⁸In fact, up until a California Labor Board ruling in 2009, sales staff were even required to wear only Abercrombie clothing on the job. ³⁹Mr. Jeffries would probably argue that his company is actually being more honest than most retailers. ⁴⁰He has explicitly described the type of customer to whom he would like to sell, and attempts to attract those customers by hiring employees who will attract them.

⁴¹In spite of the 2004 settlement, Abercrombie continues to be a lightning rod for critics. ⁴²In the past few years, the company has had to address several charges of discrimination against employees and job applicants, and even customers. ⁴³In one instance, a store manager refused to let a disabled person's assistant accompany them into a fitting room. ⁴⁴In another instance, an employee was told she couldn't work on the sales floor because her prosthetic arm would alarm customers.

⁴⁵Many Americans, and a growing number of affluent people around the world, are perfectly happy to pay extra for exclusive products and services. ⁴⁶While governments have an obligation to protect people from harm and to ensure that people are treated fairly, not everyone agrees on what is fair, or even what is reasonable. ⁴⁷As long as the world has some people with more money, more opportunity or even more luck than others such questions won't be resolved any time soon.

Comprehension Questions

Task 3: Answer the following questions on the article. Underline the key words in each question.

- ✓ What is the main point that a prominent American retailer Mike Jeffries makes writing about his company's strategy?
- ✓ What aspects of the Abercrombie & Fitch activities are touched upon in the article?
- ✓ Why did Abercrombie & Fitch change its recruitment policy?
- ✓ What is the type of Abercrombie & Fitch target customer?
- ✓ What is the typical image of the company's employee?
- ✓ Which changes did the company have to face and why?

List of Active Vocabulary

Table 1.1. Active Vocabulary on Diversity

Diversity Vocabulary	
1) a certain demographic	11) to do something outrageous
2) a college student	12) to drive smth
3) a job applicant	13) to ensure people are treated fairly
4) an upper-middle class	14) to favor smb
5) diversity	15) to have a preference for
6) exclusionary/inclusive (ant.)	16) to penalize
7) to admit fault	17) to prohibit from
8) to chastise	18) to relegate
9) to differentiate oneself from	19) to resolve the question/issue
10) to do smth explicitly	20) to target smb/to market to smb
Modifiers	Legal Vocabulary
21) financially speaking,	23) a class-action settlement for
22) in one instance,	a lawsuit brought by
	24) a plaintiff
	25) to address several charges
	of discrimination against

Language Focus

Task 4: Translate each of the items from the List of Active Vocabulary into Russian.

Task 5: In your own words, reproduce the context in which items from the List of Active Vocabulary were used.

Task 6: Match the words from the text (left) with their synonyms (right):

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) outrageous | a) downgrade/consign |
| 2) to penalize | b) to punish/fine |
| 3) to prohibit | c) elitism |
| 4) to relegate | d) team |
| 5) to resolve | e) to bring about smth |
| 6) to target | f) to aim at |
| 7) prominent | g) forbid |
| 8) crew | h) shocking |
| 9) exclusivity | i) to settle |
| 10) to drive something | j) famous |

Task 7: Find words and phrases in the text which mean the following:

- a person who brings a legal case against someone in a court of law
- to give preference to someone, often unfairly

- to move to a lower position
- to cause something
- to exclude a particular person or group of people
- to allow all kinds of people to belong to a group or organization
- people who share the same interests as a particular group
- a society in the US of female university or college students
- a white person
- a group of people in a society, especially people in a particular age group
- to speak angrily or to punish someone for something, to criticize severely
- a case in a court of law which concern a dispute between two people or organizations

Task 8: Describe the policies of the store where you usually shop in using at least 15 active vocabulary items. You can talk about its marketing strategy, target customers, employees, and image.

Task 9: Provide a rendering in English for the following text in Russian. Use at least 15 active vocabulary items. (The rendering should contain only key ideas and should not exceed 200 words.)

Дискриминация — позитивная?

Нередко можно наблюдать недоумение в глазах неосведомленных русскоязычных граждан, когда они слышат словосочетание «позитивная дискриминация». Это связано с тем, что прилагательное зачастую воспринимается как оценочное определение, которое, по сути, противоречит негативному оттенку значения слова «дискриминация». Однако на самом деле это словосочетание является термином, принятым в истории американской борьбы за гражданские права и означающим конкретные шаги для увеличения представительства женщин и меньшинств в сфере занятости, в области образования и бизнеса, из которых они были исторически исключены. Итак, насколько позитивна позитивная дискриминация?

Расцвет позитивной дискриминации в США пришелся на 70–80-е годы XX столетия, когда триумфаторы борьбы за гражданские права афроамериканцев, добившись отмены сегрегации, пошли дальше. Они потребовали компенсацию за все ранее перенесенные притеснения и получили привилегии при поступлении на работу или учебу. Так, в некоторых учебных заведениях появились квоты на набор представителей расовых меньшинств, что означало дополнительные преимущества для непривилегированных слоев общества. Вдохновившись примером афроамериканцев, свои права стали отстаивать женщины, выступая против дискриминации по гендерному признаку. Впоследствии к ним присоединились представители всех остальных меньшинств американского общества — религиозных, национальных, сексуальных и т.д.

Венцом движения борьбы за права стала ситуация, когда представителю европеоидной расы мужского пола оказалось в разы труднее получить работу или место в престижном учебном заведении. Знаковый иск был подан в 1977 году в Верховный суд США абитуриентом медицинского факультета Университета Калифорнии в Дэвисе Алланом Бакке. Молодой человек настаивал на том, что ситуация, когда при более высоких оценках на вступительных экзаменах, чем у остальных, он так и не был зачислен в университет, является чистой воды дискриминацией и противоречит Конституции США. Бакке выиграл дело.

В XXI веке американское общество, кажется, переболело позитивной дискриминацией и уже не настолько рьяно обсуждает притеснение большинства. На круги своя возвращаются проблемы, связанные с ущемлением меньшинств, но в более изощренной форме. Так, например, можно ли считать, что к людям проявляется равное и справедливое отношение, если девушке в хиджабе отказали при приеме на работу в магазин модной одежды на территории светского государства? Является ли почти весь модельный бизнес притеснением прав полных людей? Примеры можно продолжать до бесконечности.

Современный мир меняется так быстро, что вопрос о необходимости позитивной дискриминации или ее оправданности будет возникать снова и снова в связи с каждым новым случаем. Будет ли дискриминация в прямом смысле слова позитивной, зависит от того, какое решение принимается в каждом конкретном случае нарушения прав.

Task 10: Skim the article ‘Beauty at Work’ and compose a sentence for each paragraph that captures its essence.

Reading Skills: Main Ideas and Supporting Details

MAIN IDEA is a term in Academic Reading which indicates the central point of a structural unit of a text — a paragraph, an article section or the whole text. On the basic level, it applies to a paragraph and is generally accompanied by supporting details. All SUPPORTING DETAILS usually are more specific than the main idea and are subordinate to it (see Illustration 1.1).

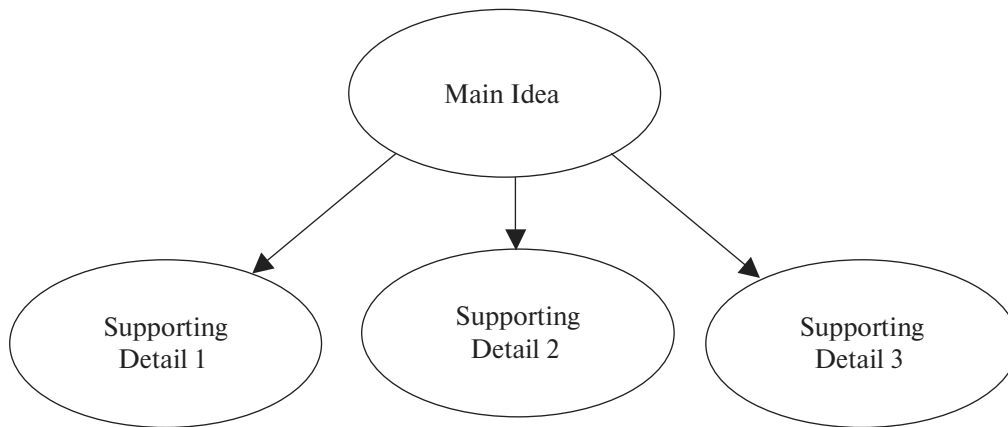


Illustration 1.1: Main Idea and Supporting Details

For such a relationship to exist, the main idea should be more general than the supporting details. The clues that help classify information according to ‘general vs. specific’ include the following words and expressions that appear within the main idea:

a number of reasons	several ways	some steps
various approaches	different strategies	a series of
certain advantages	three steps	five effects

Such expressions indicate that there will be a list of items that constitute supporting details, which can be introduced with the help of the following transitions:

first, second, third	for example	to illustrate, namely
also, next, then	for instance	moreover, furthermore
in addition, for one thing	in particular	finally, lastly

Example 1: Main Idea and Supporting Details

Paragraph 8 from the article ‘Beauty at Work’ illustrates the way to introduce supporting details.

¹In spite of the 2004 settlement, Abercrombie continues to be a lightning rod for critics. ²In the past few years, the company has had to address **several** charges of discrimination against employees and job applicants, and even customers. ³**In one instance**, a store manager refused to let a disabled person’s assistant accompany them into a fitting room. ⁴**In another instance**, an employee was told she couldn’t work on the sales floor because her prosthetic arm would alarm customers.

‘Several charges’ make Sentence 2 the main idea. Although at first glance Sentence 1 also might seem to qualify as the main idea of the paragraph, it is too general and doesn’t fully reflect the essence of the paragraph as it would if left by itself in a summary. It doesn’t contain any hints on how exactly Abercrombie continues to be the target for critics’ attacks. Thus, Sentence 1 merely provides as a transition from the previous paragraph. That being said, it is important to distinguish between general and too general when determining the main idea. Something that appears too general is just the topic of the paragraph, while the main idea reflects the point the author is trying to make about the topic coupled with supporting details help to illustrate the author’s point.

Practice 1: ‘General vs. Specific’

Task: Fill in Table 1.2 with missing information

Table 1.2. General vs. Specific

Topic	Main idea	Supporting details
recruitment	ways to find the right job	search the net
		ask friends
	reasons to avoid cheating	loss of trust
traveling		hurricanes in FL
		tsunamis in Japan
	freedom is a myth	
education		Oxford — \$8,000 a year
		Harvard — \$10,000 a year

Supporting details can appear in the form of particular examples, numbers/statistics, citations, expert opinions, and facts. They fall into two categories: MAJOR and MINOR details. Minor details further illustrate major ones in the event that additional information is needed. While major details can definitely be found in every paragraph, minor ones are optional. Illustration 1.2 shows a paragraph that contains both major and minor details.

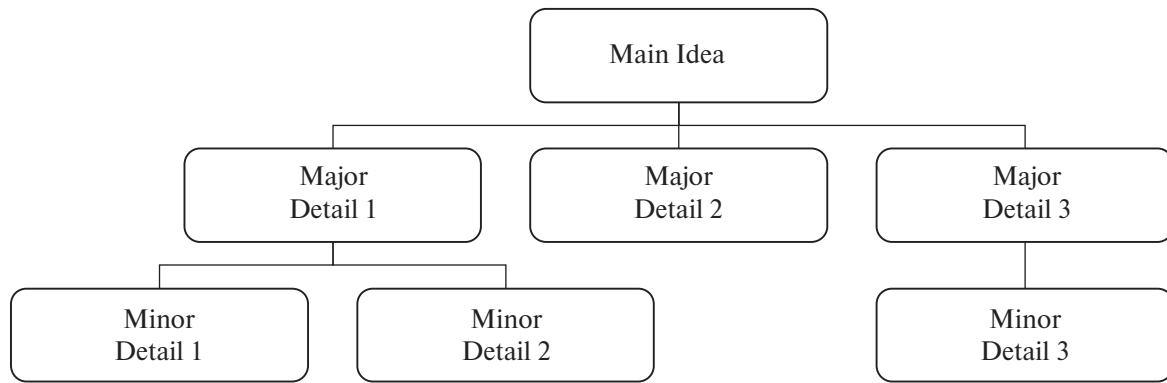


Illustration 1.2: Major and Minor Details organizational diagram

Practice 2: Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Task: Choose the correct answer. Only one answer can apply.

1. The main idea of Paragraph 2 is that
 - a) Abercrombie faced a number of law suits
 - b) Mr. Gonzalez won the class-action case
 - c) the store's employees suffered numerous cases of discrimination
 - d) Abercrombie has taken measures to improve its image
2. The main idea of Paragraph 3 is located in
 - a) Sentence 14
 - b) Sentence 18
 - c) Sentence 19
 - d) Sentence 20
3. The title for Paragraph 3 could be
 - a) Sporting Goods Store
 - b) Created for the Young and Elite
 - c) Abercrombie Success
 - d) none of the above (suggest your own title)
4. Major details of Paragraph 4 include
 - a) reasons for Abercrombie's exclusive recruitment policies
 - b) examples of companies applying similar tactics
 - c) cases of unsuccessful businesses
 - d) illustrations of how Abercrombie is different from other companies
5. The main idea of Paragraph 5 is worded in
 - a) Sentence 28
 - b) Sentence 29
 - c) Sentence 30
 - d) Sentence 31
6. The title for Paragraph 5 could be
 - a) Crucial Customer Preference
 - b) Flight Attendant Diversity

- c) Beauty as BFOQ
 - d) none of the above (suggest your own)
7. The main idea of Paragraph 6 can be found in
- a) Sentence 33
 - b) Sentence 34
 - c) Sentence 35
 - d) Sentence 36
8. In Paragraph 7, Sentence 38 and Sentence 40 can be regarded as
- a) major details to support the implied main idea
 - b) minor details illustrating major ones
 - c) a major detail (Sentence 38) and a minor one (Sentence 40)
 - d) a minor detail (Sentence 38) and a major one (Sentence 40)
9. The main idea of the whole article is expressed in
- a) Sentence 4
 - b) Sentence 7
 - c) Sentence 45
 - d) none of the above
10. The title of the article
- a) reflects the topic of the article — recruitment
 - b) reflects the topic of the article — beauty
 - c) addresses both the topic and the main idea — the issues of appearance during recruitment
 - d) doesn't really suit the article (suggest your own title)

Speaking Skills: Discrimination Debate

Case Analysis

Task 1: Formulate the issue under discussion in one sentence.

Task 2: Fill in Table 1.3 and focus on the ultimate goal of each party involved in the debate and the implications of reaching this goal for the rest of the parties.

Table 1.3. Goals of Parties Involved in Abercrombie Case

	Abercrombie brand owners	Abercrombie customers	Potential job applicants
Ultimate goal			
Implications for Abercrombie brand owners			
Implications for abercrombie customers			
Implications for job applicants from minorities			

Task 3: Fill in Table 1.4 summarizing the ‘for and against’ arguments in the debate around Abercrombie’s exclusive recruitment policy. Draw arguments from the text and add some of your own.

Table 1.4. Exclusive Recruitment ‘For and Against’

	For exclusive recruitment policy	Against exclusive recruitment policy
Arguments from the text		
Additional arguments		

Role Play

Task 4: Using the arguments from the previous task, apply the following debate phrases to present your opinion on behalf of any party involved in the debate, specifically brand owners, customers, or minority job applicants.

Introducing the Issue

1. It's common knowledge that...
2. Many people tend to think that...
3. It's common sense that...
4. It is often believed that...
5. Everyone would agree that...

Discussing Broader Perspectives

Task 5: Answer the following questions. (When needed, use the Internet for additional research.)

Social Context

1. How do sociologists often define the term 'minority'? Which minority groups are usually singled out in a society? What do minority groups share in common with 'civil rights' and 'collective rights'?
2. How can 'discrimination' be defined? What is 'affirmative action'? Do you think 'affirmative action' is a fair concept? Give your reasons.
3. What is the distribution of age groups in American society percentage-wise? Which states have the highest and the lowest median age?
4. What is the distribution of ethnic minorities in American society? What are the largest ethnic minorities? Why?
5. What religions are practiced in the U.S.? How can this distribution be explained?
6. Taking into consideration data reflecting the distribution of minorities in the U.S., do you believe Abercrombie's strategy fits American society? Explain your thinking.

Business Context

7. What is crucial for successful marketing?
8. What measures can a company take to increase its market shares?
9. How can a company differentiate itself from competitors?
10. Considering marketing strategies of other companies, do you consider Abercrombie's methods effective business-wise? Give your reasons.

Global Context

11. In which other countries besides the U.S. does Abercrombie have its stores? Does its strategy fit those countries given their social contexts? Explain your thinking.
12. Do you think that companies such as Abercrombie would be successful in Russia? Give your reasons.
13. Would Abercrombie face similar types of lawsuits in Russia as they have in the U.S.? Why or why not?
14. Would 'affirmative action' be appropriate in Russia? Is there a need for it? Provide reasons to support your opinion.
15. Do you consider the issue of discrimination relevant or outdated given the globalized and mobile society in which we live? Give your reasons.

Writing Skills: Paragraph Structure and Prewriting Strategies

It is generally understood that in order to break rules wisely, one first has to know them well. The same axiom applies to writing. In order to craft an original and unique paragraph, it's essential to master the rules associated with a particular convention. That's where 'THE RULE OF THREE' comes into play. Usually, on the most basic level a well-written paragraph with transparent structure should contain a main idea (referred to as a TOPIC SENTENCE in Academic Writing) supported by THREE major details, which in turn might optionally be illustrated by minor ones. Graphically, it resembles *Illustrations 1.1 and 1.2* in the Reading section of this unit.

A well-crafted topic sentence will signal to the reader which supporting details the author will use. This can be done in two ways:

1) using words such as 'several', 'different', 'various', 'a series of', 'a number of' to signal that a list is coming: for instance,

'A new employee can take a number of steps to fit into the environment of a new work place'; or

2) naming the major details within the topic sentence: for example,

'Having two jobs teaches a person to be flexible, patient, and responsible'.

Practice 3: Topic Sentences

Task: Finish the topic sentences which would signal your major details using the Rule of Three.

1. Ability to speak a foreign language helped me _____.
2. Russians and Americans are similar in _____.
3. Majoring in economics can be _____.
4. To be an A-student, it takes _____.
5. Procrastination can result in _____.

In order to come up with suitable supporting details for a given topic sentence, writers use a number of PREWRITING STRATEGIES, which include:

- 1) brainstorming;
- 2) mapping;
- 3) clustering;
- 4) freewriting;
- 5) outlining.

BRAINSTORMING is the most efficient and the least difficult strategy as it simply supposes putting down on paper all the words/ideas/notions that come to one's head when thinking about a given topic. All one has to do is take a sheet of paper and start jotting down ideas that come to mind, so that the paper ends up looking something like Illustration 1.3.

Topic:
Landing the job of your dreams.

*resume job vacancies acquaintances
 skills internship classified ads
 interview promotion recruitment
 agencies education freelancing
 moonlighting connections job sharing
 experience recommendations wages
 perks and benefits application
 cover letter employer self-employment*

Illustration 1.3: Brainstorming

After all the ideas are on paper, another technique comes into play — MAPPING. This term means connecting similar ideas together. For instance, in Illustration 1.3 the words ‘skills, education, experience, connections/acquaintances’ fall within the same category of ‘job requirements’, while the words ‘cover letter, resume, application, interview’ can be classified under the sub-topic of ‘recruitment process’. Bringing similar concepts under one umbrella is called CLUSTERING, as shown in Illustration 1.4.

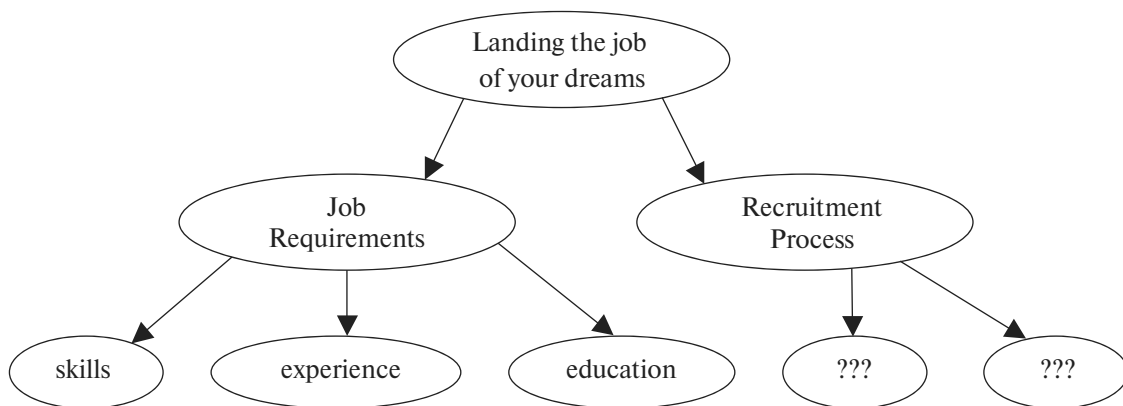


Illustration 1.4: Clustering

Practice 4: Mapping and Clustering

Task: Using Illustration 1.4, map and cluster all the words in Illustration 3.

Although, brainstorming, mapping, and clustering are useful means of presenting prewriting ideas graphically, some writers prefer to use other techniques that allow them to generate not only notions and ideas, but fully worded sentences. Sometimes, a topic is so interesting that one needs to write down the stream of consciousness. In such a case, FREEWRITING is invaluable. Freewriting entails writing down all thoughts and ideas in full sentences without any logical connections between them. Doing so helps one to grasp unique metaphors and phrases that can come to mind. After putting one’s thoughts on paper, the next step is to go back and highlight those that seem the most appropriate, so that the work in progress looks something like Illustration 1.5.

Topic:

Affirmative Action at a University.

Quotas set for minority students make the students who entered on a general basis feel it's unfair. Some students feel stressed going through the admissions process having to compete with more fortunate and intelligent ones. Selection of future students can be carried out using various criteria. For example, applicants from a majority might be more privileged to begin with, To ensure fair admissions, the university policy should be tailored to the needs of minority groups and majority applicants.

Illustration 1.5: Freewriting

To organize ideas generated through freewriting, authors use **OUTLINING**, which means writing down a plan for the composition. Outlining is the most widespread method of prewriting, however, it can run the risk of causing writer's block when an author can't come up with enough ideas for the assignment. Thus, a combination of prewriting strategies seems to be the best bet for those attempting to produce a piece of writing.

Practice 5: Writing a Paragraph

Task: Write a paragraph (5–8 sentences) containing a clear topic sentence, supported by major and minor details on one of the following topics. Use at least 5 active vocabulary items from this unit. (See List of Active Vocabulary after 'Beauty at Work' article.)

Topic 1: Exclusive recruiting is cost-effective business-wise

Topic 2: Affirmative Action should not apply to college admissions

Topic 3: The government should prevent discrimination in the workplace

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