

# The ABCs of Writing Strategies

英作文のストラテジー ABC

S. Kathleen Kitao

Kenji Kitao

EIHŌSHA

*The ABCs of Writing Strategies*  
by  
S. Kathleen Kitao and Kenji Kitao

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# Introduction

Although most Japanese students study English for years, they do not do much writing in English. If students have written in English, they have usually either translated or just written individual sentences. They have had few if any opportunities to express their own ideas and experiences in English or to put sentences together into paragraphs or essays. It is important for students to be able to put sentences together, understand the conventions of English writing, know what readers are likely to expect, and express themselves clearly and interestingly. This textbook is intended to help students learn strategies that will help them put their ideas together and express them clearly and effectively. In addition, in each chapter, there is an exercise to help students develop their vocabulary. These exercises encourage students to learn words related to a particular topic together.

This textbook is divided into three sections. The first section is “Sentences and Connections,” in which students learn to write sentences more effectively and to combine short sentences to make their writing more varied. Students also learn to use connectors to make relationships between sentences clear, to write sentences in ways that make the referents of pronouns obvious, to write parallel constructions correctly, and to use modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) correctly.

The second section is on organizing students’ writing. Students learn about the three parts of a paragraph, types of organization, and topic sentences. The last chapter is on pre-writing steps. This chapter is intended to help students learn to focus their topics and brainstorm ideas for the passage.

The purpose of the third section is to teach students strategies to help them write more clearly and effectively. Students learn to emphasize certain ideas, use figures of speech such as similes and metaphors, make their writing concrete and specific, and write about time.

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S. Kathleen Kitao, PhD  
Kenji Kitao, PhD



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# **The ABCs of Writing Strategies**

英作文のストラテジー ABC





# I

## At the Sentence Level



Rome, Italy



## Chapter 1

# Connecting Sentences

When you write, you probably write many short, simple sentences. They may communicate your meaning, but they can be difficult to read and uninteresting. You can make your writing more interesting by combining sentences in different ways. In this chapter, you will learn about how to combine sentences.

### I. Using conjunctions (and, so, but)

One way you can combine sentences is to combine them with conjunctions such as “and,” “so,” and “but.”

**A.** You can combine two sentences with “and” if the second one adds new information to the first sentence. If the same noun is repeated at the beginning of the second sentence, you can replace it with a pronoun (he, she, it, etc.). You can also delete part of the second sentence that is repeated.

#### For example:

Karrie is going to Rome this summer. Karrie is going to see the Coliseum.

*Karrie is going to Rome this summer, and she is going to see the Coliseum.*

or

*Karrie is going to Rome this summer and see the Coliseum.*

### Exercise A

**Combine the following pairs of sentences using “and.”**

1. I have to study for a test. I have to write a paper.

---

2. Jane likes to hike. Jane likes to read mysteries.

---

3. Liz is going to take five classes next semester. Liz is going to join the tennis club next semester.
- 

4. Learning to speak English well can help you find a good job. Learning to speak English well can allow you to make friends.
- 
- 

**B.** Another way to combine sentences with a conjunction is to use “but.” “But” is used to contrast two pieces of information. It is used when the second part of the sentence is unexpected, based on the first part of the sentence.

**For example:**

I got up late this morning. I wasn’t late for my first class.

*I got up late this morning, but I wasn’t late for my first class.*

**Exercise B**

**Combine the following pairs of sentences using “but.”**

1. This book is long. This book is interesting.
- 

2. Joan and Sheldon are moving to Tokyo. Joan and Sheldon don’t want to move to Tokyo.
- 

3. Will’s biology class is difficult. Will likes his biology class.
- 

4. Charlotte has to take either French or Spanish. Charlotte cannot decide which one to take.
-

**C.** Finally, you can combine sentences using “so.” “So” indicates that what follows is the result of what came before.

**For example:**

I lost my textbook. I couldn’t study for the test.

*I lost my textbook, so I couldn’t study for the test.*

**Exercise C**

**Combine the following pairs of sentences using “so.”**

1. Julie liked this book very much. Julie recommended it to me.

---

2. Ted is going to save money. Ted can go to the US for his vacation.

---

3. Jenny really liked her psychology class. Jenny wants to take another psychology class next year.

---

4. Tim is going to UCLA next September. He plans to move to Los Angeles in August.

---

**Exercise D**

**Combine the following pairs of sentences using “and,” “so,” or “but.”**

1. My friend is going to the University of Arizona next year. My friend is going to major in history.

---

---

2. Jeanne tried to save money for a car. Jeanne couldn't save money for a car.
- 
3. When she gets a job, Lynn is going to buy a new car. Lynn is going to rent her own apartment.
- 
4. Harry is going to France this summer. Harry can practice his French.
- 
5. Everyone says that book is really good. I did not like that book.
- 

## II. Using Relative Pronouns (that, who, where, etc.)

Relative pronouns can also be used to combine sentences.

### For example:

I read a book. The book was written by Michael Davis.

*I read a book that was written by Michael Davis.*

Jane and Charlie had a good time in New York. In New York, Jane and Charlie went to several museums and some plays.

*Jane and Charlie had a good time in New York, where they went to several museums and some plays.*

I met Roger in 1997. In 1997, I was living in England.

*I met Roger in 1997, when I was living in England*

### Exercise E

**Combine the following pairs of sentences using relative pronouns.**

1. Yesterday, Alice bought a new dress at the department store. Alice bought a new blouse at the department store last week.

---

---

2. Marie met her husband in 1996. In 1996, they were both students at New York University.

---

---

3. Barry was born in New York City. Barry still lives in New York City.

---

---

4. I have a test on Friday. I also have a paper due on Friday.

---

---

5. The woman is wearing a red dress. The woman taught my composition course last year.

---

---

### Writing Exercise

**Write five pairs of short sentences. Combine the pairs into one sentence, using the ways you learned in this chapter.**

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### Vocabulary Exercise

It is useful to develop your vocabulary by learning related words together. In the exercises this chapter, several words are used related to school and classes. They are listed in categories below. Think of more words in each category. If you do not know the word in English, look it up in your dictionary.

#### Words Related to School

##### Things used in class

textbook

---

---

---

---

##### Courses

psychology

---

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##### People at school

student

---

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## Chapter 2

# Using Words to Connect Ideas

When you write in English, you should make the relationship between ideas clear. To do that, you use words and phrases called *connectors*. Connectors indicate that what follows is additional information, an example of what came before, a restatement of what came before, and so on. Using connectors effectively can make what you write easier for the reader to understand.

In the sentence, “I like Indian food, *for example*, samosa and chicken korma,” the words *for example* indicate that what follows is an example of what came before, that is, samosa and chicken korma are examples of Indian food.

In this chapter, you will learn about six types of connectors: those that introduce additional information, restatement, contrasting information, examples, causes, and consequences.

### I. Additional information

These connectors tell the reader that what follows is additional information. Words and phrases that introduce additional information include “and,” “furthermore,” “moreover,” “in addition,” “also,” “too,” “as well as,” and “not to mention.”

1. Marie is a student at Lovell University. *In addition*, she is working as a waitress.
2. If you’re going to apply for this job, you have to provide documents *as well as* going for an interview.
3. Yvonne asked if she could borrow a book, *and* Derek said she could.

### II. Restatements

These connectors mean that what follows is another way of saying the same thing. Sometimes you might want to say something in a different way to make certain it is clear or to emphasize its importance. Connectors that introduce restatement include “in other words,” “in short,” “i.e.,” and “that is.”

1. Marianne's daughter has conjunctivitis, *that is*, a disease of the eye.
2. When we were in Europe, we saw castles, beautiful scenery, plays and musicals, and interesting historical sites. *In other words*, we had a wonderful time.

### III. Contrasting information

These connectors introduce information that is different from what would be expected, based on what came before or what the reader would expect. Connectors that introduce contrasting information include "but," "however," "although," "(even) though," "nevertheless," "nonetheless," and "on the other hand."

1. Lynn is really good at her job, *but* she doesn't like it.
2. My friends planned a surprise birthday party for me. *However*, Jackie told me about it, so I had to pretend to be surprised.
3. *Even though* it's raining today, we will still go sightseeing.

### IV. Examples

This connector tells readers that what follows is an example. "For example," "for instance," "to illustrate," "such as," "like," "including," and "include" all introduce examples.

1. Darcy's roommates have unusual hobbies. *For example*, one of them collects ceramic frogs and another dances.
2. In my English literature class, we're studying Victorian authors *such as* Charlotte Brontë and Charles Dickens.
3. Many of my relatives, *including* my mother, my sister, and two of my cousins, have red hair.

### V. Causes

This connector tells the reader that a cause for a certain event or situation. These connectors include "because (of)," "due to," "as a result (of)," "on account of," and "thanks to."

1. *Because* he's good at biology, Drew wants to major in biology in college.
2. *Due to* its low cost, we decided to stay in the Acme Hotel.
3. *Thanks to* good advice from my mother, I took computer courses in high school.

## VI. Consequences

Connectors that introduce consequences indicate that what follows is the result of a certain action. Connectors indicating consequences include “so,” “therefore,” “as a result,” “consequently,” and “as a consequence.”

1. Elinor got very sick last year, and, *as a result*, she missed a lot of school.
2. *Because* their children are in school, the Dashwoods do not want to move to a new city.
3. I like mysteries, *so* I buy a lot of them.

### Exercise A

**Underline the connectors and identify their types.**

1. It's really cold today, so be sure to dress warmly.
2. I'd like to go out tonight, but I have to study for a test.
3. This paper is too long. Furthermore, it has a number of errors.
4. We have a lot of work to do. For instance, we have to clean the house thoroughly.
5. Due to illness, the restaurant will be closed today.
6. The book was boring, unrealistic, and badly written; in other words, it was terrible.

### Exercise B

**Underline the connector and identify the type. Fill in the blank with something that could fit in the blank, based on the information you are given and the connector.**

1. Because I slept late this morning, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Catherine was hurt in an accident, so \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Bert really likes science fiction, but \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. That movie had a great story, excellent acting, and an ending that is a big surprise. In short, \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Kyoto has a lot of famous temples, including \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Last weekend, Julia went to church. She also \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Exercise C

**Fill in the blanks with appropriate connectors and identify their types.**

What is “Culture”?

1 When some people think of culture, they think of art, music, and literature, \_\_\_\_\_, “high culture.” 2 \_\_\_\_\_, some people think of movies, television, and popular music, \_\_\_\_\_, “popular culture.” 3 \_\_\_\_\_, there is another kind of culture. 4 Culture also refers to social behavior that is transmitted, including behavior patterns, beliefs, institutions, and so on. 5 \_\_\_\_\_, what people eat, how they are educated, and how they dress are all parts of culture. 6 Other examples of culture are family relationships, types of entertainment there, and ways of being polite. 7 We do not often think about these things, \_\_\_\_\_ they are very important to all aspects of our life. 8 These aspects of culture are passed along from one generation to the next within the culture. 9 Members of a culture share a verbal code (language) and a nonverbal code (ways of communicating without language). 10 \_\_\_\_\_, culture influences all aspects of our lives.

### Writing Exercise

Write six sentences or pairs of sentences with examples of connectors.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary Exercise

#### Words Related to Tourism

**Places that tourists visit**  
museums

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**Forms of transportation**  
train

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**Things that tourists take along**  
camera

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The National Museum of the American  
Indian, New York City

# Parallel Constructions

*Parallel constructions* are words or phrases in the same sentence or series of sentences that are equal. For example, in the sentence “I like listening to music and to play chess,” “to play” and “listening” are not parallel. The sentence should either be, “I like to listen to music and to play chess,” or “I like listening to music and playing chess.”

When writing a sentence with a series of elements, you should be sure that all the elements are parallel, that is, that they are grammatically equal. If the first element is an adjective, the second and third should be adjectives as well. Parallel elements indicate that the ideas are parallel. In addition, they make reading smoother and easier.

The following is a list of types of elements that should be parallel. (A, B, and C represent elements.)

### 1. A is B.

Not parallel: To fall in love is making a commitment to the future.

Parallel: To fall in love is to make a commitment to the future.

### 2. ... A, B, C ...

Not parallel: My responsibilities include answering the phone, filing papers and whatever my boss asks me to do.

Parallel: My responsibilities include answering the phone, filing papers, and doing whatever my boss asks me to do.

### 3. either A or B

Not parallel: I'd like either going to the beach or to go camping in the mountains.

Parallel: I'd like either to go to the beach or to go camping in the mountains.

### 4. Both A and B

Not parallel: Going to college is both an opportunity to make friends and educational.

Parallel: Going to college is both an opportunity to make friends and to get an education.

**5. not only A but also B**

Not parallel: Gil told Mimi the problem and how to solve it.

Parallel: Gil told Mimi what the problem was and how to solve it.

**6. : A and/or B**

Not parallel: The dress does not fit, so I have two choices: to get a refund or giving it away.

Parallel: The dress does not fit, so I have two choices: getting a refund or giving it away.

**Exercise A**

**Underline the elements of the following sentences that are or should be parallel. If they are not parallel, rewrite the sentence so that the elements are parallel.**

1. David is both going to school and works at a hotel.

---

---

2. Choose a movie that is either educational or a funny one.

---

---

3. Starting a new job is taking a chance.

---

---

4. When we go on vacation, we like to go to swim and hiking.

---

5. When choosing a school, you should consider what you want to major in and your future goals.

---

---

6. Stan hates cleaning the house and to take care of the yard.

---

---

7. You should consider your options: to ask for a raise or changing jobs.

---

---

8. New York is my favorite city, because it has interesting places to visit and good theater.

---

---

9. The book has two important characteristics: it is exciting, and interesting characters.

---

---

10. I have two pets: a dog and a bird.

---

---



### Writing Exercise

**Write an example of each of the six constructions that should be parallel. Underline the elements of the sentence that should be parallel. Check to make sure that they are.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary Exercise

#### Words Related to Physical Activity

##### Physical activities

hiking

swimming

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---

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##### Equipment

swimsuit

backpack

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## Chapter 4

# Using Modifiers

Modifiers are words that are used to describe something. They are important when you write. They can make your writing more concrete and more interesting.

### Adverbs and Adjectives

There are two basic types of modifiers. The first type is adjectives. Adjectives are words that modify nouns. For example, in the sentence, “Sam is a tall man,” “man” is a noun, and “tall” modifies it, so “tall” is an adjective. The second type of modifier is adverbs. Adverbs modify verbs, other adverbs, or adjectives. For example, in the sentence “My cousin plays tennis badly,” “badly” modifies the verb “plays,” so it is an adverb. In the sentence “Sam is a very tall man,” “very” modifies the adjective “tall,” so it is an adverb.

### Exercise A

**In the following sentences, underline the adjectives or adverbs, and draw a line to the words that they modify.**

1. I really like traveling to other countries.
2. The mountains around here are beautiful.
3. A picture with a gold frame sitting on the neat desk.
4. The ham is delicious, but the vegetables are salty.
5. The papers were piled neatly on the table.
6. If you want to do well on the test, you have to study hard.
7. Have some of these cookies — they’re delicious.
8. San Francisco is a beautiful city, but it can be cold and foggy.
9. The knife is sharp. Be very careful when you use it.
10. The Internet is really convenient for keeping in touch with faraway friends or quickly finding useful information.

### Exercise B

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with adverbs or adjectives.

1. This is a really \_\_\_\_\_ city.
2. If you want a \_\_\_\_\_ book, try reading *Tom Sawyer*.
3. Hanna made herself a \_\_\_\_\_ sweater.
4. The chicken is too \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If you want the job done \_\_\_\_\_, ask Donna.
6. Since it's \_\_\_\_\_ out today, be sure to wear a \_\_\_\_\_ coat.
7. This textbook is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. This news magazine has a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ news stories.
9. Jake works \_\_\_\_\_ but his work is \_\_\_\_\_.
10. If you want to get there \_\_\_\_\_, you should take a bus instead of flying.

### Exercise C

Write ten sentences. Underline the adverbs and adjectives that you have used.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## Comparatives and Superlatives

A comparative is a form of an adjective or adverb that compares two things. If the word has one or two syllables, regular comparatives are formed by adding an -er ending. For example, the comparative form of “tight” is “tighter.” (There are some irregular comparatives. For example, the comparative form of “well” and “good” is “better,” and “worse” is the comparative form of “bad” and “badly.”) When a word has more than two syllables, then the word “more” comes before the adjective or adverb, for example, “more beautiful.”

A superlative is similar to a comparative, but a superlative is an adjective or adverb that compares three or more things rather than just two things. The regular superlative is formed by adding -est to a one or two syllable word or putting “most” before the word if it has three or more syllables. Therefore, the superlative form of “tight” is “tightest,” and the superlative form of “beautiful” is “most beautiful.” There are also irregular forms of superlatives. For example, “best” is the superlative form of “well” and “good,” and “worst” is the superlative form of “badly” and “bad.” Superlatives are sometimes used in sentences like “That is the most interesting book I’ve ever read.”

For example, in the sentence, “Becky works harder than Barbara,” “harder” is a comparative adverb that compares how hard Becky and Barbara work. In the sentence, “Becky works harder than Barbara, but Diane works the hardest of the three,” “hardest” is a superlative.

### Exercise D

**Fill in the blanks with the correct form of an adjective or adverb.**

1. Junko is good at speaking English, but Kimiko is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Copenhagen was the \_\_\_\_\_ city Jenny had ever seen.
3. Doug is a talented piano player, but Kim is even \_\_\_\_\_.
4. That bed is hard, but this one is even \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Jimmy likes pears and apples a lot, but he likes peaches \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The park is quiet, but the garden is \_\_\_\_\_.