

# English Essays by English Teachers

Reading, Writing活動の教材としても活用できる!  
英文ライティング添削講座「フォローアップ」  
参加者による寄稿英文集

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# Introduction

by Peter Parise

This text is a collection of writing samples produced by the participants in an online writing course at the Kanagawa Prefectural Institute of Language and Culture Studies, a government sponsored organization located in Japan. One of the missions of this institute is to provide opportunities for teacher development for English teachers who serve in elementary, junior high, and high schools in the Kanagawa Prefecture. There are two writing courses connected with this program. The basic writing course, called 英文ライティング添削講座, *EibunRaitingu TensakuKoza*, or the Support Writing Course focuses on writing better paragraphs. The course which follows after this is the 英文ライティング添削講座「フォローアップ」, *EibunRaitingu TensakuKoza Foro-appu* or the Support Writing Follow-up. This course, based on the foundation established in the basic course, teaches the participants about four different types of essays. Both of these exist to help teachers improve their writing with the hope that with practice comes not only perfection but also confidence. With this confidence, we believe the teachers will be more willing to adopt writing tasks as part of their teaching repertoire. Teachers need to know both in Japan and abroad is that writing not just a static exercise of grammar, but an opportunity for the writer to communicate a meaningful message to the readers.

These writing courses are necessary for English teachers for three reasons. The first reason is to provide opportunities for practice. Writing, like any skill, needs practice in order to improve. The best analogy for this is like exercise or sports. The idea is that if a teacher gets enough practice writing, as mentioned above, confidence in teaching and evaluating writing is also developed. A second reason is to expand the teachers' knowledge of how to teach writing by showing examples of how to conduct a writing task, what to focus on in that task and suggest ways on how to give feedback. The final reason, and the most important, is that these courses are conducted online. This institute uses Moodle, an open source software platform for providing a website for e-learning. By participating in these courses, the teachers in our courses not only get practice using word processing software, they are also exposed to the affordances of the Internet by being shown resources that they too can utilize to facilitate their language instruction. It is important for teachers to be aware of these possibilities.

The main reason we produced this volume and present three texts written by the teachers who participated in the first follow-up course held in 2017, is to reach an authentic audience, which means that rather than write for the instructor to obtain a grade, these texts are written for people outside the course context. These sample texts, which were made for use in English as a second or foreign language classes are written by authors who are teachers themselves.

Teachers know what they and their students are interested in and this perspective informs our decision to present the best of what our participants produced in this follow-up course. They address issues that are relevant to them and to their own students with topics such as how to find a new career, what are the advantages and disadvantages of marrying late, and why school lunch is an important part of school life. Most importantly, these topics apply to not only Japan, but also are relevant to most people around the world.

This text can be used in two possible ways: to provide a model for writing a certain type of essay, such as a chronological, compare and contrast, and argumentative essay and to be a secondary resource for reading practice beyond the school's textbook.

Each section will:

- Provide some background about the content and the type of essay.
- Give some teaching tips on how to utilize the sample text for your classes to teach reading and writing.
- Give hints on how to raise the students' awareness of important aspects of reading and writing in English.
- Provide a sample essay written by one of the contributors.

To conclude, I want to express my appreciation to the authors who contributed to this volume. They are the ones who wrote four essays in light of their busy schedules and eventually chose one of these for this publication. It is my hope that this will inspire them to continue writing and put what they learned into practice at their schools. My thanks also goes to my colleague, Thoa Nguyen. She has contributed a lot both online and off with checking the participants' writing as well as updating and developing materials for both writing courses. Her tireless effort and her sharp wit are impeccable and these qualities make her an important member of this institute. Finally, I want to thank you, the reader for taking the time to read this text. If you are a teacher of English, please use these materials for your own classes. This text has the Creative Commons attribution, meaning you can freely use the material to suit your educational needs.

Thank you,

Peter Parise

Kanagawa Prefectural Institute of Language and Culture Studies

# Chronological Essay

The first essay is a *Chronological* essay, which means that an element of time, either to illustrate an event, or to give steps in doing some sort of action, is presented in the essay. With the essay titled “How to Find a New Career,” we are presented with steps on how to find a new career. This topic is quite relevant because the rate of change in society is so rapid that some jobs could become obsolete in a few years due to advances in technology. For students, the idea of changing either their place of work as well as whole careers is a strong possibility. In addition, this essay can also be good advice from the perspective of a high school student who wonders what they want to do after university. Students can reflect on who they are and take steps on what they want to do when they enter adulthood.

The following pages offer suggestions for teaching activities.

## Teaching Suggestion 1: Reading

### Thinking about Discourse Markers

#### Aim:

- To raise the students' awareness of the use and importance of discourse markers.
- To have the students notice the difference between formal and informal writing styles.

**Level:** High School Year 1-3

**Time:** 25 –30 minutes

**Materials:** One copy of the essay “How to Find a New Career” for each student.

#### Preparation:

1. Have the students read the text first individually.
2. Make groups or pairs to conduct the activity.
3. Write the guiding questions on the board or project on the screen for students to read and follow.
  - Notice that using *conjunctions* or connecting words like “also”, “and” and “or” are at the beginning of a sentence.
  - What do you think about using “also”, “and” and “or” at the beginning of a sentence?
  - Would it be good to replace these words?
  - Can you think of any words to replace these?
4. Write or project these discourse markers:

In addition,

However,

Furthermore,

Moreover,

On the other hand,

For instance,

#### Procedure:

1. After reading this essay, have the students notice three words in the text that are **bold** face and underlined.
2. Ask the students the guiding questions for #3 in the preparation.
3. Have the pairs/groups discuss these questions. Use of Japanese or English is ok.
4. Have a representative from the pair/group report about what they notice.

## Teaching Suggestion 1: Reading

### Thinking about Discourse Markers (continued)

5. Next, show the students the list of discourse markers provided above at #4 of the and provide a definition of each. Be sure to quiz the students if they can remember.
6. The next task is to decide which fits best as a replacement of “also”, “and” and “or” in the text. Have the pairs and groups, based on the definitions they learned, replace the conjunctions with discourse markers. Here are the model answers.
  - This is one way to develop your skills. **In addition**, there are many opportunities to study by yourself by attending courses, taking online classes, or learning with a specialist one on one.
  - You can have many chances to have different experiences. **Furthermore**, internships are a good way to get a job.
  - This may be strange advice, but the reason is to open your mind to new ideas and that means going to places where you have a chance to meet many people. **Moreover/For instance**, live in a place with other people, such as share house or social apartment where you may have many chances to learn new things.
7. Ask an additional guiding question. “How do these conjunctions and the discourse markers differ?” Have the pairs/groups discuss and report their answers. Explain the following if necessary.
  - The use of ***regular conjunctions*** at the beginning of a sentence is wrong by most grammar books.
  - However it is used for more casual writing between friends or on SNS. It is closer to spoken English rather than written English.
  - The use of ***discourse markers*** is more formal and academic. The text becomes more like written English than spoken English. This is a more acceptable way to write in most grammar books.
8. Ask additional questions:
  - If you were writing to a friend on LINE or Facebook Messenger, which would be better?
  - If you were writing an email to get a job, which would be better?
  - If you are writing an article for the Daily Yomiuri (an English newspaper in Japan), which would be better?
9. Have the students respond to these questions. Comment on the casual style of this text. It may be easier to read because it is trying to give advice. If discourse markers were used, then it would create some distance between the author and the reader.

## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### Reverse Engineering and Writing an Outline for a Chronological Essay

#### Aim:

- To raise the students awareness of what an outline is and why its important
- To have students practice writing an outline to prepare for writing

**Level:** High School Year 1-3

**Time:** One class hour (50 minutes)

**Materials:** Paper both A4 (for individual writing) and A3 (for group writing), a pen or pencil.  
These items can also be projected as well.

#### Preparation:

- For Part 1: Understanding an outline via reverse engineering

#### Introduction

How to \_\_\_\_\_

Here are three steps to \_\_\_\_\_

#### Body

The first step is \_\_\_\_\_

The second step \_\_\_\_\_

The third step \_\_\_\_\_

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, to \_\_\_\_\_ the three steps are  
to \_\_\_\_\_

- For Part 2: Writing an original outline

how to lose weight.

how to get a girlfriend /  
boyfriend.

how to prepare for an exam.

how to finish a video game.

how to make new friends.

how to use a sewing machine.

how to study.

how to make okonomiyaki.

how to take good pictures on  
your phone.



## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### Writing an Outline for a Chronological Essay (continued)

#### Procedure:

#### Part 1: The structure of an outline: How is it done?

1. The teacher projects or hands out the outline frame on p. 8
2. Teacher starts by stating: "To understand how an essay is written, it is best to look at the parts. One good way to do this is to outline the text"
3. The teacher can ask guiding questions about the outline, the students can respond in Japanese or English.
  - What is the purpose of an "introduction?"
    - Model answer: to present the topic sentence and prepare the reader for the points in the body.
  - What does the "body" have and why is it important?
    - Model answer: the body is the main section of the essay and provides evidence and examples to support the topic sentence.
  - How do you find main points of the body?
    - Model answer: Usually the first line of the paragraph will provide a hint.
  - What is the purpose of a "conclusion?"
    - Model answer: to review the topic sentence and points made in the body.
  - Is the "introduction" and the "conclusion" similar?
    - Model answer: Yes, both talk about the same information to focus the reader on the writer's ideas.
4. Using this frame pairs/groups of students work to fill in the outline using the text "How to Find a New Career." First they read the text and fill out the relevant sections.
5. P. 10, shows how the essay can be outlined and can serve as a way to give feedback and to serve as a model for the activity for Part 2.

## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### Writing an Outline for a Chronological Essay (continued)

#### Introduction

How to find a new career.

Here are three steps to change your career.

#### Body

The first step is to know yourself.

The second step is to educate yourself.

The third step is to meet people.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, to change your career the three steps are to know yourself, to educate yourself, and to meet people.

## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### Writing an Outline for a Chronological Essay (continued)

#### Part 2: Write an original outline.

1. List some problems/activities that need advice or use the list provided on p. 8. The teacher can also invite the students to suggest different ones to add to this list. The whole class should decide on one topic.
2. The students then as a group think and discuss the advice they would give to solve the problem/complete the activity.
3. Have the students plan an essay outline based on the topic, and their solution.
4. In pairs or in groups, the students fill in the essay outline frame on p. 8.
5. The teacher should circulate around the class to be available to help and answer questions.
6. The completed outlines will be posted on the wall of the classroom.
7. The students read the outlines of each pair/ group and vote on the one that is most interesting.
8. The teacher then checks the outlines and gives feedback to the class on how to perfect their outline.
  - Is the outline clear?
  - Does the outline illustrate steps necessary to solve the problem/ do the activity?
  - Does the conclusion review the steps in the body?
9. Finally, the teacher can comment on how building an outline prepares students for writing.

## How to Find a New Career

Are you happy with your job? Do you want to change your life? I have been an English teacher for six years, but sometimes I think about changing my career. This is because I have so many interests that I sometimes wonder if I should try a different kind of job. There are some people in the world, though, who really want to change, but do not know what to do. If you are one of those people, here are three steps to change your career.



The first step is to know yourself. To know ourselves is one way to build a career. Think about your good and bad points. Then think about what you like and dislike are. Next, think about what kinds of situations make you feel happy or sad and why? Take a piece of paper, and start writing a list of these ideas. These are indicators of who you are and this is very important knowledge that can help you to decide on your career.

The second step is to educate yourself. Develop skills that can help you make a career change. If you are working, try to learn things in your current job. If you are reluctant and demotivated to do your job, you should change your attitude and see it as an opportunity to learn something new. This is one way to develop your skills.



**Also**, there are many opportunities to study by yourself by attending courses, taking online classes, or learning with a specialist one on one. Volunteering is another option to improve your job skills. You can have many chances to have different experiences. **And** internships are a good way to get a job. Recently, many university students try to do internships to

find suitable jobs. There are even some internships for working adults. That way you don't need to quit your current job.

Finally, try to meet people. This may be strange advice but the reason is to open your mind to new ideas and that means going to places where you have a chance to meet many people. Or live in a place with other people, such as a share house or a social apartment where you may have many chances to learn new things. If you live alone, you can work hard, go home, and eat by yourself. This is fine but you may not have a chance to talk with others. In other words, put yourself in situations where you can make connections, because one way to find a new career is through people you know who can help you.



In conclusion, the main points of changing your career are first, to know yourself. If you don't know yourself, it is difficult for you to find an occupation that is suitable for you. Second, educate yourself. If you really want to get a different job, or a new job, you must think about your skills and that means doing your best to learn. Try to volunteer, take an internship or even learn things in your own job. Finally, find a place to make connections. Find or live with people who have similar interests as you do because they can help you with building a new career. There are many things to learn in the world, but by following these steps, you will eventually be able to find a career that is right for you.



# Compare and Contrast Essay

A green apple and a yellow orange are positioned in the background, with the apple on the left and the orange on the right. The background is a warm, orange-toned gradient.

A *Compare and Contrast* essay is used to make a comparison between two things. Another way to use compare and contrast is to think about the advantages and disadvantages of something. In this essay, the author writes about a very timely idea: the advantages and disadvantages of marrying late. While this can be a hot topic for adults in Japan and beyond, it can also be important for students of any age to think about when is the right time, if ever, to make a commitment to marry. The essay structure is itemized by different points and looks at the positive and negative aspects of that point in the three body paragraphs. The points used in the essay are practical by considering the financial, psychological, and physical aspects of marrying late. The author also employs some very informative facts to support these advantages and disadvantages. The evidence presented in the essay is very persuasive, and reveals another side to compare and contrast essays: helping the reader make a decision. For anyone who struggles with whether to marry later in life or not, this text makes interesting observations to help with that choice.

The following pages offer teaching hints on how to use this essay.

## Teaching Suggestion 1: Reading

### Post-Reading Activity Using The Venn Diagram

**Aim:**

To provide practice in using graphic organizers as a means for comprehending a text.

**Level:** High School Year 1-3

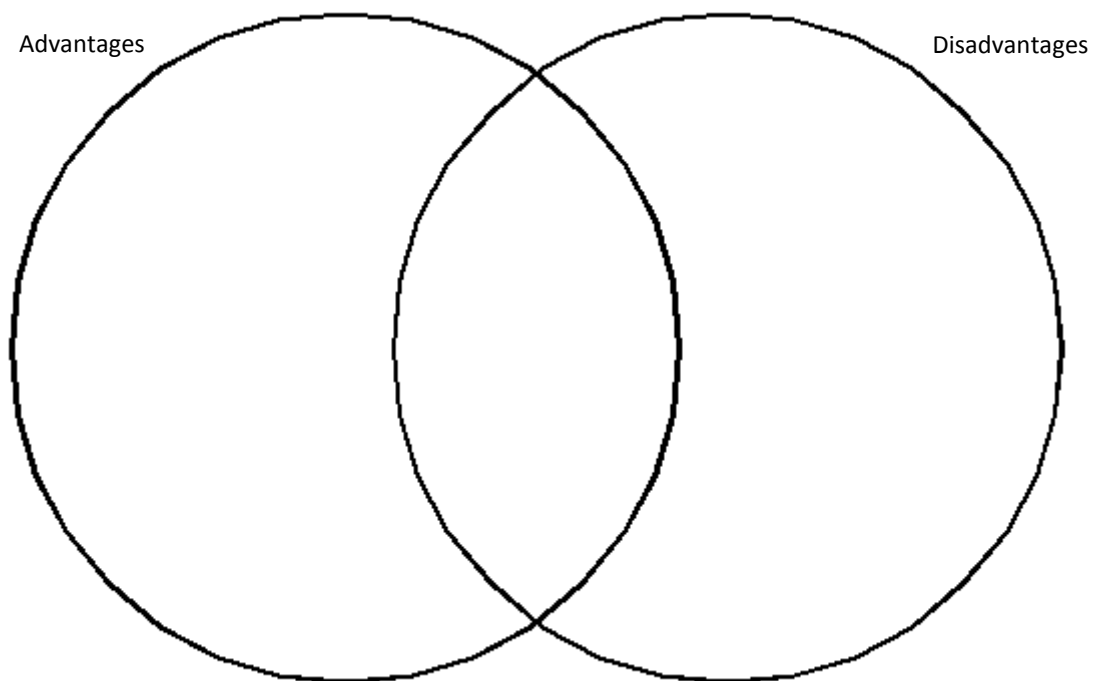
**Time:** 25 –30 minutes

**Materials:** One copy of the essay for each student, Paper, Pencils,

**Preparation:**

Distribute paper for students to take notes.

Divide students into pairs or groups.



- Write on the chalkboard or project on the screen a Venn Diagram.
- Prepare some guiding questions for the students.
  - “Have you seen this image before?”
- If some students answered yes:
  - “What is this diagram called?”
  - “What is it used for?”
- If students answered no:
  - “What do you think this diagram is used for?”

## Teaching Suggestion 1: Reading

### Post-Reading Activity Using The Venn Diagram (continued)

#### Procedure:

1. Have the students read through the text.
2. While the students read, prepare for presenting.
3. Have the pairs/groups read through the text and try to fill in the advantages and disadvantages that the author mentions in the text.
4. Are there any details that they are missing? Have the groups show each other their diagram as a way to check if they missed anything.
5. Ask the students if they can think of any additional advantages or disadvantages to marrying late that the author did not mention. This time rather than rely on the text, the students must think together. This can be done in their L1 but they must write and report in English. They can add their ideas/reasons/examples to their diagram.
6. Ask the groups to do to decide: "Is it better to marry late or early, why?" Remind them to refer to the information in their diagram as support.



## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### A Writing Activity Using the Venn Diagram

**Aim:**

To prepare students for writing using the Venn Diagram

**Level:** High School Year 1-3

**Time:** 25 –30 minutes

**Materials:** Worksheet with a Venn Diagram

**Preparation:**

1. Demonstrate how to make a Venn Diagram to your students using a very simple topic:

- City vs. Country
- Dogs vs. Cats

Classroom English:

“Today we are going to think of a topic to compare and contrast, but first let me demonstrate how to use a Venn Diagram for planning writing. I will make one about (topic). But let’s do this together. Please help by giving me your ideas.”

Please fill in the diagram while you demonstrate. Encourage the students to contribute ideas.

2. The teacher and the students discuss and choose one interesting topic.

The topic should be something that all the students can enjoy.

Example topics

- Which is a better place to live in the country or the city?
  - Which is best for a school trip: Okinawa or Kyoto?
  - What are the advantages or disadvantages of having a boyfriend or girlfriend in high school?
  - What are the advantages or disadvantages of studying abroad?
  - What are the advantages or disadvantages of having a part-time job in high school?
3. Get the students into pairs or groups.
4. Distribute the Venn Diagram handout.
5. Students think about the topic and every member must contribute something for their diagram.

## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### A Writing Activity Using the Venn Diagram (continued)

6. Since it is the same topic, encourage the pairs or groups to “outthink” each other. In other words, which pair/group can add more ideas to their diagram.
7. Have the pairs/ groups share their diagram.

## The Advantages and Disadvantages of Marrying Late in Life

In Japan, the average age of marriage keeps going up. According to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in 2015, the average age for men stood at 30.7 and for women at 29. When I was young, a proper age for marriage was likened to a Christmas cake. On December 24th, almost every cake sells well, on the 25th, some of the leftovers are purchased, but on the 26th, hardly anyone tries to buy them. This parable became old-fashioned and things have changed. The trend toward later marriage is gaining momentum. I'd like to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of marrying late. Also, I will try to demonstrate the cause of the current situation.



First, let us consider later marriage from the financial point of view. On the positive side, if you get married later, in most cases you are financially secure and would be able to spend much money on child rearing. Today's educational expenses are skyrocketing: after school, your children might want to go to swimming and cram school, or to attend piano or ballet lessons, plus English conversation class. Do you know how much it costs? The Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute figures that money spent on each child for extracurricular activities ranges from 10,000 to 20,000 yen a month. As the average annual income of a University of Tokyo student's family surpasses 10 million yen, to provide a broad and good education costs a lot.



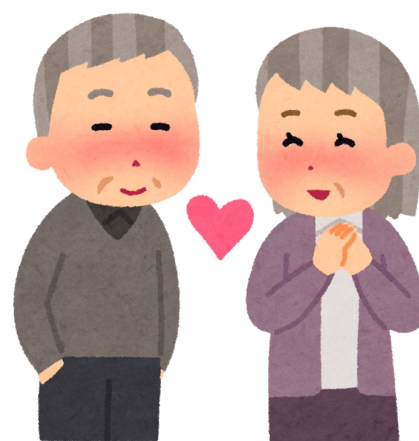
Another advantage of later marriage is that you are mentally mature and can devote yourself to family life. After you have enjoyed your personal life, you wouldn't play around without thinking of your family members. You can build peaceful relationships with your spouse and children. News on child abuse cases by young and immature parents is rampant on TV or in the newspapers. Middle-aged calmness and psychological stability will contribute to creating a happy and loving family.

On the other hand, if you have children in your forties or fifties, you are supposed to worry about whether you can support your children's education. You might face retirement before your children reach adulthood. Now that almost all students choose higher education, you have to keep working even after your retirement. Even though you continue to work, your income will decrease dramatically. In the end, you may be able to finance your children's education, but you cannot afford to save money for your old age.

The second disadvantage is that tying the knot later means you are already getting older. You may become easily exhausted from playing with your children. In a kindergarten or an elementary school, you need to participate in a running race with your children in the Sports Day event. Do you think you can manage it? Some of your children's friends might regard you as their grandparents when you have a class observation day. What if your children feel embarrassed with your graying hair in front of their friends? In the worst-case scenario, you may not be able to live long enough to attend your children's wedding ceremony. No matter how hard you may try, you cannot beat your age.

To summarize, marrying late has advantages and disadvantages in terms of financial, mental, and physical aspects. However, it is a sure thing that later marriage has become a trend in Japan. What accelerates this trend? I believe there are two reasons. One is attributed to the Japanese economy. After the end of World War II, men devoted themselves to working to help Japan recover economically. Economic success has brought about overwork. As a result, people are busy working when they are young. In addition, women have started to work on equal terms with men.

Both men and women have little time to concern themselves in dating. Another reason is that the value of family ties has eroded as people enjoy their individual freedom in this modernized society. *Ohitorisama*, meaning, "people living and doing things alone," is growing in popularity. People find it enjoyable to travel solo, to sing Karaoke alone, and to eat dinner alone. The



tendency to marry late is the result of structural changes in society rather than of personal choice. This trend will carry on and will be difficult to break.

# Argumentative Essay

This type of essay is important when the author feels very strongly about a topic and wishes to *persuade* the reader to agree with the author's view. *Argumentative* essays are essentially a debate on paper, with the writer using reasons, examples, and data from secondary sources to convince the reader of their position. This author's contribution to this publication is a topic that takes a stance on the importance of school lunch. The title itself skillfully presents a debatable topic: "Do We Need School Lunch?" telling the reader that this is the point of debate. Her introduction also lays the groundwork for the issue as well by sharing the history of school lunch and asks if it is necessary to have school lunch in a first world country like Japan. She then prepares the reader with two reasons that will be explored in depth: school lunch keeps children healthy, and it teaches them manners. She then follows with two paragraphs devoted to each point and provides support with examples, as well as data from relevant secondary sources. These sources are a statistic from the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) and quotes from specialists who comment on the value of having school lunch for developing proper manners, which is important to the socialization of children. Her conclusion reviews these vital points again and finishes with a statement that school lunch is not only a duty, but also a way to insure the future of the country. The inclusion of references also adds a degree of professionalism to the text, allowing the reader research more on the subject. The following pages have teaching suggestions for using this essay.

## Teaching Suggestion 1: Reading

### Jigsaw task: Identifying and Ranking Different Types of Supporting Evidence

#### Aim:

- To introduce different types of supporting evidence
- To read the essay and label the types of supporting evidence
- To evaluate the logical support of argumentative essays
- To exercise critical thinking

**Level:** High School Year 1-3

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Materials:** One copy of the essay for each student, Paper, Pencils,

#### Preparation:

This activity is divided into two steps using Jigsaw.

- Data /Statistics – (Numbers/statistics related to your topic.)
- Quotes from Experts – (The opinions of specialists)
- Examples – (Illustration of an idea or opinion/ to help the reader understand)

- Identification and labeling of supporting evidence.
  1. Introduce each of these types of supporting evidence and define them.
  2. Tell the students that they will look for these in the essay. Reassure them they do not have to find these by themselves; they will get help from their classmates and the teacher if necessary.
  3. Divide your class into groups of 4 students.
  4. Each student in the group be responsible for a section of either paragraph two or three. Each paragraph section has a number.
    - The students can highlight these sections with a different color to make it easier for them to focus on the section they are reading.
    - An alternative is to print out the essay, cut out the relevant sections, and then give those sections to each team.
  5. One student in each group has to specialize in one section. This group is called the “home” team.

## Teaching Suggestion 1: Reading

### Jigsaw task: Identifying and Ranking Evidence (continued)

6. The home teams break up into “specialist” teams. In other words, the students who specialize in section #1 get together as a group; students who specialize in section #2 get in a group, etc. The goal of each group is to find and then categorize the type of supporting evidence in the section. Each member of the specialist group needs to be familiar with their part well enough to teach their home team.
  - If the specialist teams are very large, i.e. more than four students, it would be best to break it up into smaller specialist teams.
7. The expert groups look at their section and search for supporting information. In each numbered section there is one of the following.
  - Data /Statistics – (Numbers/statistics related to your topic.)
  - Quotes from Experts – (The opinions of specialists)
  - Examples – (Illustration of an idea or opinion/ to help the reader understand)
8. After the specialist groups become familiar with their passage, they return to their home team and teach the group members what they learned in the specialist team.
  - The teacher should circulate among the groups to give assistance, ask questions or if necessary intervene.
9. The home team, after hearing each report, then ranks passages on the strength of the evidence presented and why. The students rank passages in order from 1 to 4 with 1 being the weakest and 4 being the strongest.
10. The teacher can then ask the groups to present their ranking: The groups can conduct this discussion in Japanese, but the report should be in English. The teacher should give their own ranking as well as a model and as a way to give feedback.

## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### Reverse engineering: How to outline an essay.

#### Aim:

- To see how reasons are supported by evidence
- To show the logical structure of an argumentative essay

**Level:** High School Year 1-3

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Materials:** One copy of the essay for each student, outline graphic organizer, pencils, and post-its.

**Background:** This can be a follow-up activity to the reading activity for argumentative essays.

#### Procedure:

##### Part 1: Outlining the Argumentative Essay, “Do We Need School Lunch?”

1. Students receive a copy of the argumentative essay.
2. In pairs, or groups the students read the text and determine the topic, reasons and supporting evidence in an outline structure below.

Topic: Do we need school lunch?

Reason 1

Evidence

Evidence

Reason 2

Evidence

Evidence



## Teaching Suggestion 2: Writing

### Reverse engineering: How to outline an essay (continued)

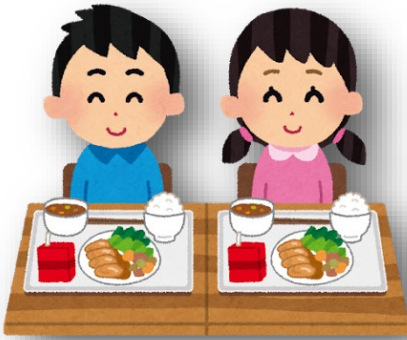
3. The students need to map out the reason and supporting evidence from the text. Their focus should be on sections numbered 1-4 in the essay.
4. A representative of a pair or group moves to another pair or group and shows their answers. Having the same answer is a good thing since they have recognized the important sections.

### Part 2: Who has the best support?

**Background:** This task is a variation of an activity for practicing debate. Rather than take opposing sides as in usual debate, the students write for the affirmative side of a debatable topic, but the goal is to see who can give the best reasons and evidence for support. Students can do this in pairs, or groups.

1. The class decides on one single topic, with the teacher's suggestion if necessary.
2. The students: either alone, in pairs, or groups think of two reasons for support.
3. The students think of evidence to support those two reasons.
4. The students write an outline such as the one below to organize the logic of the argument.
5. Time should be given for students to think about and research the topic.
  - Depending on the policy of your school, you can allow the students to use their smartphones to find data and expert opinions about the topic. Be sure to remind students to paraphrase or quote what they read to avoid plagiarism.
6. Once the outlines are written, the teacher has the pairs/groups post their outline on the walls around the classroom.
7. The students are given one post-it each, write their name on it, and move around the classroom to read the posted outlines. If one outline seems stronger than the others, the student attaches their post-it to that outline.
8. The outline with the most post-its is the focus for a whole class discussion. The teacher asks the students why this outline is the strongest. The discussion can be conducted in Japanese or English.
9. The teacher should write their own outline and show it to the students as a way to give feedback/or to serve as an example.
10. The teacher can also remind the students that writing an outline is helpful for planning the logic of the essay before writing.

## Do We Need School Lunch?



School lunch has a long history in Japan. The first school lunch began in 1884 to offer meals for poor children whose parents could not afford enough food. Compared to 150 years ago, the number of poor children has decreased and we have the freedom of choice. Therefore, some say Japan no longer needs school lunch. However, I believe we still need it because of two reasons. School lunch keeps children healthy and it also gives children the chance to learn manners.

First, school lunch keeps children healthy. ①Having lunch is considered a duty in Japanese school. In foreign countries, it is common to have lunch in a school cafeteria. If a school had a cafeteria, children would choose their favorite foods such as French fries and sweetened juice. Japan's school lunch is totally different from other countries' school lunch. Every student has to have the same meal in his or her classroom. They are not allowed to go outside their classroom before they finish eating. Thanks to this routine, children never miss their lunch. ②In addition, nutritionists hired by the government plan a well-balanced menu. Each meal consists of rice or bread, a bowl of soup, and side dishes. Children who are used to having well-balanced meals will be able to consider more about nutrition when they choose what they eat. This balanced combination also helps to decrease the obesity rate. According to OECD, Japan's obesity rate is 3.7% and this rate is the lowest in the world. Children get accustomed to having a balanced meal regularly through school lunch. It is effective not only to raise healthy children but also healthy adults.



Second, school lunch gives children the chance to learn manners. ③Children can learn how to cooperate with others for having meals and what good table manners are. Just after the last morning class, children put on white aprons. Then, they carry dishes and food from the school kitchen. It is because children are responsible for serving out food to their classmates. During lunchtime, their homeroom teacher teaches children table manners; for example, how to use chopsticks, hold dishes and remove bones from grilled fish.



Children put their desks together and teach these kinds of table manners to each other. ④ In an article published in the Asia Journal of Clinical Nutrition, registered dietitians Nobuko Tanaka and Miki Miyoshi both agreed on the effectiveness of lunch time in teaching manners. They wrote, “Not only serving nutritional food, school lunch program also serves as an important educational method for school children to acquire proper dietary habits and its knowledge, and a sense of gratitude in children.” Although teaching table manners used to be the parents’ role, it is difficult for them to do so because they are too busy working. Not every parent has time to cook and eat meals with their children. Therefore, school lunch is necessary to learn how to prepare meals and eat meals politely.



In conclusion, school lunch has two roles. One is to provide children with well-balanced meals for their health. Having school lunch makes children aware of the importance of having a well-balanced meal every day. The other role is to learn social manners. School is the place where children study basic subjects and learn social manners. Learning social manners is a very important duty. That is why school lunch is an essential part of Japanese school. Having school lunch is not only essential for our children’s future, but also for our country’s future. Therefore, we need school lunch.

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# English Essays by English Teachers

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発行日 令和元年 5月1日

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