

4 Simple Tips for Success in Any U.S. Classroom



ESL Workshop

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The 4 Tips

- Be an active learner
- Prepare, prepare, prepare
- Understand U.S. academic styles and values
- Know where (and when) to go for help



#1 Be An Active Learner

- Be confident in your abilities to digest, analyze and produce information
- Engage with text, classmates and professors
- Create learning strategies/opportunities that work for you
- Take responsibility for your success



#2 Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

- Give yourself time

Assignment Lifecycle

Brainstorm → Gather Info/Take Notes →
Draft → Revise → Final Product

- Practice presentations in advance
- Don't worry if it takes you longer to read/write/prepare presentations



#3 Understand U.S. academic styles and values

- Author has more responsibility than reader
- Know the “formula” for your field
- Readers (especially professors) want to hear your words, not just words of experts
- Author must infer, synthesize, & analyze outside sources to be considered credible. Author must prove credibility.
- Know what is meant by “plagiarism”



Understand U.S. academic styles and values

- Ponder “What is good writing?”



Is this good writing?

The sun is as hot as Hades. It is August.

Because I'm inside all week, I really look forward to weekends. This weekend I plan to go to the lake and have a barbeque with friends. My sister is a summer baby. I'll go to her birthday party as well.



Is this good writing?

The August sun beats on the pavement outside my building. I feel a different sort of pounding, the one that comes from overhead lights and neutral colored walls. Daydreaming about my weekend keeps me sane.



Understand U.S. academic styles and values

- Ponder “What is good writing?”
 - Insightful
 - Relevant
 - Cohesive/ Well Structured
 - Informed
 - Clear – Use words that you know, speak on subjects you understand, adhere to standard U.S. grammar rules, be efficient
- Learning can't be measured by grades alone



#4 Know WHERE to go for help

- Instructor
- Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL)
- Writing Handbook
- Grammar & Writing Websites
- ESL Department
 - Classes during school year
 - Writing Studios every Friday during school year
 - ESL TA in the CTL
 - Workshops



Know WHEN to go for help

- Instructor: ASAP & as needed
- CTL: Days/week before a paper/project due
<http://www.uis.edu/ctl/about/documents/writingapptguidelines.pdf>
- Writing Handbook: While writing or developing presentation
- Grammar & Writing Websites: Any time.
Doesn't need to be connected with assignment
- ESL Department – ASAP



Grammar & Writing Websites

A Writer's Reference – Grammar and Writing Rules & Practice

<http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref6e/Player/Pages/Main.aspx>

OWL at Purdue

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Ohio State University

<http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/index.html>

Variety of links to grammar rules and practice

[http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Grammar and English Usage/](http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Grammar%20and%20English%20Usage/)

Variety of links on writing techniques

<http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Writing/>

