

## **Second Person**

A student can learn to improve his writing by taking several steps. First, he should think about his assignment and find a topic that he knows he can write about. For instance, a student who loves hunting and fishing and is assigned a comparison/contrast paragraph could compare bow hunting to hunting with a gun. Or he could compare pole fishing to fishing with a rod and reel. After the student has picked a topic, the next step is to brainstorm ideas and organize your thoughts. Most teachers expect you to learn how to write a formal outline as a method of organization. Though a formal outline intimidates some students, it is really only a list of main ideas with a list of examples under each main idea. After getting organized, the student should state his main idea or ideas in the form of a topic sentence. Then you should support the topic sentence with good details and examples in a well-organized fashion. Finally, you should close the paragraph with a good sentence which ties the ideas of the paragraph together or draws a conclusion from the details presented in the paragraph. However, at this point the student has completed only a rough draft. Before turning in the paragraph, you should revise it. Read it silently or, if possible, aloud, and see if the sentences sound mature or if they are short and choppy. Also check for transitions. See if the sentences flow logically from one to the other. Make sure that no ideas are left out, that they are discussed in the proper order, and that they are not repeated unnecessarily. The last part of revision involves proofreading for grammatical, mechanical, and spelling errors. When the student is satisfied that he has written the very best paper he can write and that he has perfected every word and every sentence, he can turn in his paper. Remember! Your writing reflects who you are and what you think. If you can write clearly and precisely, you will have a better chance of succeeding in any class you take and, ultimately, in any career that you choose.