



SMARTHINKING™

Online Writing Lab

Give your students the writing support they need to achieve success.

With SMARTHINKING's Online Writing Lab, your students will have easy access to experienced and highly qualified online tutors. Students can submit essays and other written work for

personalized and detailed critique and feedback, with a return usually in 24 hours. Or, they can ask grammar or style questions and receive quick assistance.

SMARTHINKING's Online Writing Lab is used by ...

- Baylor University
- University of Texas Telecampus
- University of North Dakota
- University of New Mexico
- Rio Salado College
- Hillsborough Community College
- Capella University
- Community College of Vermont
- Ohio Learning Network
- West Virginia Higher Ed Commission
- And over 250 other institutions

Learn the Fundamentals of Good Writing with SMARTHINKING's Online Writing Lab

Individualized Student Instruction. To become better writers, students need to receive personalized, timely feedback. With the Online Writing Lab, students submit a succession of drafts, building on the feedback given by tutors. Students also receive real-time grammar and writing help.

Strengthened Fundamentals. The Online Writing Lab tutors address the core skills of strong writing. Students learn to tackle assignments on their own.

Tracked Student Progress. Faculty are only a click away from data on student progress. They can read actual student tutorial sessions, including writing submissions and guidance.

Increased Faculty Support. The Online Writing Lab gives your faculty the extra support of trained, experienced writing tutors, staffed around the clock. Faculty can spend valuable class time focusing on problem areas culled from tutorial sessions.

Experienced Tutors. Over 90% of the Online Writing Lab's writing tutors have a master's degree or higher in their writing-intensive discipline. Most are current or former instructors. All are experienced, screened, and receive ongoing professional development.

The Online Writing Lab Works for All Students

- Report and Essay Review
- Graduate Level Thesis Critique
- Developmental Education
- Remediation
- ESL
- GED



I have been very impressed with the quality of the tutoring my students are getting. In almost every case, the tutor has pointed out exactly the kinds of errors or logic gaps that I would have... My students are also pleased with the help they have received. I am certainly going to recommend that San Jacinto continue with this program."

Vickie J. Hodges
Professor of English
San Jacinto College South

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At our Essay Center, students receive a detailed, personalized critique of their writing assignments.

Each critique includes the tutor's comments inserted within the student assignment, and a Response Form (shown right) detailing additional feedback.

Tutors address students' writing issues, targeting higher-order skills like content and thesis development as well as lower-order concerns like grammar and mechanics. They do not edit or correct student work. By increasing a student's understanding of good writing techniques, our tutors help students become better writers.



It's a great service, especially when you're out there struggling to produce a term paper on your own...it's nice to have a helping hand and not have that feeling of being completely lost, especially at odd hours or weekends when instructors at school are not available."

Student
Houston Community College

SMARTHINKING's E-structor Response Form

Strengths of the essay: Hello, Kate. Welcome back to Smarthinking. This is Tom, and I'm glad to work with you on another draft of this essay. You're making some great improvements here, particularly in the development of your third paragraph and in the elimination of some of the comma splices that were a problem in your first draft. I encourage you to keep up the good work! I've included my comments here and in your essay. Be sure to look there, too.

Kate has requested that you respond to Content Development: Kate, I think your main goal during revision will be to decide just exactly what critical point you want to make about Butler's writing. I see that you want to focus on the death rituals of Vietnam and Butler's character Dao; however, I don't see what point you want to make about these topics. Try to rework your thesis statement so that it answers the following questions: What do I want to prove or show to my readers about the death ritual in Butler's story? What opinion do I have about Butler's use of the death ritual in the story? Then, make sure your body paragraphs address and develop these questions, using both examples from the text and your discussion and analysis of these examples. You will find more specific content development suggestions embedded in your essay.

Kate has requested that you respond to Organization: Currently, some of your paragraphs summarize the story, while other paragraphs give us information about Vietnamese tradition. We can't be sure what the relationship is between these two topics. By rewriting your thesis statement, you will give your essay a more clear-cut organizational structure. The first portion of your essay's body may examine the use of the death ritual in Vietnamese tradition; the next part of your essay's body may look at Butler's use of the ritual in his story; and the final portion of your essay's body may include information about your opinion of Butler's use of the death ritual in the story.

Grammar and Mechanics: Kate, as I mentioned above, you've done a good job of eliminating comma splices, but I see you're still having some trouble with commas. I wanted to remind you to check for comma errors by reading your writing aloud. Commas sound like pauses, as you can tell from reading this sentence aloud. If you read the following sentence aloud, can you hear which comma might be unnecessary?

In "A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain," Robert Olen Butler, tells the story of an old Vietnamese gentleman as he is departing this life and entering the next.

As you probably can hear, the comma after Butler sounds unnatural. Note: sometimes it is difficult to "hear" all of these pauses, so it is important to know the rules. For more information about comma usage, take a look at the section on commas in our online handbook: http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document_Library/docs/writeman/5_09.cfm.

Summary of Next Steps: As you work on your next draft,

- Determine a clear thesis statement that tells us exactly what point you want to make about these topics. Make sure that each body paragraph is working to support your thesis.
- Use your thesis as a "road map" for the organization of your essay.
- Read aloud to listen for missing or extra commas.
- Feel free to submit your next draft to us if you'd like more help!

For more information about writing, grammar, and usage, visit the [SMARTHINKING Writer's Handbook](#) or the [SMARTHINKING ESOL \(English for speakers of other languages\) Writer's Handbook](#). Thank you for visiting SMARTHINKING. I enjoyed working with you again today, Kate. Please stop back again soon! Tom

