

---

# UNIT 15 NARRATIVE COMPOSITION -2

---

## Structure

- 15.0 Objectives
- 15.1 Samples of Writing
- 15.2 Style
  - 15.2.1 Simplicity
  - 15.2.2 Direct Conversational Style
  - 15.2.3 Individuality
  - 15.2.4 Concreteness
- 15.3 Let Us Sum Up
- 15.4 Key Words

---

## 15.0 OBJECTIVES

---

In this unit we shall continue our discussion on 'narrative composition' and present samples of writing to serve as models. We shall also discuss certain features of style. After completing the unit you will be able to write narrative composition better.

---

## 15.1 SAMPLES OF WRITING

---

Here are three samples of writing in the form of dialogues.

### Example 1

This is a record of discussions at an Interview Committee, where members of a Board of Trustees are discussing the candidates for the post of the Principal of a school in a small town. The committee consists of two trustees and a specialist from the Board of Education. They have already interviewed a number of candidates and are now waiting for the last candidate to come in.

**Chairman :** If you don't mind, ladies and gentlemen, we shall compare notes before we interview the last candidate. I must say we have not had the response I expected. Perhaps we should have advertised more widely. Speaking for myself, I have not been impressed by anyone we have seen so far. At the same time, we must immediately find someone suitable as the admissions have to begin in May. The last candidate has good paper qualifications, but I doubt whether, being a woman, she will be able to manage the school well.

**Mrs. Garg :** Mr. Chairman, we can't reject her just because she is a woman. We must remember our school is co-educational, and a woman has as much right to apply for the post as a man. If we do not consider her purely on the ground of her sex, it will be very unfair.

**Dr Sharma :** At present women are very conscious of their right to equality of opportunity for jobs, and if the story of discrimination on grounds of sex gets into the newspapers, the trust will have a tough job defending itself.

**Chairman :** I wish, Dr. Sharma, you would not bring newspapers and politics into every matter. My chief worry is that if we put a woman in charge of the school, she will have a tough time dealing with some of the teachers we have on the staff, let alone the children from the slums.

**Dr. Sharma :** Let's not get involved in political discussions.

**Mrs. Garg :** Yes, we'd better be quick. It's already late. I wish, Mr Chairman, we had a wider selection. The fact is Mrs. Fazalbhoj is very well qualified on paper. Shall we call her in and interview her first?

**Chairman :** You're quite right, Mrs. Garg. Let's get on with the interview. Please call her.







This is fairly simple and the writer sets the tone with the brief introductory comment. It is easy for the reader to see that what will follow is a social comedy and the writer is an ironic commentator. Notice how essential facts are communicated to the reader. We learn that Mrs. Bennet keeps her eyes and ears open and loves gossip. We also find that her one interest in life is marrying off her daughters to men of large fortunes. Mr. Bennet does not have the same views and makes fun of his wife. We get the feeling that the writer is more sympathetic towards Mr. Bennet and would like us to side with him.

We find that Mr. Bingley, who will occupy Netherfield Park, is likely to be an important character in the novel and a number of events will probably take place in Netherfield Park. The neighbourhood has people like Mrs. Long, Mr. Morris, and the Bennets, who are all a little awed and impressed by Mr. Bingley's wealth.

In this way the dialogue gives us a point of view as well as the relevant facts which are to be communicated to the readers.

---

## 15.2 STYLE

---

In writing narrations one of the skills to be cultivated is style. It is difficult to define style, as so many different definitions have been current. The easiest definition is the one by Swift: "Proper words in proper places make the true definition of a style." The most popular definition is: "Style is the man himself." While Swift's definition is very useful and clear, the other definition by Buffon conveys the idea that in everything you write you communicate a little bit of your inner-most self. Most students also know Chesterfield's definition: "Style is the dress of thought." This definition is quite often misunderstood to mean that you have something like content and then you dress it up in a fancy style, and many students think that lack of content or weakness of content can be covered up with a decorative style. At this point they may like to remember Whitehead's definition: "Style is the morality of mind." This definition indicates the close connection between style and the integrity of a writer's mind. Style will thus bring to your readers your approach, your point of view and your way of looking at things. It can never be separated from your basic mode of thinking. When we say a writer has a poor style, we mean that his way of writing does not leave a definite impression on the reader's mind. We are commenting on the way in which he expresses his attitude and opinions. So style is the individual manner in which someone writes or expresses his thoughts. Style is what the writer adds to the basic communication in language which comes from the use of linguistic units. The writer exercises his choice in the matter of sounds, words, grammatical patterns and their arrangements to convey his meaning.

The question that arises is how you can improve your narrative style. You should re-examine all that you write from the point of view of style and ask the following questions:

- 1 Does it communicate the idea that you have in mind?
- 2 Is there anything that slows down the flow of narration?
- 3 Is there any fault which can be removed, like faulty syntax, faulty diction, non-standard usage, etc.?
- 4 What can you do to improve communication? You can consider the following stylistic features:
  - a) simplicity, b) direct conversational style, c) individuality, d) concreteness.

Given below are four short passages illustrating each of these qualities, and exercises to practise these qualities.

### 15.2.1 Simplicity

#### Example 4

The passage given below is remarkable for its simplicity.

The language is used to make statements, and the reader has to supply almost nothing from his imagination. Articles in newspapers are often written in this style.

There is a product on the market that is sold in a jar. The jar is inside a box. The box is inside a bag. The bag is inside a carrier. This is known as packaging.





