

WRITING DEVELOPMENT

In her book, *The Writing Revolution* Judith Hochman tells us that students' problems with reading comprehension, as well with writing essays, occur because they have not been taught systematically to write ... to which her book gives a step-by-step guide.

The Writing Development exercises here are adapted from her programme.

The Soviet takeover of eastern Europe

5. Appositives

An appositive is a noun-phrase placed beside a noun to explain it more fully. It is a key tool in making your sentences more interesting and more concise; they are useful to convey a large amount of information in the minimum number of words.

You use an appositive to explain or expand an idea in the text.

You can frame an appositive using commas, but I tend to use brackets or en-dashes ('-') instead.

Consider the following sentence:

“The Hungarian Communist Rakosi described the process as ‘slicing salami’.”

On the webpage I was able to provide a hyperlink for anybody who doesn't know what that means. In an essay, however, you would need to explain it. You could do so in two sentences:

“The Hungarian Communist Rakosi described the process as ‘slicing salami’. By this he meant gradually taking control of the different organs of government, and getting rid of all opposition, bit-by-bit..”

But it is less clumsy to use an appositive, as I do on the webpage:

“The Hungarian Communist Rakosi described the process as ‘slicing salami’ – gradually taking control of the different organs of government, and getting rid of all opposition, bit-by-bit..”

1. Identify the appositive in the following sentence:

- Rakosi set up the AVO, a sinister and brutal secret police unit. .

2. Suggest suitable appositives to complete the following sentences:

- In 1944-45, Stalin had devoured the Baltic States, _____.
- In October 1944, Churchill and Stalin made the so-called ‘Percentages Agreement’, _____.
- Some Communists were elected, led by Matyas Rakosi, _____.

3. Create a sentence using the given appositive:

- a moderate left-wing coalition

4. Convert these two sentences into a single sentence using an appositive:

- “Then, during 1946–47, he made sure that Communist governments came to power in what came to be called the 'Iron Curtain' countries. These were all the countries of eastern Europe which Russia had occupied in 1945.

5. Brainstorm a range of suggested appositives for the following sentence. Then decide which would be the best in the specific context of the sentence:

- Stalin's policies in eastern Europe, _____, are often regarded as a primary cause of the Cold War.

6. One of the key features of my style of writing, and a main way in which I make my writing so dense, is the use of varied and complex appositives. This webpage contains some – can you find them?