

## Reasoning in Writing

All writers who know the basic rules of sentence formation in their language manage to communicate their ideas to their readers but only a few succeed in convincing them. Assuming their readers alert, we can say that this may be due to two reasons: one, the reader is not sufficiently sophisticated to follow the argument of the writer. Two, the writer's own reasoning is faulty. Now we will examine how poor reasoning inevitably leads to ineffective writing. The reader is separated from the writer through time and space. However, the writer and the reader need each other as they make their exploration together. The invisible but most crucial element which prevents them from drifting apart is their adherence to a common logic, a logic which is free from fallacies. So we should expose our students to some of the familiar types of wounded writing. Such an exposure would warn them about the pitfalls in writing and thereby help them write and succeed better. When a mind is trained to scrutinize the evidence and the conclusion or the proposition and the proof, it is less likely to be swayed by the demagoguery of people manipulators. It trains our students in connected and purposive thinking, enabling them as responsible citizens to contribute to the intellectual and material wealth of our nation. We are, of course, neither ignoring nor ruling out the role of transcendentalism, which inexplicably connects things and events. Transcendentalism is beyond our present concern. Our immediate purpose is to look at examples of flawed writing and account for their ineffectiveness.

## Some Fallacies

- A. Hasty Generalization
- B. Unfounded Inference
- C. Hasty Prediction
- D. Stereotypes
- E. Either/or Reasoning
- F. Dogmatic Statements
- G. Cliches
- H. Appeal to Questionable Authority
- I. Mistaken Cause and Effect

## Need for vigilance

Whatever evidence a writer presents, should be convincing. S/he should research his/her topic carefully, present his/her facts accurately examines the problem dispassionately, reason with his/her reader credibly and earn his/her support successfully. Otherwise <sup>s/</sup>he will spend his/her time not in communicating but licking his/her wounds. The list of fallacies presented here is by no means exhaustive. We come across these fallacies quite frequently in our speech and writing everyday and unless we are very careful, we could easily be misled by fallacious assertions.