

of **TALES**
WISDOM
in **FOLLY**

**A Course in Controlled
Composition**

by

JOAN KAYEUM

Intensive Language Program
Department of English
King Saud University

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Preface

Tales of Wisdom in Folly consists of a set of Joha stories which form the basis for a controlled course in composition. The changes the student is asked to make to these stories are graduated in forty steps. The student begins with the earliest steps, which are relatively mechanical, and proceeds as rapidly as he can to the more advanced steps. He is gradually and methodically led from maximum control required in Step # 1 to free writing in Step # 40.

The aim of this series of writing exercises is to provide a programmed course where none has been available so far. Its purpose is to provide in a systematic way extensive practice in writing, an area that is often dominated by a waste of effort. It is concerned with presenting the student with ample opportunity to “learn by doing” — to practice and apply what he has already been taught. At the same time, it is concerned with providing more effective writing assignments — assignments that eliminate countless errors so discouraging to teachers and students both.

In testing the material it was found that the advantages of this controlled composition method are manifold.

It offers the student valuable training in copying. It teaches him the importance of detail in spelling, punctuation and penmanship. It encourages accuracy and penalizes carelessness.

It promotes good writing habits by motivating the student to do his best at all times.

It offers the student programmed grammar exercises in interesting and amusing reading material. The Joha stories are a welcome contrast to the monotonous, repetitive, unrelated sentences of usual grammar drills.

It gives the student regular practice in meaningful reading.

It allows each student to advance at his own individual rate.

It permits writing assignments without unduly burdening the composition teacher with the grading of countless errors. At the same time, it provides the student with a focus and immediate feed-back, so essential to learning.

It reveals individual and class weaknesses. It can serve as a guide to the teacher in preparing additional instructional material and work sheets on points of grammar.

Introduction to the Students

Tales of Wisdom in Folly is a controlled course in composition. It has been planned to help you improve your ability to write. It is made up of 40 Joha stories. You will read and work with them in a series of 40 steps.

The first step asks you to copy a story. You will want to be careful of margins, indentations, capital letters, punctuation and spelling. When you are finished, your work will be checked. If your work is acceptable, you will go on to the next page. You will read a new story and do Step # 2. If you make more than three mistakes, you will have to do Step # 1 again. However, repeating the same step won't be so bad because you will have a chance to work with a new story, also. **IF YOU MAKE MORE THAN THREE MISTAKES, YOU WILL ALSO TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE**, but you will have to do Step # 1 again.

At first you will copy a story and then you will change some of the words. Then you will make additions to some of the sentences. Later you will add some of your own sentences to the stories. Towards the end you will rewrite some of the stories in your own words. In the end you should be able to write a complete story of your own.

The steps are easy in the beginning, but they will get harder and harder. As you make progress, you will be expected to write more and more on your own. If you are careful from the beginning, you will have no trouble with the assignments and you will gradually become a good writer in English.

Warning to the Students

You will not make much progress if you hurry and make mistakes. Every time you make more than three mistakes you will have to repeat the same step. If you want to get ahead quickly, you must work slowly and carefully. To avoid making mistakes, pay attention to the following rules:

1. Listen carefully as your teacher explains each new step.
2. Do not read or write when examples are being worked.
3. Ask questions if you do not understand what you are supposed to do.
4. Read the entire story before you begin to write.
5. Raise your hand if you do not understand some words in the story.
6. Proofread your work very carefully before handing it in.

Breakdown of Steps

- | | | |
|-------------|----|--|
| Step | 1 | Copying |
| | 2 | Copying and Substitution |
| | 3 | Gender change |
| | 4 | Number change (of pronouns) |
| | 5 | Number change (of pronouns and verbs) |
| | 6 | Tense change (future) |
| | 7 | Tense change (simple past) |
| | 8 | Combination of areas covered in steps 2–7 |
| | 9 | Tense change (past perfect) |
| | 10 | Point of view (person changes) |
| | 11 | Interrogative (changing statements to questions) |
| | 12 | Synonyms (replacing words with) |
| | 13 | Changing passive voice to active |
| | 14 | Changing premodifier (adjectives) to postmodifier clauses (relative clauses) |
| | 15 | Adding premodifiers (adjectives) |
| | 16 | Adding premodifiers (adverbs) |
| | 17 | Compound sentences (making two sentences out of one) |
| | 18 | Adding prepositional phrases |
| | 19 | Adding verbal phrases |
| | 20 | Adding relative clauses (who, which, that) |
| | 21 | Adding reason clauses (since, because) |
| | 22 | Adding time clauses (when, after, before, while, as, as soon as) |
| | 23 | Adding concessive clauses (although, even though) |
| | 24 | Adding a purpose phrase or clause (in order to, so that) |
| | 25 | Combining sentences (with conjunctions) |
| | 26 | Combining sentences (with adverb clauses) |

- 27 Changing direct speech to indirect speech (involving tenses)
- 28 Changing active voice to passive
- 29 Supplying 3–4 suitable ending sentences
- 30 Supplying 5–6 suitable ending sentences
- 31 Changing direct speech to indirect speech (involving questions)
- 32 Adding a time clause plus a purpose phrase or clause
(As soon as ... so that ...)
- 33 Supplying 3–4 suitable beginning sentences
- 34 Supplying 6–7 suitable beginning sentences
- 35 Adding a concessive clause plus a reason clause (although ...
because ...)
- 36 Changing direct speech to indirect speech (involving imperative
sentences)
- 37 Changing indirect speech to direct speech (involving present and
future tenses)
- 38 Supplying 3–4 sentences in the middle of the story
- 39 Supplying 6–7 sentences in the middle of the story
- 40 Paraphrasing
Writing one's own story