

## Writing Handout 19 - Avoiding “I” in Writing

Formal writing can sound childish if the word “I” is used too often. Even if the goal of the writing is to argue a point, it will sound more persuasive if a more objective tone can be achieved.

Read Paragraph A and circle every “I” you find (there are 7), and then read Paragraph B. Note how the subject has changed.

### Paragraph A

I think that the Harajuku area of Tokyo is the most exciting in the city. I often go there on weekends. After I walk along Takeshita Avenue, which has very trendy and inexpensive clothing shops, I go to Omotesando Street, which has many top designers’ stores. At Christmas every year I can see beautiful lights along the street. Then, at New Year’s, I go to the Meiji Shrine. I can say that no other area in Tokyo can compete in terms of overall interest.

### Paragraph B

It is thought by many people that the Harajuku area of Tokyo is the most exciting in the city. Many young people often go there on weekends. After going shopping along Takeshita Avenue, which has very trendy and inexpensive clothing shops, they go to Omotesando Street, which has many top designers’ stores. At Christmas every year beautiful lights along the street can be seen. Then, at New Year’s, people go to the Meiji Shrine. It can be said that no other area in Tokyo can compete in terms of overall interest.

### ▲ *Practice 1* ▼

Get rid of the “I” in the following sentences by making them passive and using “It” as the subject.

1. I believe that the book will influence many people.

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2. I think that he is one of the finest jazz musicians in Japan now.

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3. I can say that Japanese is a hard language to learn.

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### ▲ *Practice 2* ▼

Change the following police officer’s statements to the passive to make the writing correspond to the style of a formal police report.

1. I stopped the suspect because he was driving over the speed limit.

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2. I asked him to hand over his driver’s license and registration.

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3. His driver’s license had expired so I told him to get out of the car.

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4. I smelled alcohol on his breath.

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5. I arrested him and took him to the police station.

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