

Defining a Concept

Basic strategy:

A _____ is a _____ who/that/in which _____.
(term) (member of a class)

An Economic Exclusivity Zone (EEZ) is a sea area extending no farther than two hundred nautical miles offshore from the coast, **in which** a coastal nation has special rights and obligations.

An algorithm is an effective procedure -- a recipe, a computer program -- **that** gets something done in a finite number of discrete steps.

Do NOT say or write "An algorithm is when . . ." or "Stress is when . . ."

Other strategies:

1. use an adjective clause

Someone who is only interested in science or math, has poor social skills, and pays little attention to his appearance, **is called** a geek.

2. describe the necessary conditions

An earthquake occurs when tectonic plates slide in different directions, causing sections of the surface of the earth to shift in ways that often result in serious property damage and loss of life.

Imagine an environment that can listen, watch and learn about its inhabitants, and respond when verbally asked to do something. Several MIT researchers are now working on creating such a place, called a "smart environment."

3. use an appositive

Alan suffers from **Asperger's Syndrome, a condition which** is characterized by excessive attention to accuracy and detail combined with an almost complete lack of social skills.

4. define by contrast

Whereas rollerskating involves four wheels attached at opposite points along the sole of the skate, **rollerblading** involves wheels attached to the bottom on the skate in a straight line.

Homework: define two of these terms two ways:

stress

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21G.222 Expository Writing for Bilingual Students
Fall 2002

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.