

The following paragraph illustrates simply how an effective body paragraph works to help both writer and reader. The thesis of the essay in which this paragraph appears is that a Texas chili championship gives undue attention to an unpleasant food.

Some people really like chili, apparently, but nobody can agree how the stuff should be made. C. V. Wood, twice winner at Terlingua, uses flank steak, pork chops, chicken, and green chilis. My friend Hughes Rudd of CBS News, who imported five hundred pounds of chili powder into Russia as a condition of accepting employment as Moscow correspondent, favors coarse-ground beef. Isadore Bleckman, the cameraman I must live with on the road, insists upon one-inch cubes of stew beef and puts garlic in his chili, an Illinois affectation. An Indian of my acquaintance, Mr. Fulton Batisse, who eats chili for breakfast when he can, uses buffalo meat and plays an Indian drum while it's cooking. I ask you.

—CHARLES KURALT, *Dateline America*

General statement relating to thesis: announces topic of paragraph

Four specific examples, all providing evidence for general statement

While you are drafting, conscious attention to the requirements of the paragraph may sometimes help pull ideas out of you or help you forge relationships. But don't expect effective paragraphs like Kuralt's to flow from your fingertips while you are grappling with what you want to say. Instead, use the following checklist to guide your revision of paragraphs so that they work to your and your readers' advantage.

Checklist for revising paragraphs

- Is the paragraph **unified**? Does it adhere to one general idea that is either stated in a **topic sentence** or otherwise apparent? (See opposite.)
- Is the paragraph **coherent**? Do the sentences follow a clear sequence? Are the sentences linked as needed by parallelism, repetition or restatement, pronouns, consistency, and transitional expressions? (See p. 78.)
- Is the paragraph **developed**? Is the general idea of the paragraph well supported with specific evidence such as details, facts, examples, and reasons? (See p. 91.)



On the World Wide Web, the paragraphing conventions described here do not always apply. Web readers sometimes skim text instead of reading word for word, and they are accustomed to embedded links that may take them from the paragraph to another page. Writing for the Web, you may want to write shorter paragraphs

Maintaining paragraph

Readers generally expect a paragraph to be alert for that idea and will pull out other words, they will seek and appreciate elaboration and clear elaboration of the thesis statement of the paragraph. In an essay the thesis statement of the paragraph alerts readers to the essence of the paragraph and expressing the writer's main idea and expressing the writer's main idea. Each body paragraph will likely begin with the essay's thesis statement; the paragraph will be into that main point and support the thesis.

...focusing on the central idea

...the thesis sentence, the rest of the paragraph

than you would in printed documents, and save embedded links for the ends of paragraphs lest readers miss important information. (For more on composing for the Web, see Chapter 10.)

CULTURE LANGUAGE Not all cultures share the paragraphing conventions of American academic writing. The conventions are not universal even among users of standard American English: for instance, US newspaper writers compose very short paragraphs that will break up text in narrow columns. In some other languages, writing moves differently from English—not from left to right, but from right to left or down rows from top to bottom. Even in languages that move as English does, writers may not use paragraphs at all. Or they may use paragraphs but not state the central ideas or provide transitional expressions to show readers how sentences relate. If your native language is not English and you have difficulty with paragraphs, don't worry about paragraphing during drafting. Instead, during a separate step of revision, divide your text into parts that develop your main points. Mark those parts with indentions.

4a Maintaining paragraph unity

Readers generally expect a paragraph to explore one idea. They will be alert for that idea and will patiently follow its development. In other words, they will seek and appreciate paragraph **unity**, clear identification and clear elaboration of one idea and of that idea only.

In an essay the thesis statement often asserts the main idea as a commitment to readers (see p. 31). In a paragraph a **topic sentence** often alerts readers to the essence of the paragraph by asserting the central idea and expressing the writer's attitude toward it. In a brief essay each body paragraph will likely treat one main point supporting the essay's thesis statement; the topic sentences simply elaborate on parts of the thesis. In longer essays paragraphs tend to work in groups, each group treating one main point. Then the topic sentences will tie into that main point, and all the points together will support the thesis.

1 ■ Focusing on the central idea

Like the thesis sentence, the topic sentence is a commitment to readers, and the rest of the paragraph delivers on that commit-

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For added help with paragraph unity, click on

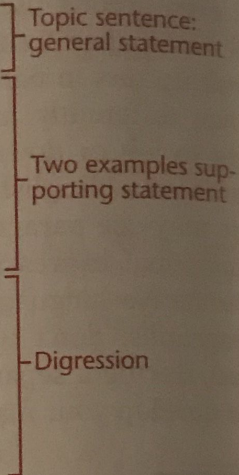
- The writing process
- Video tutorials ➤ Maintaining paragraph unity
- Exercises ➤ Exer. 4
- Web links ➤ Paragraphs



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ment. Look again at Kuralt's paragraph on chili on page 72: the opening statement conveys the author's promise that he will describe various ways to make chili, and the following sentences keep the promise. But what if Kuralt had written this paragraph instead?

Some people really like chili, apparently, but nobody can agree how the stuff should be made. C. V. Wood, twice winner at Terlingua, uses flank steak, pork chops, chicken, and green chilis. My friend Hughes Rudd, who imported five hundred pounds of chili powder into Russia as a condition of accepting employment as Moscow correspondent, favors coarse-ground beef. He had some trouble finding the beef in Moscow, though. He sometimes had to scour all the markets and wait in long lines. For any American used to overstocked supermarkets and department stores, Russia can be quite a shock.



By wandering off from chili ingredients to consumer deprivation in Russia, the paragraph fails to deliver on the commitment of its topic sentence.

You should expect digressions while you are drafting: if you allow yourself to explore ideas, as you should, then of course every paragraph will not be tightly woven, perfectly unified. But spare your readers the challenge and frustration of repeatedly shifting focus to follow your rough explorations: revise each paragraph so that it develops a single idea.

While revising your paragraphs for unity, you may want to highlight the central idea of each paragraph to be sure it's stated and then focus on it. On paper, you can bracket or circle the idea. On a computer, you can format the idea in color or highlight it with a color background. Just be sure to remove the color or highlighting before printing the final draft.



2 ■ Placing the topic sentence

The topic sentence of a paragraph and its supporting details may be arranged variously, depending on how you want to direct readers' attention and how complex your central idea is. In the most common arrangements, the topic sentence comes at the beginning of the paragraph, comes at the end, or is not stated at all but is nonetheless apparent. The advantages of each approach are described on the next two pages. If you write on a computer, you can easily experiment by moving the topic sentence around (or deleting it) to see the effect. (The sentence will probably take some editing to work smoothly into various positions.)



Topic sentence at the beginning
When the topic sentence appears at the beginning of a paragraph, the model establishes an initial context that helps you select the details that follow. Details that do not easily relate to the topic sentence can be deleted or examined in a separate paragraph. Reading the first sentence of a paragraph often helps you understand the details that follow. Reading the first sentence of a paragraph often helps you understand the details that follow.

The topic-first model is common in many paragraphs, such as Kuralt's, but also in the one following:
It is a misunderstanding of the retail store to think we go there to buy. Some of us shop. Shopping has many purposes, one of which is to acquire a shop to cheer ourselves up. We shop to make a decision. We shop to make a productive member of our society. We shop to remind ourselves how much is to be striven for to assert our superiority to subjects that spread themselves.
—PHYLLIS ROSS, "Shopping Spirit"

Topic sentence at the end

In some paragraphs the central idea is stated at the end after supporting sentences have been presented. Since this model leads the reader through all the evidence first, it can be dramatic in effect. The following example from an essay about the Union general during the US Civil War:

Sherman is considered the inventor of "total war": the first man in American history to carry the logic of the war to its ultimate extreme, the first to consciously demoralize the civilian population in order to win the war. He was the first to wreck an army, the first to starve its soldiers. He was the first "merchant of terror" and the first "search and destroy," "patriotic hamlets," and "free-

Topic sentence at the beginning

When the topic sentence appears first in a paragraph, it can help you select the details that follow. For readers, the topic-first model establishes an initial context in which all the supporting details can be understood. Reading Kuralt's paragraph on page 72, we easily relate each detail or example back to the point made in the first sentence.

The topic-first model is common not only in expository paragraphs, such as Kuralt's, but also in argument paragraphs, such as the one following:

It is a misunderstanding of the American retail store to think we go there necessarily to buy. Some of us shop. There's a difference. Shopping has many purposes, the least interesting of which is to acquire new articles. We shop to cheer ourselves up. We shop to practice decision-making. We shop to be useful and productive members of our class and society. We shop to remind ourselves how much is available to us. We shop to remind ourselves how much is to be striven for. We shop to assert our superiority to the material objects that spread themselves before us.

—PHYLLIS ROSE, "Shopping and Other Spiritual Adventures"

Topic sentence: statement of misconception

Correction of misconception

Topic sentence at the end

In some paragraphs the central idea may be stated at the end, after supporting sentences have made a case for the general statement. Since this model leads the reader to a conclusion by presenting all the evidence first, it can prove effective in argument. And because the point of the paragraph is withheld until the end, this model can be dramatic in exposition, too, as illustrated by the following example from an essay about William Tecumseh Sherman, a Union general during the US Civil War:

Sherman is considered by some to be the inventor of "total war": the first general in human history to carry the logic of war to its ultimate extreme, the first to scorch the earth, the first to consciously demoralize the hostile civilian population in order to subdue its army, the first to wreck an economy in order to starve its soldiers. He has been called our first "merchant of terror" and seen as the spiritual father of our Vietnam War concepts of "search and destroy," "pacification," "strategic hamlets," and "free-fire zones." As such,

Information supporting and building to topic sentence

he remains a cardboard figure of our history: a monstrous arch-villain to unreconstructed Southerners, and an embarrassment to Northerners.

—Adapted from JAMES RESTON, JR.,
“You Cannot Refine It”

Topic sentence

Expressing the central idea at the end of the paragraph does not eliminate the need to unify the paragraph. The idea in the topic sentence must still govern the selection of all the preceding details.

Central idea not stated

Occasionally, a paragraph's central idea will be stated in the previous paragraph or will be so obvious that it need not be stated at all. The following is from an essay on the actor Humphrey Bogart:

Usually he wore the trench coat unbuttoned, just tied with the belt, and a slouch hat, rarely tilted. Sometimes it was a captain's cap and a yachting jacket. Almost always his trousers were held up by a cowboy belt. You know the kind: one an Easterner waiting for a plane out of Phoenix buys just as a joke and then takes a liking to. Occasionally, he'd hitch up his slacks with it, and he often jabbed his thumbs behind it, his hands ready for a fight or a dame.

—PETER BOGDANOVICH, “Bogie in Excelsis”

Details adding up to the unstated idea that Bogart's character could be seen in his clothing

Paragraphs in descriptive writing (like the one above) and in narrative writing (relating a sequence of events) often lack stated topic sentences. But a paragraph without a topic sentence still should have a central idea, and its details should develop that idea.

EXERCISE 1

Finding the central idea

What is the central idea of each paragraph below? In what sentence or sentences is it expressed?

1. Today many black Americans enjoy a measure of economic security beyond any we have known in the history of black America. But if they remain in a nasty blue funk, it's because their very existence seems an affront to the swelling ranks of the poor. Nor have black intellectuals ever quite made peace with the concept of the black bourgeoisie, a group that is typically seen as devoid of cultural authenticity, doomed to mimicry and pallid assimilation. I once gave a talk before an audience of black academics and educators, in the course of which I referred to black middle-class culture. Afterward, one of the academics in the audience, deeply affronted, had a question for me. “Professor Gates,” he asked rhetorically, his

voice dripped
I suggested the
around the room.
mirror: for just as not
ism, nothing is more c
the sense of shame and
—HENRY LOUIS

2. Though they do
scientists do know so
measured the length
over half an hour. Th
and complex arrange
ing squeals that make
each whale sings in its

EXERCISE 2

Revising a paragraph

The following paragraph
port its central idea.
and delete the unrelat

In the southern p
they did a century ag
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bathrooms or runnin
adequate funding fr
schools are poor and
garden where fresh v
tures nearby support
chickens. Most of th
are old and beat-up f

EXERCISE 3

Considering your pa

For a continuing ex
written in the past y
Do they have clear t
tral ideas still clear?
tral ideas? Should a
more relevant details

EXERCISE 4

Writing a unified pa

Develop the followin
using the relevant in
each statement that
rewrite and combin
tence in the position

voice dripping with sarcasm, "what is black middle-class culture?" I suggested that if he really wanted to know, he need only look around the room. But perhaps I should just have handed him a mirror: for just as nothing is more American than anti-Americanism, nothing is more characteristic of the black bourgeoisie than the sense of shame and denial that the identity inspires.

—HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR., "Two Nations . . . Both Black"

2. Though they do not know why the humpback whale sings, scientists do know something about the song itself. They have measured the length of a whale's song: from a few minutes to over half an hour. They have recorded and studied the variety and complex arrangements of low moans, high squeaks, and sliding squeals that make up the song. And they have learned that each whale sings in its own unique pattern.

—JANET LIEBER (student), "Whales' Songs"

EXERCISE 2

Revising a paragraph for unity

The following paragraph contains ideas or details that do not support its central idea. Identify the topic sentence in the paragraph and delete the unrelated material.

In the southern part of the state, some people still live much as they did a century ago. They use coal- or wood-burning stoves for heating and cooking. Their homes do not have electricity or indoor bathrooms or running water. The towns they live in don't receive adequate funding from the state and federal governments, so the schools are poor and in bad shape. Beside most homes there is a garden where fresh vegetables are gathered for canning. Small pastures nearby support livestock, including cattle, pigs, horses, and chickens. Most of the people have cars or trucks, but the vehicles are old and beat-up from traveling on unpaved roads.

EXERCISE 3

Considering your past work: Paragraph unity

For a continuing exercise in this chapter, choose a paper you've written in the past year. Examine the body paragraphs for unity. Do they have clear topic sentences? If not, are the paragraphs' central ideas still clear? Are the paragraphs unified around their central ideas? Should any details be deleted for unity? Should other, more relevant details be added in their stead?

EXERCISE 4

Writing a unified paragraph

Develop the following topic sentence into a unified paragraph by using the relevant information in the supporting statements. Delete each statement that does not relate directly to the topic, and then rewrite and combine sentences as appropriate. Place the topic sentence in the position that seems most effective to you.

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Topic sentence

Mozart's accomplishments in music seem remarkable even today.

Supporting information

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in 1756 in Salzburg, Austria.

He began composing music at the age of five.

He lived most of his life in Salzburg and Vienna.

His first concert tour of Europe was at the age of six.

On his first tour he played harpsichord, organ, and violin.

He published numerous compositions before reaching adolescence.

He married in 1782.

Mozart and his wife were both poor managers of money.

They were plagued by debts.

Mozart composed over six hundred musical compositions.

His most notable works are his operas, symphonies, quartets, and piano concertos.

He died at the age of thirty-five.

EXERCISE 5**Turning topic sentences into unified paragraphs**

Develop three of the following topic sentences into detailed and unified paragraphs.

1. Men and women are different in at least one important respect.
2. The best Web search engine is [name].
3. Fans of _____ music [country, classical, rock, rap, jazz, or another kind] come in [number] varieties.
4. Professional sports have [or have not] been helped by extending the regular season with championship play-offs.
5. Working for good grades can interfere with learning.

4b Achieving paragraph coherence

A paragraph is unified if it holds together—if all its details and examples support the central idea. A paragraph is **coherent** if readers can see *how* the paragraph holds together—how the sentences relate to each other—without having to stop and reread.

Incoherence gives readers the feeling of being yanked around, as the following example shows.

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For added help with paragraph coherence, click on

- The writing process
- Exercises ➤ Exer. 5
- Web links ➤ Paragraphs



- Ways to achieve paragraph coherence**
- Organize effectively (p. 80).
 - Use parallel structures (p. 84).
 - Repeat or restate words (p. 84).
 - Use pronouns (p. 85).
 - Be consistent in nouns, pronouns, and verbs.
 - Use transitional expressions (p. 86).

The ancient Egyptians were preserving dead people's bodies in mummies of them. Mummies several years old have been discovered intact. The skin, hair, teeth, fingernails, and facial features of the mummies were evident. It is possible to identify diseases they suffered in life, such as pox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies. The process was remarkably effective. Sometimes apparent were the fatal injuries of the dead people: a middle-aged man who died from a blow on the head, and a child king. Mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying preservatives inside and out, and wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

The paragraph as it was actually written is much clearer because the writer used pronouns and also built links into his sentences smoothly:

- After stating the central idea, the writer moves to two more specific examples, and then ends with four sentences of explanation.
- **Circled** words repeat or restate key terms.
- **Boxed** words link sentences together.
- **Underlined** phrases are in parallel structure, showing their parallel content.

The ancient Egyptians were preserving dead people's bodies in mummies of them. Basically, the process consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

Ways to achieve paragraph coherence

- Organize effectively (p. 80).
- Use parallel structures (p. 84).
- Repeat or restate words and word groups (p. 84).
- Use pronouns (p. 85).
- Be consistent in nouns, pronouns, and verbs (p. 85).
- Use transitional expressions (p. 86).

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. Mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. The skin, hair, teeth, finger- and toenails, and facial features of the mummies were evident. It is possible to diagnose the diseases they suffered in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies. The process was remarkably effective. Sometimes apparent were the fatal afflictions of the dead people: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head, and polio killed a child king. Mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

Topic sentence

Sentences related to topic sentence but disconnected from each other

The paragraph as it was actually written appears below. It is much clearer because the writer arranged information differently and also built links into his sentences so that they would flow smoothly:

- After stating the central idea in a topic sentence, the writer moves to two more specific explanations and illustrates the second with four sentences of examples.
- Circled words repeat or restate key terms or concepts.
- Boxed words link sentences and clarify relationships.
- Underlined phrases are in parallel grammatical form to reflect their parallel content.

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. Basically, mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

Topic sentence

Explanation 1: What mummification is

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dages. And the process was remarkably effective. Indeed, mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. Their skin, hair, teeth, finger- and toenails, and facial features are still evident. Their diseases in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies, are still diagnosable. Even their fatal afflictions are still apparent: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head; a child king died from polio.

—MITCHELL ROSENBAUM (student),
"Lost Arts of the Egyptians"

Explanation 2: Why the Egyptians were masters

Specific examples of explanation 2

Though some of the connections in this paragraph were added in revision, the writer attended to them while drafting as well. Not only superficial coherence but also an underlying clarity of relationships can be achieved by tying each sentence to the one before—generalizing from it, clarifying it, qualifying it, adding to it, illustrating it. Each sentence in a paragraph creates an expectation of some sort in the mind of the reader, a question such as "How was a mummy made?" or "How intact are the mummies?" or "What's another example?" When you recognize these expectations and try to fulfill them, readers are likely to understand relationships without struggle.

1 ■ Organizing the paragraph

The paragraphs on mummies illustrate an essential element of coherence: information must be arranged in an order that readers can follow easily and that corresponds to their expectations. The common organizations for paragraphs correspond to those for entire essays: by space, by time, and for emphasis. (In addition, the patterns of development also suggest certain arrangements. See pp. 92–101.)



If you want to try rearranging a paragraph to achieve different emphases, you can copy it, paste the duplicate into your document, and then experiment by moving sentences around. To evaluate the versions, however, you'll need to edit each one so that sentences flow smoothly, attending to parallelism, repetition, transitions, and the other techniques discussed in this section.

Organizing by space or time

A paragraph organized spatially focuses readers' attention on one point and scans a person, object, or scene from that point. The movement usually parallels the way people actually look at things,

from top to bottom, from Woolf follows the last pattern in

The sun struck straight u making the white walls glar dark green branches. Their panes, trable darkness. Sharp-edged lay upon the window-sill and the room plates with blue curved handles, the bulge of criss-cross pattern in the ru dable corners and lines of cases. Behind their conglo zone of shadow in which m shape to be disencumbered denser depths of darkness.

—VIRGINIA

Another familiar way of o is chronologically—that is, in a chronological paragraph, come first, followed by more

Nor can a tree live w cane-born mangrove islar soil to the sea. But otl make their own soil—and from scratch. These are t est me. The seeds germ the tree. The germin anywhere—say, onto a The heavy root er: sink furls. The tiny seedling Soon aerial roots sho tions trap debris. Th twine, the interstices calms in the lee. Bact broth; amphipods sw grow and die at the t thickens, accumulati seashells, and guano

—ANN

Organizing for emphasis

Some organizations achieve a certain emph specific scheme, in wh then the following sente graph on mummies (p

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from top to bottom, from side to side, from near to far. Virginia Woolf follows the last pattern in this paragraph:

The sun struck straight upon the house, making the white walls glare between the dark windows. Their panes, woven thickly with green branches, held circles of impenetrable darkness. Sharp-edged wedges of light lay upon the window-sill and showed inside the room plates with blue rings, cups with curved handles, the bulge of a great bowl, the criss-cross pattern in the rug, and the formidable corners and lines of cabinets and bookcases. Behind their conglomeration hung a zone of shadow in which might be a further shape to be disencumbered of shadow or still denser depths of darkness.

—VIRGINIA WOOLF, *The Waves*

Description moving from outside (closer) to inside (farther)

Unstated central idea: sunlight barely penetrated the house's secrets.

Another familiar way of organizing the elements of a paragraph is **chronologically**—that is, in order of their occurrence in time. In a chronological paragraph, as in experience, the earliest events come first, followed by more recent ones.

Nor can a tree live without soil. A hurricane-born mangrove island may bring its own soil to the sea. But other mangrove trees make their own soil—and their own islands—from scratch. These are the ones which interest me. The seeds germinate in the fruit on the tree. The germinated embryo can drop anywhere—say, onto a dab of floating muck. The heavy root end sinks; a leafy plumule unfurls. The tiny seedling, afloat, is on its way. Soon aerial roots shooting out in all directions trap debris. The sapling's networks twine, the interstices narrow, and water calms in the lee. Bacteria thrive on organic broth; amphipods swarm. These creatures grow and die at the tree's wet feet. The soil thickens, accumulating rainwater, leaf rot, seashells, and guano; the island spreads.

—ANNIE DILLARD, "Sojourner"

Topic sentence

Details in order of their occurrence

Organizing for emphasis

Some organizational schemes are imposed on paragraphs to achieve a certain emphasis. The most common is the **general-to-specific** scheme, in which the topic sentence often comes first and then the following sentences become increasingly specific. The paragraph on mummies (pp. 79–80) illustrates this organization: each

sentence is either more specific than the one before it or at the same level of generality. Here is another illustration:

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Perhaps the simplest fact about sleep is that individual needs for it vary widely. Most adults sleep between seven and nine hours, but occasionally people turn up who need twelve hours or so, while some rare types can get by on three or four. Rarest of all are those legendary types who require almost no sleep at all; respected researchers have recently studied three such people. One of them—a healthy, happy woman in her seventies—sleeps about an hour every two or three days. The other two are men in early middle age, who get by on a few minutes a night. One of them complains about the daily fifteen minutes or so he's forced to "waste" in sleeping.

—LAWRENCE A. MAYER,
"The Confounding Enemy of Sleep"

Topic sentence

Supporting examples, increasingly specific

In the less common **specific-to-general** organization, the elements of the paragraph build to a general conclusion:

It's disconcerting that so many college women, when asked how their children will be cared for if they themselves work, refer with vague confidence to "the day care center" as though there were some great amorphous kiddie watcher out there that the state provides. But such places, adequately funded, well run, and available to all, are still scarce in this country, particularly for middle-class women. And figures show that when she takes time off for family-connected reasons (births, child care), a woman's chances for career advancement plummet. In a job market that's steadily tightening and getting more competitive, these obstacles bode the kind of danger ahead that can shatter not only professions, but egos. A hard reality is that there's not much more support for our daughters who have family-plus-career goals than there was for us; there's simply a great deal more self and societal pressure.

—JUDITH WAX, *Starting in the Middle*

Common belief

Actual situation

General conclusion: topic sentence

As its name implies, the **problem-solution** arrangement introduces a problem and then proposes or explains a solution. The next paragraph explains how to gain from Internet newsgroups despite their limitations:

Even when you appear apparently useful, the assurance of a correspondence of e-mail's in hope people don't cite the information you can pose as a reference to something not aware but can't help self. Internet newsgroups that alone. I have books, and important problem solutions, ing about communication communities. It is a supposition that you are people who know this you probably know. Gradually, by trading develop some virtual assess the relative value. Meanwhile, you will few things along the —Adap

When your details in a climactic order, fr

Nature has put the heads of her creatures tongue, rooted at the can be protruded and prey. There is the general and agile that the lion But the ultimate lion achieved in the animal long as it is, is not tremendous tongue hills. Its tongue is throat: it is fastened —ALAN

In other organizations how you think readers the virtues of public from most familiar to your readers have probably may not have seen. employees to strike, you most complex, from

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Even when you do find a newsgroup with apparently useful material, you have no assurance of a correspondent's authority because of e-mail's inherent anonymity. Many people don't cite their credentials. Besides, anyone can pose as an expert. The best information you can get initially is apt to be a reference to something of which you were not aware but can then investigate for yourself. Internet newsgroups can be valuable for that alone. I have been directed to software-problem solutions, owners of out-of-print books, and important people who know nothing about communicating through electronic communities. It is best to start with the assumption that you are conversing with peers, people who know things that you don't, while you probably know things that they don't. Gradually, by trading information, you develop some virtual relationships and can assess the relative validity of your sources. Meanwhile, you will probably have learned a few things along the way.

Topic sentence and clarification: statement of the problem

Solution to the problem

—Adapted from JOHN A. BUTLER,
Cybersearch

When your details vary in significance, you can arrange them in a climactic order, from least to most important or dramatic:

Nature has put many strange tongues into the heads of her creatures. There is the frog's tongue, rooted at the front of the mouth so it can be protruded an extra distance for nabbing prey. There is the gecko lizard's tongue, so long and agile that the lizard uses it to wash its eyes. But the ultimate lingual whopper has been achieved in the anteater. The anteater's head, long as it is, is not long enough to contain the tremendous tongue which licks deep into ant-hills. Its tongue is not rooted in the mouth or throat: it is fastened to the breastbone.

Topic sentence

Least dramatic example

Most dramatic example

—ALAN DEVOE, "Nature's Utmost"

In other organizations, you can arrange details according to how you think readers are likely to understand them. In discussing the virtues of public television, for instance, you might proceed from most familiar to least familiar, from a well-known program your readers have probably seen to less well-known programs they may not have seen. Or in defending the right of government employees to strike, you might arrange your reasons from simplest to most complex, from the employees' need to be able to redress griev-

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ances to more subtle consequences for relations between employers and employees.

2 ■ Using parallel structures

Another way to achieve coherence is through **parallelism**—the use of similar grammatical structures for similar elements of meaning within a sentence or among sentences. (See Chapter 25 for a detailed discussion of parallelism.) Parallel structures help tie together the last three sentences in the paragraph on mummies (p. 80). In the following paragraph, underlining highlights the parallel structures linking sentences. Aphra Behn (lived 1640–89) was the first Englishwoman to write professionally.

In addition to her busy career as a writer, Aphra Behn also found time to briefly marry and spend a little while in debtor's prison. She found time to take up a career as a spy for the English in their war against the Dutch. She made the long and difficult voyage to Suriname [in South America] and became involved in a slave rebellion there. She plunged into political debate at Will's Coffee House and defended her position from the stage of the Drury Lane Theater. She actively argued for women's rights to be educated and to marry whom they pleased, or not at all. She defied the seventeenth-century dictum that ladies must be "modest" and wrote freely about sex.

—ANGELINE GOREAU, "Aphra Behn"

3 ■ Repeating or restating words and word groups

Repeating or restating key words or word groups is an important means of achieving paragraph coherence and of reminding your readers what the topic is. In the next example, notice how the circled words tie the sentences together and stress the important ideas of the paragraph:

Having listened to both Chinese and English, I also tend to be suspicious of any comparisons between the two languages. Typically, one language—that of the person doing the comparing—is often used as the standard, the benchmark for a logical form of expression. And so the language being compared is always in danger of being judged deficient or superfluous, simplistic or unnecessarily complex, melodious or cacophonous. English speakers point out that Chinese is extremely difficult because it relies on variations in tone barely discernible to the human ear. By the same token, Chinese speakers tell me English is extremely difficult because it is inconsistent, a language of too many broken rules, of Mickey Mice and Donald Ducks.

—AMY TAN, "The Language of Discretion"

Note Though planned repetition can be effective, excessive repetition weakens prose (see p. 568).

4 ■ Using pronouns

Pronouns, such as *she*, *he*, *it*, *they*, and *who*, refer to and function as nouns (see p. 242). Thus pronouns naturally help relate sentences to one another. In the following paragraph the pronouns and the nouns they refer to are circled:

After dark, on the warrenlike streets of Brooklyn where I often see women who fear the worst from me, They seem to set their faces on neutral, and with their purse straps strung across their chests bandolier-style, they forge ahead as though braving themselves against being tackled. I understand, of course, the danger they perceive is not a hallucination. Women are particularly vulnerable to street violence, and young black males are disproportionately represented among the perpetrators of that violence. Yet truths are no solace against the kind of alienation that comes from being ever the suspect, a fearsome entity with whom pedestrians avoid making eye contact.

—BRENT STINEBAUGH

"Black Men and Public Space"

5 ■ Being consistent

Being consistent is the most subtle way to achieve paragraph coherence because readers are aware of consistency only when it is absent. Consistency (or the lack of it) occurs primarily in the use of verbs and the number and person of nouns and pronouns (see Chapter 20). Although some shifts will be necessary to convey meaning, inappropriate shifts, as in the following paragraph, interfere with a reader's ability to follow the development of the paragraph.

Shifts in tense

In the Hopi religion, water is the driving force. Since the Hopi live in the Arizona desert, they needed water urgently for drinking, cooking, and irrigating crops. Their complex beliefs are based in part on gaining the assistance of supernatural forces to bring water. Many of the Hopi kachinas, or spirit essences, are concerned with clouds, rain, and snow.

Shifts in number

Kachinas represent the things and events of the real world, such as clouds, mischief, cornmeal, and even death. A kachina is often depicted as a god but regarded as an interested friend. Hopi from December through July in the form of men and women in kachina costumes and perform dances and other rituals.

Note Though planned repetition can be effective, careless or excessive repetition weakens prose (see p. 568).

4 ■ Using pronouns

Pronouns, such as *she*, *he*, *it*, *they*, and *who*, refer to and function as nouns (see p. 242). Thus pronouns naturally help relate sentences to one another. In the following paragraph the pronouns and the nouns they refer to are circled:

After dark, on the warrenlike streets of Brooklyn where I live, I often see women who fear the worst from me. They seem to have set their faces on neutral, and with their purse straps strung across their chests bandolier-style, they forge ahead as though bracing themselves against being tackled. I understand, of course, that the danger they perceive is not a hallucination. Women are particularly vulnerable to street violence, and young black males are drastically overrepresented among the perpetrators of that violence. Yet these truths are no solace against the kind of alienation that comes of being ever the suspect, a fearsome entity with whom pedestrians avoid making eye contact.

—BRENT STAPLES,
"Black Men and Public Space"

5 ■ Being consistent

Being consistent is the most subtle way to achieve paragraph coherence because readers are aware of consistency only when it is absent. Consistency (or the lack of it) occurs primarily in the tense of verbs and the number and person of nouns and pronouns (see Chapter 20). Although some shifts will be necessary because of meaning, inappropriate shifts, as in the following passages, will interfere with a reader's ability to follow the development of ideas:

Shifts in tense

In the Hopi religion, water is the driving force. Since the Hopi lived in the Arizona desert, they needed water urgently for drinking, cooking, and irrigating crops. Their complex beliefs are focused in part on gaining the assistance of supernatural forces in obtaining water. Many of the Hopi kachinas, or spirit essences, were directly concerned with clouds, rain, and snow.

Shifts in number

Kachinas represent the things and events of the real world, such as clouds, mischief, cornmeal, and even death. A kachina is not worshiped as a god but regarded as an interested friend. They visit the Hopi from December through July in the form of men who dress in kachina costumes and perform dances and other rituals.

4b

Shifts in person

Unlike the man, the Hopi woman does not keep contact with kachinas through costumes and dancing. Instead, one receives a small likeness of a kachina, called a tihu, from the man impersonating the kachina. You are more likely to receive a tihu as a girl approaching marriage, though a child or older woman sometimes receives one, too.



The grammar checker on a word processor cannot help you locate shifts in tense, number, or person among sentences. Shifts are sometimes necessary (as when tenses change to reflect actual differences in time), and even a passage with needless shifts may still consist of sentences that are grammatically correct (as all the sentences are in the preceding examples). The only way to achieve consistency in your writing is to review it yourself.

6 ■ Using transitional expressions

Specific words and word groups, called transitional expressions, can connect sentences whose relationships may not be instantly clear to readers. Notice the difference in these two versions of the same paragraph:

Medical science has succeeded in identifying the hundreds of viruses that can cause the common cold. It has discovered the most effective means of prevention. One person transmits the cold viruses to another most often by hand. An infected person covers his mouth to cough. He picks up the telephone. His daughter picks up the telephone. She rubs her eyes. She has a cold. It spreads. To avoid colds, people should wash their hands often and keep their hands away from their faces.

Paragraph is choppy and hard to follow

Medical science has **thus** succeeded in identifying the hundreds of viruses that can cause the common cold. It has **also** discovered the most effective means of prevention. One person transmits the cold viruses to another most often by hand. **For instance**, an infected person covers his mouth to cough. **Then** he picks up the telephone. **Half an hour later**, his daughter picks up the **same** telephone. **Immediately afterward**, she rubs her eyes. **Within a few days**, she, **too**, has a cold.

Transitional expressions (boxed) remove choppiness and spell out relationships

And thus it spreads. To a
people should wash their h
keep their hands away from th
—KATHLEEN LAF
“Colds: My
There are scores of transiti
The box below shows many comm
relationships they convey.

Transitional expressions

To add or show sequence
again, also, and, and then, besides,
furthermore, in addition, in the f
still, too

To compare
also, in the same way, likewise, si

To contrast
although, and yet, but, but at
though, for all that, however,
notwithstanding, on the contra
though, yet

To give examples or intensify
after all, an illustration of, even
it is true, of course, specifically,

To indicate place
above, adjacent to, below, else
the other side, opposite to, the

To indicate time
after a while, afterward, as lon
time, before, earlier, formerly,
lately, later, meanwhile, now,
far, soon, subsequently, then

To repeat, summarize, or c
all in all, altogether, as has
words, in particular, in short,
that is, therefore, to put it diff

To show cause or effect
accordingly, as a result, bec
otherwise, since, then, there
object

And thus it spreads. To avoid colds, therefore, people should wash their hands often and keep their hands away from their faces.

—KATHLEEN LAFRANK (student),
"Colds: Myth and Science"

There are scores of transitional expressions on which to draw. The box below shows many common ones, arranged according to the relationships they convey.

Transitional expressions

To add or show sequence

again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, last, moreover, next, second, still, too

To compare

also, in the same way, likewise, similarly

To contrast

although, and yet, but, but at the same time, despite, even so, even though, for all that, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, regardless, still, though, yet

To give examples or intensify

after all, an illustration of, even, for example, for instance, indeed, in fact, it is true, of course, specifically, that is, to illustrate, truly

To indicate place

above, adjacent to, below, elsewhere, farther on, here, near, nearby, on the other side, opposite to, there, to the east, to the left

To indicate time

after a while, afterward, as long as, as soon as, at last, at length, at that time, before, earlier, formerly, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, lately, later, meanwhile, now, presently, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, subsequently, then, thereafter, until, when

To repeat, summarize, or conclude

all in all, altogether, as has been said, in brief, in conclusion, in other words, in particular, in short, in simpler terms, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to put it differently, to summarize

To show cause or effect

accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this purpose, hence, otherwise, since, then, therefore, thereupon, thus, to this end, with this object

Paragraph is choppy and hard to follow.

Transitional expressions (boxed) help out relationship.

¶ coh
4b

Note Draw carefully on the preceding list of transitional expressions because the ones in each group are not interchangeable. For instance, *besides*, *finally*, and *second* may all be used to add information, but each has its own distinct meaning.

To see where transitional expressions might be needed in your paragraphs, examine the movement from each sentence to the next. (On a computer or on paper, you can highlight the transitional expressions already present and then review the sentences that lack them.) Abrupt changes are most likely to need a transition: a shift from cause to effect, a contradiction, a contrast. (You can smooth and clarify transitions *between* paragraphs, too. See pp. 108 and 110–12.)

CULTURE LANGUAGE If transitional expressions are not common in your native language, you may be tempted to compensate when writing in English by adding them to the beginnings of most sentences. But such explicit transitions aren't needed everywhere, and in fact too many can be intrusive and awkward. When inserting transitional expressions, consider the reader's need for a signal: often the connection from sentence to sentence is already clear from the context, or it can be made clear by relating the content of sentences more closely (see pp. 84–85). When you do need transitional expressions, try varying their positions in your sentences, as shown in the sample paragraph on pages 86–87.

Punctuating transitional expressions

A transitional expression is usually set off by a comma or commas from the rest of the sentence:

Immediately afterward, she rubs her eyes. Within a few days, she, too, has a cold.

See pages 461–62 for more on this convention and its exceptions.

7 ■ Combining devices to achieve coherence

The devices for achieving coherence rarely appear in isolation in effective paragraphs. As any example in this chapter shows, writers usually combine sensible organization, parallelism, repetition, pronouns, consistency, and transitional expressions to help readers follow the development of ideas. And the devices also figure, naturally, in the whole essay (see pp. 110–13 for an example of paragraphs linked in an essay).

EXERCISE 6

Analyzing paragraphs for coherence

Study the paragraphs by Janet Lieber (p. 77), Hillary Begas (p. 92), and Freeman Dyson (p. 94) for the authors' use of various devices

to achieve coherence. Look especially at the structures and ideas, repetition and transitional expressions.

EXERCISE 7

Arranging sentences coherently

After the topic sentence (sentence 1), the paragraph below have been deliberately guides, rearrange the sentences in the organized, coherent unit.

We hear complaints about the Postal Service delivered by the Postal Service each year. 140,000,000,000 pieces of mail each year. Service delivers almost as much mail as the combined. That huge number means over 2,000 and over 560 pieces per man, woman, and

EXERCISE 8

Eliminating inconsistencies

The following paragraph is incoherent in person, number, or tense. Identify the paragraph to give it coherence. (For eliminating inconsistencies, see pp. 376, 377)

The Hopi tihu, or kachina likeness its owner, usually a girl or woman, do thing. Instead, you treated them as a them out of the way on a wall. For its connection with the kachina's spirit. the kachina, carrying a portion of the

EXERCISE 9

Using transitional expressions

Transitional expressions have been paragraph at the numbered blanks. appropriate transitional expression (1 and (3) to show effect. Consult the list

All over the country, people are ing, dancing, walking, playing tennis (1) this school has consisted equip a fitness center. The school has isting athletic facilities to all studer nized sports. (3) students have their rooms and on dangerous publi

to achieve coherence. Look especially for organization, parallel structures and ideas, repetition and restatement, pronouns, and transitional expressions.

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4b

EXERCISE 7

Arranging sentences coherently

After the topic sentence (sentence 1), the sentences in the student paragraph below have been deliberately scrambled to make the paragraph incoherent. Using the topic sentence and other clues as guides, rearrange the sentences in the paragraph to form a well-organized, coherent unit.

We hear complaints about the Postal Service all the time, but ¹ we should not forget what it does *right*. The total volume of mail ² delivered by the Postal Service each year makes up almost half the total delivered in all the world. Its 70,000 employees handle ³ 140,000,000,000 pieces of mail each year. And when was the last ⁴ time they failed to deliver yours? In fact, on any given day the Postal Service delivers almost as much mail as the rest of the world ⁵ combined. That huge number means over 2,000,000 pieces per employee ⁶ and over 560 pieces per man, woman, and child in the country.

EXERCISE 8

Eliminating inconsistencies

The following paragraph is incoherent because of inconsistencies in person, number, or tense. Identify the inconsistencies and revise the paragraph to give it coherence. (For further exercises in eliminating inconsistencies, see pp. 376, 377–78, and 380.)

The Hopi tihu, or kachina likeness, is often called a “doll,” but its owner, usually a girl or woman, does not regard them as a plaything. Instead, you treated them as a valued possession and hung them out of the way on a wall. For its owner the tihu represents a connection with the kachina’s spirit. They are considered part of the kachina, carrying a portion of the kachina’s power.

EXERCISE 9

Using transitional expressions

Transitional expressions have been removed from the following paragraph at the numbered blanks. Fill in each blank with an appropriate transitional expression (1) to contrast, (2) to intensify, and (3) to show effect. Consult the list on page 87 if necessary.

All over the country, people are swimming, jogging, weightlifting, dancing, walking, playing tennis—doing anything to keep fit. (1) this school has consistently refused to construct and equip a fitness center. The school has (2) refused to open existing athletic facilities to all students, not just those playing organized sports. (3) students have no place to exercise except in their rooms and on dangerous public roads.

EXERCISE 10
Considering your past work: Paragraph coherence

Continuing from Exercise 3 (p. 77), examine the body paragraphs of your essay to see how coherent they are and how their coherence could be improved. Do the paragraphs have a clear organization? Do you use parallelism, repetition and restatement, pronouns, and transitional expressions to signal relationships? Are the paragraphs consistent in person, number, and tense? Revise two or three paragraphs in ways you think will improve their coherence.

EXERCISE 11
Writing a coherent paragraph

Write a coherent paragraph from the following information, combining and rewriting sentences as necessary. First, begin the paragraph with the topic sentence given and arrange the supporting sentences in a climactic order. Then combine and rewrite the supporting sentences, helping the reader see connections by introducing parallelism, repetition and restatement, pronouns, consistency, and transitional expressions.

Topic sentence

Hypnosis is far superior to drugs for relieving tension.

Supporting information

Hypnosis has none of the dangerous side effects of the drugs that relieve tension.

Tension-relieving drugs can cause weight loss or gain, illness, or even death.

Hypnosis is nonaddicting.

Most of the drugs that relieve tension do foster addiction.

Tension-relieving drugs are expensive.

Hypnosis is inexpensive even for people who have not mastered self-hypnosis.

EXERCISE 12**Turning topic sentences into coherent paragraphs**

Develop three of the following topic sentences into coherent paragraphs. Organize your information by space, by time, or for emphasis, as seems most appropriate. Use parallelism, repetition and restatement, pronouns, consistency, and transitional expressions to link sentences.

1. The most interesting character in the book [or movie] was _____.
2. Of all my courses, _____ is the one that I think will serve me best throughout life.
3. Although we in the United States face many problems, the one we should concentrate on solving first is _____.
4. The most dramatic building in town is the _____.
5. Children should not have to worry about the future.

In an essay that you will provide plenty of statements. You will write a paragraph, as you will, to be adequate if you skimp.

Untruths when they are simple. In preventing feelings, they are fore.

This paragraph lacks wide enough information to support the writer's assertion.

1 ■ Using specific

If they are simple, the writing will be based on thought. Readers will provide the evidence, statistics, examples, and views you need.

Here is the example. With examples,

Untruths when they are simple. Assurance is flattering to avoid an interest in the lies may be the person's attention and in one to go on. —JOAN

<http://www>

For added help

- ▶ The writer
- ▶ Examples
- ▶ Don't
- ▶ We

4c Developing the paragraph

¶ dev

4c

In an essay that's understandable and interesting to readers, you will provide plenty of solid information to support your general statements. You work that information into the essay through the paragraph, as you build up each point relating to the thesis.

A paragraph may be unified and coherent but still be inadequate if you skimp on details. Take this example:

Untruths can serve as a kind of social oil when they smooth connections between people. In preventing confrontation and injured feelings, they allow everyone to go on as before.

General statements
needing examples
to be clear and
convincing

This paragraph lacks development, completeness. It does not provide enough information for us to evaluate or even care about the writer's assertions.

1 ■ Using specific information

If they are sound, the general statements you make in any writing will be based on what you have experienced, observed, read, and thought. Readers will assume as much and will expect you to provide the evidence for your statements—sensory details, facts, statistics, examples, quotations, reasons. Whatever helps you form your views you need, in turn, to share with readers.

Here is the actual version of the preceding sample paragraph. With examples, the paragraph is more interesting and convincing.

Untruths can serve as a kind of social oil when they smooth connections between people. Assuring a worried friend that his haircut is flattering, claiming an appointment to avoid an aunt's dinner invitation, pretending interest in an acquaintance's children—these lies may protect the liar, but they also protect the person lied to. In preventing confrontation and injured feelings, the lies allow everyone to go on as before.

Examples specifying
kinds of lies and
consequences

—JOAN LAR (student). "The Truth of Lies"

<http://www.ahlongman.com/littlebrown>

For added help with developing paragraphs, click on

- ▶ The writing process
- ▶ Exercises ▶ Exer. 6
- ▶ Downloads ▶ Questions about patterns
- ▶ Web links ▶ Paragraphs



1 dev
4c

If your readers often comment that your writing needs more specifics, you should focus on that improvement in your revisions. Try listing the general statements of each paragraph on lines by themselves with space underneath. Then use one of the discovery techniques discussed on pages 19–31 (freewriting, brainstorming, and so on) to find the details to support each sentence. Write these directly on your draft. If you write on a computer, you can do this revision then, working on the copy, separate the sentences and explore their support. Rewrite the supporting details into sentences, reassemble the paragraph, and edit it for coherence.

2 ■ Using a pattern of development

If you have difficulty developing an idea or shaping your information, then try asking yourself questions derived from the patterns of development. (The same patterns can help with essay development, too. See pp. 27–28.)

You can download the following questions from this book's Web site: see the box on page 91. When you're having difficulty with a paragraph, you can duplicate the list and explore answers. You may be able to import what you write directly into your draft.

How did it happen? (Narration)

Narration retells a significant sequence of events, usually in the order of their occurrence (that is, chronologically):

Jill's story is typical for "recruits" to religious cults. She was very lonely in college and appreciated the attention of the nice young men and women who lived in a house near campus. They persuaded her to share their meals and then to move in with them. Between intense bombardments of "love," they deprived her of sleep and sometimes threatened to throw her out. Jill became increasingly confused and dependent, losing touch with any reality besides the one in the group. She dropped out of school and refused to see or communicate with her family. Before long she, too, was preying on lonely college students.

—HILLARY BEGAS (student),
"The Love Bombers"

As this paragraph illustrates, a narrator is concerned not just with the sequence of events but also with their consequence, their importance to the whole. Thus a narrative rarely corresponds to real time; instead, it collapses transitional or background events and focuses on events of particular interest. In addition, writers some-

times rearrange events, as with
ory by flashing back to an ea

How does it look, sound, feel
Description details the
thing, or feeling. You use c
dominant mood, to illustrat
pose. Some description is
through his or her biases ar
by Virginia Woolf on page
darkness, the bulge of a gre
lines all indicate the author
In contrast to subjecti
often favor description tha
out bias or emotion:

The two toddlers,
for half an hour in a
with yellow walls (one
for observation) and
room was unfurnished
chairs and about two
interaction was gene
struggled physically a
toys, especially a lar
small wooden fire en
two boys often push
pried his hands from
larger boy never sp
grunting sounds wh
other. In turn, the s
piercing screams of
"Stop that!" When
hummed and mutter

"Case Study: E

What are examples of i

Some ideas can
support—supplying de
paragraph on lying (p.
examples of her genera
tended example:

The language
ing loomed larger
learn more. When
certain concepts
Korean emotion a
slowly aware of

times rearrange events, as when they simulate the workings of memory by flashing back to an earlier time.

How does it look, sound, feel, smell, taste? (Description)

Description details the sensory qualities of a person, place, thing, or feeling. You use concrete and specific words to convey a dominant mood, to illustrate an idea, or to achieve some other purpose. Some description is **subjective**: the writer filters the subject through his or her biases and emotions. In the subjective description by Virginia Woolf on page 81, the *glare* of the walls, the *impenetrable darkness*, the *bulge of a great bowl*, and the *formidable corners and lines* all indicate the author's feelings about what she describes.

In contrast to subjective description, journalists and scientists often favor description that is **objective**, conveying the subject without bias or emotion:

The two toddlers, both boys, sat together for half an hour in a ten-foot-square room with yellow walls (one with a two-way mirror for observation) and a brown carpet. The room was unfurnished except for two small chairs and about two dozen toys. The boys' interaction was generally tense. They often struggled physically and verbally over several toys, especially a large red beach ball and a small wooden fire engine. The larger of the two boys often pushed the smaller away or pried his hands from the desired object. This larger boy never spoke, but he did make grunting sounds when he was engaging the other. In turn, the smaller boy twice uttered piercing screams of "No!" and once shouted "Stop that!" When he was left alone, he hummed and muttered to himself.

Objective description: specific record of sensory data without interpretation

—RAY MATTISON (student),

"Case Study: Play Patterns of Toddlers"

What are examples of it or reasons for it? (Illustration or support)

Some ideas can be developed simply by illustration or support—supplying detailed examples or reasons. The writer of the paragraph on lying (p. 91) developed her idea with several specific examples of her general statements. You can also supply a single extended example:

The language problem that I was attacking loomed larger and larger as I began to learn more. When I would describe in English certain concepts and objects enmeshed in Korean emotion and imagination, I became slowly aware of nuances, of differences be-

Topic sentence (assertion to be illustrated)