

Body Paragraphs and Conclusions

Eng 204 - Hardwick
9/14/22

What We Are Doing Next Week

Grammar, Citations, Information Literacy, Astrid Visit, Process Analysis
Paper (Don't Worry We are Re-using What You Already Wrote)

What We Covered Yesterday

- Handed in poems (I will have them for you Monday).
- Talked about essay structure.
- Discussed thesis statements and reviewed content from Chapter 2 of the textbook.
- Boomerang Free Write.
- Conversational vs Formal English.
- Began free write personal essay assignment.

Eng 204 Website

- I made you all a website find the Power points while we wait for Canvas to get fixed! It also has a link to an older edition of the textbook. If your download codes are still broken, you can legally use this to follow along.
- <https://stpaulseng204.neocities.org/>
- Take a picture of this with your phone or bookmark the URL now after typing it in on your computer's internet browser (cntrl + d on Windows, command + d on Mac).
- I am not allowed to take digital submissions outside of canvas so you must print out your essay.



Today's Writing Exercise

- Today we will be doing a more structured exercise for students that have mentioned preferring structured writing and to try something new for those of you who are less comfortable with it.
- We are going to spend the first 10 minutes answering prompts about your personal essay. You may have answered some of these already in your preparation so focus on the questions you haven't gotten to yet!



Writing Prompts

- What is your thesis statement?
- What general information can help lead up to your thesis?
- What are two pieces of evidence for your thesis? (you should have two body paragraphs in your personal essay)
- How does how your evidence compare and contrast to different experiences you've had?
- What is something that might make people think your thesis is wrong?
- What's a way you can disprove them or prove your thesis is still a correct or important idea?

Body Paragraphs

- What we will discuss starts on page 48 of the 13th edition (if you have the book) and page 46 of the 12th edition (if you are following along with the older edition I found online).
- Body paragraphs consist of evidence that support your thesis statement.
- *Steps to Writing Well* contains the following ideas about body paragraphs:
 - How to write a topic sentence (a sentence that introduces what the paragraph is about).
 - How to present evidence that ensures paragraph development (including enough evidence and quality evidence without repeating yourself).
 - How to write a unified paragraph (not changing ideas and staying focused).
 - How to achieve paragraph coherence (making sense and being easy to follow).

Continuing the Hour Glass/Sandwich of Writing

- Writing an essay is like constructing an hourglass or a sandwich shape.

Topic Sentence

Evidence

Conclusion



Thesis Statement

Body Paragraphs

Conclusion

Writing An Informal Outline of Your Body Paragraphs

- Why outline my work?
 - Makes it easier to write.
 - Improves coherence.
- What's the difference between a formal and informal outline?
 - Bullet points versus full sentences.
 - Lack of parallel parts.
 - Whatever works best for how you think!
 - Helps you plan your topic sentence.

An Example Outline

Thesis–Essay Map: Unpredictable hours, poor staffing, and inadequate space make the library's reserve facility difficult for students to use.

- I. Unpredictable hours
 - A. Hours of operation vary from week to week
 - B. Unannounced closures
 - C. Closed on some holidays, open on others
- II. Poor staffing
 - A. Uninformed personnel at reserve desk
 - B. Too few on duty at peak times
- III. Inadequate space
 - A. Room too small for number of users
 - B. Too few chairs, tables
 - C. Weak lighting

Translating Your Outline Into a Body Paragraph

Essay Thesis: The library's reserve facility is difficult for students to use.

Topic Sentence

1. The topic sentence supports the thesis by stating a main point (one reason the facility is difficult to use).

2. The topic sentence announces the subject matter of the paragraph (the unpredictable hours).

The library reserve facility's unpredictable hours frustrate even the most dedicated students. Instructors who place articles or books on reserve usually ask students to read them by a certain date. Too often, however, students arrive at the reserve desk only to find it closed. The facility's open hours change from week to week: students who used the room last week on Tuesday morning may discover that this week on Tuesday the desk is closed, which means another trip. Perhaps even more frustrating are the facility's sudden, unannounced closures. Some of these closures allow staff members to have lunch or go on breaks, but, again, they occur without notice on no regular schedule. A student arrives, as I did two weeks ago, at the desk to find a "Be Back Soon"

3. The topic sentence controls the subject matter (all the examples—the changing hours, the sudden closures, the erratic holiday schedule—support the claim of the topic sentence).

sign. In my case, I waited for nearly an hour. Another headache is the holiday schedule, which is difficult to figure out. For example, this year the reserve room was closed without advance notice on Presidents' Day but open on Easter; open during Winter Break but closed some days during Spring Break, a time many students use to catch up on their reserve assignments. Overall, the reserve facility would be much easier for students to use if it adopted a set schedule of operating hours, announced these times each semester, and maintained them.

(these are all one paragraph in the book but is just split over two pages)

Paragraph Development: Always be FLEXing

Factual - State your claim as evidence you will support.

Layout - Layout your argument in a clear way.

Evidence - Provide clear evidence.

eXamine - Be thorough.



Examples of Paragraph Development

The following paragraph offers reasons but no specific examples or details to support its claims:

Living with my ex-roommate was unbearable. First, she thought everything she owned was the best. Second, she possessed numerous filthy habits. Finally, she constantly exhibited immature behavior.

The writer might provide more evidence this way:

Living with my ex-roommate was unbearable. First, she thought everything she owned, from clothes to cosmetics, was the best. If someone complimented my pants, she'd point out that her designer jeans looked better and would last longer because they were made of better material. If she borrowed my shampoo, she'd let me know that it didn't get her hair as clean and shiny as hers did. My hand cream wasn't as smooth; my suntan lotion wasn't as protective; not even my wire clothes hangers

were as good as her padded ones! But despite her pickiness about products, she had numerous filthy habits. Her dirty dishes remained in the sink for days before she felt the need to wash them. Piles of the "best" brand of tissues were regularly discarded from her upper bunk and strewn about the floor. Her desk and closets overflowed with heaps of dirty clothes, books, cosmetics, and whatever else she owned, and she rarely brushed her teeth (when she did brush, she left oozes of toothpaste in the sink). Finally, she constantly acted immaturity by throwing tantrums when things didn't go her way. A poor grade on an exam or paper, for example, meant books, shoes, or any other small object within her reach would hit the wall flying. Living with such a person taught me some valuable lessons about how not to win friends or keep roommates.

By adding more supporting evidence—specific examples and details—to this paragraph, the writer has a better chance of convincing the reader of the roommate's real character.

What Counts as Evidence?

- There are many different types of evidence you can use!
- What type of evidence is appropriate depends on your audience.
- Types of evidence can include:
 - Observations
 - Experiences
 - Hypotheticals
 - Reasoned Through Arguments (logic)
 - Facts
 - Statistics
 - Quotations from Experts

Backing up Citations

- Academic essays often ask you to cite the text and analyze it.

FOR EXAMPLE

- My point:
 - Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken" discusses a hypothetical way the speaker makes meaning (as opposed to something he's actually done).
- How I'd write about it in the essay:
 - In the last stanza of the poem the speaker states, "I shall be telling this with a sigh/
Somewhere ages and ages hence: /Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the
one less traveled by, /And that has made all the difference." While this initially reads like
something that has already happened, the speaker is actually imagining a hypothetical
future. Rather than saying in the present moment of the poem that he is taking "the one
less travelled," he is considering how he would tell the story of this moment to an
audience.

Paragraph Length and Unity

- Each paragraph should address a single idea.
- Just like commas and periods separate ideas in a sentence, paragraphs separate ideas in your essay.
- Next week we will be focusing on grammar and when to connect or separate ideas in a sentence. This will also be a chance for you to revise your essay based on feedback I give you. (I will return your essays and poems to you Monday morning).

Transitional Language...The Deluxe Krabby Patty



- Transitional language conducts multiple ideas.
- This happens:
 - Inside paragraphs to connect your ideas.
 - At the start of paragraphs to connect them to your previous ideas.

Examples Transitional Language

giving examples	for example, for instance, specifically, in particular, namely, another, other, in addition, to illustrate
comparison	similarly, not only . . . but also, in comparison
contrast	although, but, while, in contrast, however, though, on the other hand, nevertheless
sequence	first . . . second . . . third, finally, moreover, also, in addition, next, then, after, furthermore, and, previously
results	therefore, thus, consequently, as a result

Strategies for Strong Transitions

Repetition of Key Words

Important words or phrases (and their synonyms) may be repeated throughout a paragraph to connect the thoughts into a coherent statement:

One of the most common, yet most puzzling, phobias is the *fear* of *snakes*. It's only natural, of course, to be afraid of a poisonous *snake*, but many people are just as frightened of the harmless varieties. For such people, a tiny green grass *snake* is as terrifying as a cobra. Some researchers say this unreasonable *fear* of any and all *snakes* is a legacy left to us by our cave-dwelling ancestors, for whom these *reptiles* were a real and constant danger. Others maintain that the *fear* is a result of our associating the *snake* with the notion of evil, as in the Garden of Eden. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that for many otherwise normal people, the mere sight of a *snake* slithering through the countryside is enough to keep them city dwellers forever.

The repeated words "fear" and "snake" and the synonym "reptile" help tie one sentence to another so that the reader can follow the ideas easily.

Strategies for Strong Transitions

Pronouns Substituted for Key Nouns

A pronoun is a word that stands for a noun. In your paragraph you might use a key noun in one sentence and then use a pronoun in its place in the following sentences. The pronoun "it" often replaces "shark" in the description that follows:

⁽¹⁾The great white shark is perhaps the best equipped of all the ocean's predators. ⁽²⁾*It* can grow up to twenty-one feet and weigh three tons, with two-inch teeth that can replace themselves within twenty-four hours when damaged. ⁽³⁾The shark's sense of smell is so acute that *it* can detect one ounce of fish blood in a million ounces of water. ⁽⁴⁾In addition, *it* can sense vibrations from six hundred feet away.

Sentences 2, 3, and 4 are tied to the topic sentence by the use of the pronoun "it."

Strategies for Strong Transitions

Parallelism

Parallelism in a paragraph means using the same grammatical structure in several sentences to establish coherence. The repeated use of similar phrasing helps tie the ideas and sentences together. Next, for example, is a paragraph predominantly unified by its use of grammatically parallel sentences:

⁽¹⁾The weather of Texas offers something for everyone. ⁽²⁾If you are the kind who likes to see snow drifting onto mountain peaks, a visit to the Big Bend area may satisfy your eye. ⁽³⁾If, on the other hand, you demand a bright sun to bake your skin a golden brown, stop in the southern part of the state. ⁽⁴⁾And for hardier souls, who ask from nature a show of force, the skies of the Panhandle regularly release ferocious springtime tornadoes. ⁽⁵⁾Finally, if you are the fickle type, by all means come to central Texas, where the sun at any time may shine unashamed throughout the most torrential rainstorm.

The parallel structures of sentences 2, 3, and 5 ("if you" + verb) keep the paragraph flowing smoothly from one idea to the next.

Strategies for Strong Transitions

Using a Variety of Transitional Devices

Most writers use a combination of transitional devices in their paragraphs. In the following example, three kinds of transitional devices are circled: transitional words, repetition of pronouns, and repetition of key words. See whether you can identify each one.

Transitions are the glue that holds a paragraph together. These devices lead the reader from sentence to sentence, smoothing over the gaps between by indicating the relationship between the sentences. If this glue is missing, the paragraph will almost inevitably sound choppy or childish, even if every sentence in it responds to a single topic commitment. However, transitions are not substitutes for topic unity; like most glue, they are most effective when joining similar objects, or, in this case, similar ideas. For example, in a paragraph describing a chicken egg, no transition could bridge the gap created by the inclusion of a sentence concerned with naval losses in the Civil War. On other words, transitions can call attention to the topic relationships between sentences, but they cannot create those relationships.

Free Writing Exercise

- What is your personal essay about?
- What examples are you providing of how you feel about free writing?
- How does how your experience now compare and contrast to different experiences you've had?
- What is something that people might say to counter your experiences?
- What's a way you can still assert that your experiences and thoughts in the essay are valid?

Conclusions

These slides were not in class but I have added the information we discussed in the textbook!

- Conclusions recapitulate your argument and help your writing end on a strong note.
- Just like a TV show, book, or movie having a bad ending, ending your essay poorly is like a let down for the reader.
-

Conclusion Techniques (13th ed: 88, 12th ed online 82)

- Your textbook provides several examples of ways to write a conclusion. There are examples of each of these in the text.
 - A summary of the thesis and the essay's major points.
 - An evaluation of the importance of the essay's subject.
 - A statement of the essay's broader implications.
 - A recommendation or call to action.
 - A warning based on the thesis.
 - A quotation from an authority or someone whose insight emphasizes the main point.
 - An anecdote or brief example that emphasizes or sums up the point of the essay.
 - An image or description that lends finality to the essay.
 - A rhetorical question that makes the readers think about the essay's main point.
 - A forecast or prediction based on the essay's thesis.
 - An ironic twist, witticism, pun, or playful use of words.

Paragraph Coherence

In addition to unity, *coherence* is essential to a good paragraph. Coherence means that all the sentences and ideas in your paragraph flow together to make a clear, logical point about your topic. Your paragraph should not be a confusing collection of ideas set down in random order. The readers should be able to follow what you have written and see easily and quickly how each sentence grows out of, or is related to, the preceding sentence. To achieve coherence, you should have a smooth connection or transition between the sentences in your paragraphs.

There are five important means of achieving coherence in your paragraphs:

1. A natural or easily recognized order
2. Transitional words and phrases
3. Repetition of key words
4. Substitution of pronouns for key nouns
5. Parallelism

These transitional devices are similar to the couplings between railroad cars; they enable the controlling engine to pull the train of thought along as a unit.

A Recognizable Ordering of Information

Without consciously thinking about the process, you may often organize paragraphs in easily recognized patterns that give the reader a sense of logical movement and order. Four common patterns of ordering sentences in a paragraph are discussed here.

The Order of Time

Some paragraphs are composed of details arranged in chronological order. You might, for example, explain the process of changing an oil filter on your car by beginning with the first step, draining the old oil, and concluding with the last step, installing the new filter. Here is a paragraph on black holes in which the writer chronologically orders the details:

A black hole in space, from all indications, is the result of the death of a star. Scientists speculate that stars were first formed from the gases floating in the universe at the beginning of time. In the first stage in the life of a star, the hot gas is drawn by the force of gravity into a burning sphere. In the middle stage—our own sun being a middle-aged star—the burning continues at a regular rate, giving off enormous amounts of heat and light. As it grows old, however, the star eventually explodes to become what is called a nova, a superstar. But gravity soon takes over again, and the exploded star falls back in on itself with such force that all the matter in the star is compacted into a mass no larger than a few miles in diameter. At this point, no heavenly body can be seen in that area of the sky, as the tremendous pull of gravity lets nothing escape, not even light. A black hole has thus been formed.

The Order of Space

When your subject is a physical object, you should select some orderly means of describing it: from left to right, top to bottom, inside to outside, and so forth. For example, you

might describe a sculpture as you walk around it from front to back. In the following paragraph describing a cowboy, the writer has ordered the details of the description in a head-to-feet pattern:

Big Dave was pure cowboy. He wore a black felt hat so big that it kept his face in perpetual shade. Around his neck was knotted a red bandana stained with sweat from long hot days in the saddle. An oversized blue denim shirt hung from his shoulders to give him plenty of arm freedom, and his faded jeans were held up by a broad leather belt with a huge silver buckle featuring a snorting bronc in full buck. His boots, old and dirt-colored, kicked up little dust storms as he sauntered across the corral.

Deductive Order

A paragraph ordered deductively moves from a generalization to particular details that explain or support the general statement. Perhaps the most common pattern of all paragraphs, the deductive paragraph begins with its topic sentence and proceeds to its supporting details, as illustrated in the following example:

If a group of 111 ninth-graders is typical of today's teenagers, spelling and social science teachers may be in for trouble. In a recent experiment, not one of the students tested could write the Pledge of Allegiance correctly. In addition, the results showed that the students apparently had little understanding of the pledge's meaning. For example, several students described the United States as a "nation under guard" instead of "under God," and the phrase "to the Republic for which it stands" appeared in several responses as "of the richest stand" or "for Richard stand." Many students changed the word "indivisible" to the phrase "in the visible," and over nine percent of the students, all of whom are Americans from varying racial and ethnic backgrounds, misspelled the word "America."

Inductive Order

An inductive paragraph begins with an examination of particular details and then concludes with a larger point or generalization about those details. Such a paragraph often ends with its topic sentence, as does the following paragraph on Little League baseball:

At too many Little League baseball games, one or another adult creates a minor scene by yelling rudely at an umpire or a coach. Similarly, it is not uncommon to hear adults whispering loudly with one another in the stands over which child should have caught a missed ball. Perhaps the most astounding spectacle of all, however, is an irate parent or coach yanking a child off the field after a bad play for a humiliating lecture in front of the whole team. Sadly, Little League baseball today often seems intended more for childlike adults than for the children who actually play it.

Transitional Words and Phrases

Some paragraphs may need internal transitional words to help the reader move smoothly from one thought to the next so that the ideas do not appear disconnected or choppy.

Here is a list of common transitional words and phrases and their uses:

giving examples	for example, for instance, specifically, in particular, namely, another, other, in addition, to illustrate
comparison	similarly, not only . . . but also, in comparison
contrast	although, but, while, in contrast, however, though, on the other hand, nevertheless
sequence	first . . . second . . . third, finally, moreover, also, in addition, next, then, after, furthermore, and, previously
results	therefore, thus, consequently, as a result

Notice the difference the use of transitional words makes in the following paragraphs:

Working in the neighborhood grocery store as a checker was one of the worst jobs I've ever had. In the first place, I had to wear an ugly, scratchy uniform cut at least three inches too short. My schedule of working hours was another inconvenience; because my hours were changed each week, it was impossible to make plans in advance, and getting a day off was out of the question. In addition, the lack of working space bothered me. Except for a half-hour lunch break, I was restricted to three square feet of room behind the counter and consequently felt as if I were no more than a gerbil in a cage.

The same paragraph rewritten without transitional words sounds choppy and childish:

Working in the neighborhood grocery store as a checker was one of the worst jobs I've ever had. I had to wear an ugly, scratchy uniform. It was cut at least three inches too short. My schedule of working hours was inconvenient. My hours changed each week. It was impossible to make plans in advance. Getting a day off was out of the question. The lack of working space bothered me. Except for a half-hour break, I was restricted to three square feet of room behind the counter. I felt like a gerbil in a cage.

Although transitional words and phrases are useful in bridging the gaps between your ideas, don't overuse them. Not every sentence needs a transitional phrase, so use one only when the relationship between your thoughts needs clarification. It's also a mistake to place the transitional word in the same position in your sentence each time. Look at the paragraph that follows:

It's a shame that every high school student isn't required to take a course in first aid. *For example*, you might need to treat a friend or relative for drowning during a family picnic. Or, *for instance*, someone might break a bone or receive a snakebite on a camping trip. Also, you should always know what to do for a common cut or burn. *Moreover*, it's important to realize when someone is in shock. *However*, very few people take the time to learn the simple rules of first aid. *Thus*, many injured or sick people suffer more than they should. *Therefore*, everyone should take a first aid course in school or at the Red Cross center.

As you can see, a series of sentences each beginning with a transitional word quickly becomes repetitious and boring. To hold your reader's attention, use transitional words only when necessary to avoid chopiness, and vary their placement in your sentences.

Repetition of Key Words

Important words or phrases (and their synonyms) may be repeated throughout a paragraph to connect the thoughts into a coherent statement:

One of the most common, yet most puzzling, phobias is the *fear of snakes*. It's only natural, of course, to be afraid of a poisonous snake, but many people are just as frightened of the harmless varieties. For such people, a tiny green grass snake is as terrifying as a cobra. Some researchers say this unreasonable *fear* of any and all snakes is a legacy left to us by our cave-dwelling ancestors, for whom these *reptiles* were a real and constant danger. Others maintain that the *fear* is a result of our associating the snake with the notion of evil, as in the Garden of Eden. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that for many otherwise normal people, the mere sight of a snake slithering through the countryside is enough to keep them city dwellers forever.

The repeated words "fear" and "snake" and the synonym "reptile" help tie one sentence to another so that the reader can follow the ideas easily.

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Avoiding Whiplash

The preceding example not only illustrates a variety of transitional devices, but also makes an important point about their use—and their limitations. Transitional devices show connections between sentences, but they alone cannot create a logical flow of ideas if none exists. For example, notice in the following sample the “disconnect” between the first three sentences and sentence 4:

⁽¹⁾Despite our growing dependency on computers, one of our most useful household tools is still the lowly pencil. ⁽²⁾Cheap, efficient, and long-lasting, the pencil may be operated by children and adults alike, without the necessity of a user’s manual or tech support. ⁽³⁾According to the Inense Cedar Institute, today’s pencil can draw a line 70 miles long, be sharpened 17 times, and write an average of 45,000 words. ⁽⁴⁾Chinese factories don’t have to follow as many environmental regulations, and their workers are paid less than their American counterparts. ⁽⁵⁾Many pencils used in this country are still manufactured in China because of the cheaper cost.

Did you suffer “reader’s whiplash” as your mind experienced the sudden jerk from the discussion of pencil use to “Chinese factories”? No addition of a simple transitional word will fix this problem; the writer needs to revise the paragraph’s internal logic and

flow or perhaps even consider a new paragraph on cost or production. In other words, don’t rely on transitional devices when deep-structure revision for coherence is needed. Make your reader’s trip through your prose an enjoyable one by avoiding sudden stops and starts in thought, and then smooth that ride with appropriate transitional devices when they are necessary.

Practicing What You’ve Learned



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- A. Identify each of the following paragraphs as ordered by time, space, or parallelism:

My apartment is so small that it will no longer hold all my possessions. Every day when I come in the door, I am shocked by the clutter. The wall to my immediate left is completely obscured by art and movie posters that have become so numerous they often overlap, even hiding each other. Along the adjoining wall is my sound system: CDs are stacked several feet high on two long, low tables. The big couch that runs across the back of the room is always piled so high with schoolbooks and magazines that a guest usually ends up sitting on the floor. To my right is a large sliding glass door that opens onto a balcony—or at least it used to, before it was permanently blocked by my tennis gear, golf clubs, and bicycle. Even the tiny closet next to the front door is bursting with clothes, both clean and dirty. I think the time has come for me to move.

Once-common acts of greeting may be finding renewed popularity after three centuries. According to one historian, kissing was at the height of its popularity as a greeting in seventeenth-century England, when ladies and gentlemen of the court often saluted each other in this affectionate manner. Then the country was visited by a strange plague, whose cause was unknown. Because no one knew how the plague was spread, people tried to avoid physical contact with others as much as possible. Both kissing and the handshake went out of fashion and were replaced by the bow and curtsy, so people could greet others without having to touch them. The bow and curtsy remained in vogue for over a hundred years, until the handshake—for men only—returned to popularity in the nineteenth century. Today, both men and women may shake hands upon meeting others, and kissing as a greeting is making a comeback—especially among the jet-setters and Hollywood stars.

Students have diverse ways of preparing for final exams. Some stay up the night before, trying to cram into their brains what they avoided all term. Others pace themselves, spending a little time each night going over the notes they took in class that day. Still others just cross their fingers, assuming they absorbed enough along the way from lectures and readings. In the end, though, everyone hopes the tests are easy.

continued on next page

Today's Lesson In Summary

- Body paragraphs are where you provide and analyze evidence for your thesis.
- In the same way sentences contain single thoughts, your body paragraphs each address one topic.
- A good topic sentence and outline will make it easier to analyze and explain evidence.