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**Module of Written Expression**

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 **Characteristics of a paragpraph**

**Audience for a paragraph**

 An Audience is the person for whom a writer writes. A writer uses the content that best suits the target audience. In simple words, audience refers to the spectators, listeners, and intended readers of a writing. For instance, Stephenie Meyer’s [novel](https://literarydevices.net/novel/) series, Twilight, has targeted primarily younger female audiences. Similarly, J. K Rowling’s Harry Potter series became a blockbuster hit, with a target audience of youth, and adult [fantasy](https://literarydevices.net/fantasy/) [fiction](https://literarydevices.net/fiction/) lovers.

 **Paragraph unity**

 Another important element of a good paragraph is unity. Every good paragraph has unity, which means that only one main idea is discussed. For examp1e, if your paragraph is about the advantages of owning a compact car. Discuss only that. Do not discuss the disadvantages. Furthermore, it is a good idea for beginning academic writers to develop only one advantage, such as gas economy, in each paragraph. If you begin to discuss another advantage, start a new paragraph. Sometimes it is possible to discuss two or even three aspects of the same idea in one paragraph (if they are closely related to each other. For example, you could discuss gas economy and low maintenance costs in the same paragraph because they are closely related, but you should not discuss both gas economy and easier parking in the same paragraph because they are not closely related).

 The second part of unity is that every supporting sentence must directly explain or prove the main idea that is stated in the topic sentence. Do not include any information that does not directly support the topic sentence. Sometimes one may write supporting sentences that are "off the topic". These are called irrelevant sentences. For example, if you are writing a paragraph about the high cost of college tuition, you could mention inflation as a factor. However, if you write several sentences about inflation, you are getting off the topic, and your paragraph will not have unity.

Once you determine the controlling idea, you have to make sure that your paragraph will only cover the supporting ideas that refer to the main idea stated in the topic sentence. Therefore, the paragraph will be quite unified.

**Paragraph outlining**

 An outline is like an architect's plan for a house. An architect plans a house before it is built to make sure that all the parts will fit. Like an architect, you should plan a paragraph before you write it to make sure that all of your ideas will fit.

 Learning to outline will improve your writing for three reasons. First of all, it will help you organize your ideas. Specifically, an outline will ensure that you will not include any irrelevant ideas, that you will not leave out any important points, and that your supporting sentences will be in logical order. Second, learning to outline will help you write more quickly. It may take some practice at first, but once you become used to outline your ideas before you start to write, you can get an idea on how fast will actually be able to write. Preparing an outline is 75 percent of the work. The actual writing becomes easier because you do not have to worry about what you are going to say: You already have a well-organized plan to follow. Finally, your grammar will improve because you will be able to concentrate on it, not on your thoughts or organization. Improved organization, speed, and grammar make learning to outline well worth the effort.

A simple outline for a short paragraph might look like this:

Topic sentence underlined

Topic sentence

* First Supporting Point

These are equal in importance and written in parallel form

* Second Supporting Point
* Third Supporting Point

Concluding sentence

Concluding sentence underlined

\*\*\* The number of main supporting points (A, B, C) will vary widely from paragraph to paragraph.

**Cohesion in paragraph writing**

 Creating cohesion means ‘tying’ words, phrases, and sentences together in a way that makes a paragraph clear and logical to the reader. Without cohesive sentences, readers feel like they are reading a long list of unrelated ideas.  They often have trouble remembering what you said. The following are some of the cohesive tools you can make use of.

 **1. Repetition:** Use a particular word or phrase across different sentences or paragraphs, e.g. Of course, materials development or adaptation is not the only priority for the professions in South Africa. However, the focus on materials development is appealing because it provides a very tangible and practical focus for speech and language therapists (Pascoe et al., 2013).

 **2. Synonyms:** Use a word or phrase in a later sentence which has the same or similar meaning to a keyword in the first sentence, e.g. The purpose of population genetics is to quantify and explain the processes generating variation in natural populations (Vargo & Husseneder, 2011). Sociogenetic studies of eusocial insects are generally based on the approach that the colony functions as a discrete entity within the population (Thorne et al., 1999).

**3. Pronouns**: Use a pronoun to refer back to a phrase already used, e.g. When scientific experiments do not work out as expected, they are often considered failures until some other scientist tries them again. Those that work out better the second time around are the ones that promise the most rewards.

**Cohesive Words and Phrases**

1. Additive words: Also, and, as well as, at the same time as, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, too, not only... but also.

 2. Amplification words: As, for example, for instance, in fact, specifically, such as, that is, to illustrate

 3. Repetitive words: Again, in other words, that is, to repeat

 4. Contrast words: But, conversely, despite, even though, however, in contrast, notwithstanding, on the one hand / on the other hand, still, although, though, whereas, yet, nevertheless, on the contrary, in spite of this

 5. Cause and effect words: Accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this reason, since, as, so, then, therefore, thus

 6. Qualifying words: Although, if, even, therefore, unless

 7. Example: For example, for instance

8. Emphasizing words Above all, more/most importantly

 9. Reason words: For this reason, owing to this, therefore

 10. Order words: Afterwards, at the same time, before, firstly/secondly, formerly, lastly, finally, later, meanwhile, next, now, presently, today/yesterday/last week/next year, subsequently, then, until, ultimately, while, historically, in the end, eventually

 11. Explanation: In other words, that is to say

 12. Attitude: Naturally, of course, certainly, strangely enough, surprisingly, fortunately, unfortunately, admittedly, undoubtedly

 13. Summary: Finally, in conclusion, in short, to summarize

Adapted from: Young-Kyung Min, 2015. Coherence and cohesion. [ONLINE] Available at: http://www.bothell.washington.edu/wacc/for-students/eslhandbook/coherenc

**Coherence in Writing**

 Have you ever read something that was hard to follow, where the writer jumped around from idea to idea and did not have unity or consistency to connect the words, sentences, and paragraphs? That is something that you want to avoid in your own writing. But how do you do that?

 Coherence in writing is the logical bridge between words and sentences. Coherent writing uses devices to connect ideas within each sentence. Main ideas and meaning can be difficult for the reader to follow if the writing lacks coherence.

**Coherence Between Words**

 Between each word, coherence can be created by parallelism. Parallel structure means using similar grammatical constructions between words in sentences. Parallelism is particularly important for words in lists. If you are writing a list of things someone likes to do, then each activity in the list should take the same grammatical form. For instance, if one verb in the list takes on the '-ing' gerund form, like 'running,' then the other verbs in the list should also be in the gerund form. An incoherent structure would be to say:

*Sarah likes to jump, running, and skate.*

Instead, the list should be parallel like this:

*Sarah likes jumping, running, and skating.*

**Coherence Between Sentences**

 Coherence can be created between sentences through repetition and transitional devices (those mention in cohesion section). Repetition of words across sentences helps to reiterate the same ideas between sentences. One way to use repetition to create coherence is to repeat the same word or phrase at the end of one sentence and the beginning of the next sentence to show how the ideas connect. Here is an example of sentences that create coherence through repetition:

 The most important part of an essay is the thesis statement. The thesis statement introduces the argument of the essay. The thesis statement also helps to create a structure for the essay.

 In this example, the repetition of the phrase 'thesis statement' helps to unify the three sentences. It is a phrase that ends the first sentence and transitions into the next sentence by starting with that same phrase.

 Another way to create coherence between sentences is through transitional devices. There are many types of transitional devices that show time and help ideas flow smoothly. Transitional words, such as 'first', 'later', and 'then', are a few examples of transitional devices that show time to help ideas flow more smoothly. Transitional devices are like signposts that tell the reader what is coming up ahead and where the discussion is going.