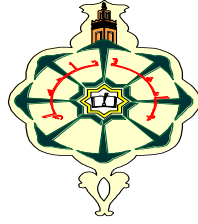


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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
University of Tlemcen Faculty of Letters and Languages Department of English	جامعة تلمسان كلية الآداب واللغات قسم اللغة الإنجليزية



## Comprehension and Written Expression

LMD 2

**Dr. Fatima Zohra BENMOSTEFA - BELKHIR**

**Dr. Youcef MESSAOUDI**

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These lectures are a synthesis of books, university handouts and websites, which were adapted to meet Second year EFL 'Licence' students' needs. These lectures are meant to help students write the different types of academic essays effectively. These sources are acknowledged in the list of references.

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**SEMESTER**

**1**

**Unit**  
**1**

**From Paragraph to Essay**  
**(Structure and Format)**

**Time**

---

Lesson Duration: (3H)

Practice Duration: (4H: 30)

**Unit Goals**

---

- The similar ways that a paragraph and a basic essay function.
- Structural parts of an essay.
- Essay format.



## 1.1. Rhetorical Focus

The sections below will pin point the similar ways that a paragraph and a basic essay function, define the structural parts of an essay and present the format of an essay.

### 1.1.1. The Paragraph and the Basic Essay Format

Writing and organizing an essay is not more difficult than writing and organizing a paragraph, except that the essay takes in several paragraphs. Similar to the paragraph, the essay encompasses three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. The table below presents those constituents and shows how the structural parts of the paragraph correspond to the elements of the essay.

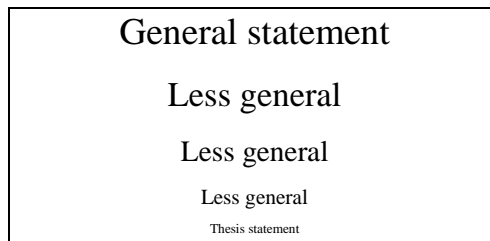
<b>PARAGRAPH</b>		<b>ESSAY</b>
Topic sentence	→	Introduction (general statements + thesis statement)
Supporting detail 1	→	Body paragraph 1 (Topic sentence + supporting details + concluding sentence)
Supporting detail 2	→	Body paragraph 2 (Topic sentence + supporting details + concluding sentence)
Supporting detail 3	→	Body paragraph 3 (Topic sentence + supporting details + concluding sentence)
Concluding sentence	→	Conclusion (restatement of the thesis statement + restatement of the main points + final comment)

## 1.1.2. Parts of the Essay

A basic essay is a three-paragraph essay: introductory paragraph (introduction), body paragraph (body), and concluding paragraph (conclusion).

### 1.1.2.1. Introduction

The introduction, also called the introductory paragraph, serves as a guide or a map of the essay. It usually starts with general statements that gradually become more specific to lead the reader into the thesis statement (See Figure 1). To this point, the introduction resembles a reversed pyramid  $\nabla$ , which is specifically called a *funnel* introduction.



**Figure1.** Funnel Introduction

By and large, a strong introductory paragraph involves three parts: the hook, the background information and the thesis statement.

- *Hook:* it is usually the opening sentence that catches the reader's attention. To achieve this purpose, the hook could be a quote, an analogy, a question... etc.
- *Background information:* after the opening attention-getter, the introduction proceeds with an orientation in a form of general statements that provide the reader with background information to understand the topic and that gradually lead the reader to the most specific statement of the essay, ending in the thesis statement.

Read the introduction below and note how the statements flow smoothly from general to specific.

(a) Hook	(b) background information	(c) Thesis statement
<p>(a) [Every day, new technology appears.] (b) [Ranging from mini-CD's that contain entire encyclopedias to giant space telescopes that can send photographs of distant stars back to earth, technology makes our lives more comfortable and more enjoyable. Of all the new technological wonders, personal computers have probably had the greatest influence on the daily lives of average people. Computers have helped us in the 21th century make a lot of our work easier. Through computers, we can now talk to people in any country, research any topic, work, shop, bank, and entertain ourselves.] (c) [Personal computers have specially reformed communication and business practices in the past twenty years.]</p>		

Adapted from (Bouguebs & Medfouni, 2007-2008, p. 6)

- *Thesis statement:* it is usually the last sentence of the introduction. It is like the topic sentence in a paragraph; it gives the main idea of the essay and puts limits to what the essay will discuss. It can even point to the organization of the entire essay as each body paragraph will directly relate to it. Hence, the thesis statement serves as a road map for the whole essay, giving readers an idea about what the essay will be arguing and which points will be used to support the main idea of the essay.

### **1.1.2.2. Body**

The body is the heart of any essay because its purpose is to develop the thesis statement in one or more paragraphs. Each body paragraph should explain, discuss or prove one aspect of the main claim or the points presented in the thesis following the tips listed below.

- Each body paragraph should start with a topic sentence to introduce the aspect or the point from the thesis statement that you will deal with in that paragraph.

- The main idea in the thesis statement should be echoed in all the controlling ideas of the body paragraphs so that the paragraphs will obviously and reasonably relate to the thesis of the introduction.

e.g. Thesis statement: *“There are many advantages of living in a foreign country.”*

The topic sentences of all the body paragraphs involving this essay should discuss one advantage of living in a foreign country.

e.g. Topic sentences:

*“The first advantage of living in a foreign country is...”*

*“Another advantage of living in a foreign country has to do with ...”*

*“One more advantage of living in a foreign country relates to ...”*

- Each topic sentence should be followed by at least three supporting details. The latter can be arguments, facts, data, quotes, anecdotes, examples, explanations, details ... etc. These means of support are important for they develop the topic sentences and flesh out the body.
- Each body paragraph should finish with a concluding sentence. Its function is to signal the end of the paragraph by summarizing the main points discussed in the paragraph, restating the topic sentence in different words, emphasizing an action on readers to take, or giving an insight, prediction, suggestion or a final comment on the topic. Sometimes the concluding sentence can function as a transition to the next body paragraph.
- The body paragraphs should keep unity with the thesis statement and be coherent. Unity is achieved by echoing a similar order and number of the points in the thesis statement in that of the body. Connection or coherence between the body paragraphs is achieved through the use of transitions.

e.g. Thesis statement: *“Whether we realize it or not, almost all movies affect people’s psychology and people’s lifestyles .”*

- 1<sup>st</sup> body paragraph topic sentence: *“The most important influence of watching a movie is that it destroys people’s psychology.”*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> body paragraph topic sentence: *“The second influence of watching movies is that it changes people’s lifestyles.”*

### **1.1.2.3. Conclusion**

The conclusion is the finale paragraph of an essay. It usually starts with a conclusion transition signal (*in conclusion, in summary, to sum up, in brief, in short, in a nutshell or in a word*) and takes in three sentences. Its aim is to mark the end of the essay and assemble its principal points. To realize this, one can restate the thesis statement in different words, review the main points discussed in the body paragraph(s) of the essay or leave the reader with a final comment, thought or a sense of closure on the essay's topic.

### **1.1.3. Basic Essay Format**

To format an essay the writer should:

- double space the essay.
- leave one inch (2.5 centimeters) on the top, the bottom, the left and the right sides of the page.
- indent the first sentence of each paragraph with one tab (5 spaces) when in typing and about 2 centimeters when in writing by hand. Otherwise, paragraphs can start with no indenting unless separated with one line space between a paragraph and another.
- center the title of the essay on the top of the page.

## **1.2. Practice**

### **Activity 1: Analysing the Paragraph and Short Essay**

*Read the paragraph and the essay in the table below then answer the questions that follow.*

- a. Label the three parts of the paragraph and the essay.
- b. Which is more interesting?
- c. What information is included in the short essay introduction that is not in the topic sentence of the paragraph?
- d. What extra details have been added to the body paragraph 1 of the essay?
- e. What additional details have been added to body paragraph 2 of the essay?
- f. What information is included in the essay conclusion that is not in the concluding sentence of the paragraph?

Paragraph	Essay
<p data-bbox="336 246 876 869">[My uncle Patricio is one of the most interesting people in my family.] [He is old and has a wrinkled face. On his arm, there is a tattoo. Patricio has an interesting history. He and my mother were born in a small village in the mountains. When he was seventeen, he left home to explore the world. Now he fixes air conditioners in Los Angeles, and during the winter months, he sometimes comes to visit us and play the accordion. I love spending time with my uncle Patricio because he has an interesting look and a mysterious past. ] [Someday, I hope that he will tell me more about his life.]</p>	<p data-bbox="879 246 1418 504">[My family is full of happy, crazy, and talented people. My aunt Margareta has a yard full of orphaned pets. My brother José is an expert tailor and my mother loves experiment in the kitchen. However, I think the most interesting is my mysterious uncle Patricio.]</p> <p data-bbox="879 566 1418 965">[Patricio is an elderly man now, with white hair striking up all over his head. Beneath his messy hair, he has a wrinkled brown face and powerful dark eyes that many emotions. Patricio is tall and skinny, and he wears baggy pants and a plaid shirt. He has a tattoo of a heart on his arm. The heart has the word Rosa written across it in red and black letters, but he has never told me who she is.]</p> <p data-bbox="879 1028 1418 1464">[Patricio has an intriguing history. He and my mother were born in a small village in the mountains. When he was seventeen, he left home to explore the world. On one trip, he went to Siberia to look for gold. On another trip, he went to Alaska to work on a fishing boat. Now he fixed air conditioners in Los Angeles, and during the winter months, he sometimes comes to visit us and play the accordion.]</p> <p data-bbox="879 1482 1418 1751">[I love spending time with my uncle Patricio. He has an interesting look and a sad and mysterious past. He is also a talented musician. Someday, I hope that he will tell me about Rosa and how he got the tattoo with her name.]</p>

Adopted from (Savage & Mayer, 2005, p. 16)

## Activity 2: Identifying Structural Elements of the Essay

Read the essay above, then:

- underline the thesis statement. Why is it the thesis of the essay?
- draw another line under the controlling idea in the thesis statement. Why is it the controlling idea of the essay?
- circle the topic sentences. Do they relate to the thesis statement?
- put the supporting sentences of each body paragraph in square brackets. Do the supporting sentences expand on the idea provided in the topic sentence of each body paragraph?
- check if there is a concluding sentence. If there is no concluding sentence; write one.
- underline the sentence in the conclusion that restates the thesis statement. Does the conclusion end with some advice, a prediction, or a warning?

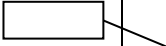
## Activity 3: Identifying the Formatting Elements of the essay

Read the essay. Then label the formatting elements of it.

**Changing English: the African American Influence**

If you ask average Americans where their language comes from, they will probably say ‘England’. However, English vocabulary has also been influenced by other countries and groups of people. Some words are borrowed from other languages, such as *typhoon*, which originally came from the Chinese word, ‘tai-fung’, meaning ‘big wind’. *Skunk*, the name of a small, smelly, black-and-white animal, came to English from a Native American language. African Americans, too, have both contributed new words to English and changed the meanings of some existing words.

African Americans, many of whose ancestors were brought to the States as slaves hundreds of years ago, have introduced a number of words to English from language that they spoke in their native countries. The common English word *OK* is used around the world today, but it was not always part of English vocabulary. One theory is that slaves in America used a phrase in their own language that sounded like *OK* to mean ‘all right’. Another good example of a ‘new’ word is the word *jazz*. African American musicians living in the United States began playing jazz music in the city of New Orleans, and they used the word *jass* or *jazz* to describe the music and certain kinds of dancing. No one is sure where the word originally came from, but as jazz music became more and more popular, the word *jazz* became a common English word.



The meanings of words sometimes change overtime. The word *cool* is a good example. *Cool* has been used in English for a long time to describe a temperature that is ‘not warm but not too cold’ or to describe a person who is ‘calm or unemotional’. However, an additional meaning was given to the word *cool* in the past 100 years. Just like the word *jazz*, African American musicians used the word *cool* to describe the music they were playing. For them, *cool* meant ‘good’. As jazz music and other forms of music played by African American musicians became popular, more and more people started to use the word *cool* in conversation. Today, it is still a commonly used word, especially by younger people, to mean ‘good’ or ‘great’. A word with the opposite meaning of *cool* is *square*. Square is, of course, a shape, but it is also used to describe a person who is not cool. This may be because a person who is too old-fashioned and not flexible is like a shape with four straight sides and four corners.

English owes some of its interesting and colourful vocabulary to African Americans. Existing ethnic groups in the United States as well as new immigrants will surely continue to bring new words to English and give fresh meanings to existing words. Who knows what the ‘cool’ words of tomorrow will be?

Adapted from (Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 57)



## Unit 2

## Outlining an Essay

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (1H: 30)

Practice Duration: (3H)

### Unit Goals

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- Identifying structural elements of an outline.
- Formatting structural elements of an outline.

## **2.1. Rhetorical Focus**

What is an outline, how to write and evaluate one are three queries that Unit 2 tries to answer.

### **2.1.1. Defining an Outline**

An outline is a list of the information one will cover in his essay. Many students find the process of writing an outline a time-consuming step but it is rather a time-saving tool. This is because it lets them see before they start writing their essay whether or not their essay will flow reasonably, need extra information or limitation and be loaded enough to fulfill the essay structure and content requirements.

### **2.1.2. Writing an Outline**

To write an outline several steps should be followed. To start with, before writing an outline students should jot down all the possible ideas they can get without considering coherence and sequence. Then, they ought to decide on the ideas that work together and those do not to organize their outline. After that, they need to group the interrelated ideas together under major headings. To mark the divisions in their essay, students should use varied genres of numbers and letters.

Typically, they make use of Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V ...) before their essay's main sections, namely, the thesis statement, the main idea of each body paragraph and the conclusion.

- I. Thesis statement: .....
- II. Main idea of body paragraph1.
- III. Main idea of body paragraph2.
- IV. Main idea of body paragraph3.
- V. Conclusion:.....

Next, to designate the supporting points involving each body paragraph capital Roman letters (A, B, C, D, E ...) are normally utilized.

- I. Thesis statement: .....
- II. Main idea of body paragraph1.
  - A. First supporting point.
  - B. Second supporting point.

III. Main idea of body paragraph2.

A. First supporting point.

B. Second supporting point.

... etc.

Lastly, details a propos these supporting points are usually marked by Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ...).

I. Thesis statement: .....

II. Main idea of body paragraph1.

A. First supporting point.

1. First detail.

2. Second detail.

B. Second supporting point.

1. First detail.

2. Second detail.

... etc.

Once finished, students have to look for any skimpy parts; in case they find only one supporting point and no details under a main idea, the latter cannot be developed into a paragraph. This step is significant before students start writing the essay because it helps them generate an organized, balanced outline that their essay will almost write itself.

### 2.1.3. Evaluating an Outline

To have an objective viewpoint as to their outline, students can ask their classmates or teacher to check their outline for organization, unity and support using the checklist below.

<b>Organization: Does the outline provide...</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
the essay's thesis statement?		
main ideas in the right order?		
supporting points in the right order?		
details in the right order?		
the essay's conclusion?		
<b>Unity: Is there unity between ...</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
the main ideas and the thesis statement?		
the supporting points and the paragraphs' main ideas?		

the details and the supporting points?		
<b>Support: Are there ...</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
enough (and not too many) main ideas to develop the thesis statement?		
enough (and not too many) supporting points for each main idea?		
enough (and not too many) details for each supporting point?		

## 2.2. Practice

### Activity 1: Looking at an Outline and Showing the Organization of an Essay

Read the outline below then answer these questions:

- a. What will the thesis statement of the essay be?
- b. How many paragraphs will there be in the main body?
- c. How many supporting points will the third paragraph have? What will they be?
- d. How many details will the fourth paragraph have? What will they be?

#### **Don't Support Nuclear Energy!**

- I. Nuclear power is not a good energy source for the world.
- II. Very expensive.
  - A. Nuclear fuel is expensive.
  - B. Nuclear power stations are expensive to build and operate.
    1. Cost of construction.
    2. Cost of training workers.
    3. Cost of safety features.
- III. Nuclear materials are not safe.
  - A. Nuclear fuels are dangerous.
    1. Mining fuels produce radioactive gas.
    2. Working with radioactive fuels can harm workers.
  - B. Nuclear waste products are dangerous.
    1. Very radioactive.
    2. Difficult to dispose of or store safely.
- IV. There is a great possibility of accidents.
  - A. Nuclear power stations can fail.
    1. Three Mile Island, USA (1979).

- 2. Tarapur, India (1992).
- 3. Darlington, Canada (1999).
- B. Workers can make mistakes.
  - 1. Chernobyl, USSR (1986).
  - 2. Kola, USSR (1991).
  - 3. Tokaimura, Japan (1999)
- C. Natural disasters can happen.
  - 1. Earthquake: Kozloduy (1977).
  - 2. Tornado: Moruroa, the Pacific (1981).
- V. Because of the cost and the danger, the world should develop different types of energy to replace nuclear power.

Adapted from (Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 65)

**Activity 2: Finishing an Outline** (Adopted from: Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 66)

*Fill in the outline for the essay in Unit 1, activity 2 on page 6. Compare your answer with a partner.*

The Changing Vocabulary of English

- I. Thesis statement: .....
- II. Words introduced by.....
  - A. ....
    - 1. From an African language.
    - 2. Now used all over the world to mean .....
  - B. Jazz
    - 1. Came from .....
    - 2. Exact origin unknown.
- III. ....
  - A. Cool
    - 1. ....
    - 2. New meanings.
  - B. ....
    - 1. Original meaning
    - 2. ....
- IV. ....: Existing ethnic groups in the United States as well as new immigrants will certainly continue to bring new words to english and give fresh meanings to existing words.

**Activity 3: Identifying Structural Elements of an Outline** (Adopted from: Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 67)

*Label each statement T for thesis statement, M for main idea, S for supporting point, or C for conclusion.*

Title: The Benefits of Yoga

a..... Develops clearer thinking	i..... Develops self-confidence
b.....Physical benefits	j..... Doing yoga regularly can be good for your mind, your body, and your emotions.
c..... Improves concentration	k..... Makes you strong and flexible
d..... Reduces fear, anger, and worry	l.....Therefore, to build mental, physical, and emotional health, consider doing yoga.
e..... Mental benefits	m..... Emotional benefits
f..... Improves blood circulation	
g..... Improves digestion	
h..... Helps you feel calm and peaceful	

**Activity 4: Arranging Structural Elements of an Outline** (Adopted from: Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 67)

*Arrange the ideas in activity 3 above into an outline. Compare your finished outline with a partner.*

I. ....

II. ....

    A. ....

    B. ....

III. ....

    A. ....

    B. ....

    C. ....

IV. ....

    A. ....

    B. ....

    C. ....

V. ....

**Activity 5: Writing and Evaluating an Outline**

*Write a simple outline of yourself (physical characteristics, your personality, your hobbies, your likes, your dislikes, studies you have had, jobs you have had ... etc.).*

*First outline only the main ideas of each body paragraph. Then explain your outline to a partner who will then add a thesis statement and a concluding statement to your outline.*

*After that, join another partner and ask him/her to check the complete outline using the outline checklist on p 9.*

**Time**

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Lesson Duration: (1H: 30)

Practice Duration: (6H)

**Unit Goals**

---

- Structural elements of an introduction.
- Weak introduction vs. strong introduction.
- Writing and editing introductions.



### 3.1. Rhetorical Focus

The rhetorical focus of Unit 3 is structured as follows. The first section provides the structural parts of the introduction. In the next two sections, tips on how to plan and make an introduction interesting are provided. The last section concludes the unit with dos and don'ts in introduction writing.

#### 3.1.1. Parts of an Introduction

As you have learned in Unit 1 (section 1.1.2.1, p. 4) a good introduction involves three parts, namely, *the hook*, *the background information* and *the thesis statement*. In **[the hook]**, usually the first sentence of the introduction, the writer introduces the general topic of the essay and gets the reader's attention. The next sentences, **[the background information]**, the writer provides the reader with the necessary information about the topic of the essay and at the same time leads the reader towards the specific topic of the essay. In the last sentence, **(the thesis statement)**, the writer states a focused idea about the topic of the essay that allows the reader to make predictions about what the body will discuss.

**[Moving to a new country can be an exciting, even exhilarating experience.] [In a new environment, you somehow feel more alive. Seeing new sights, eating new food, hearing the foreign sounds of a new language, and feeling a different climate against your skin stimulate your senses as never before. Soon, however, this sensory bombardment becomes sensory overload. Suddenly, new experiences seem stressful rather than stimulating, and delight turns to discomfort. This is the phenomenon known as culture shock. Culture shock is more than jet lag or homesickness and it affects nearly everyone who enters a new culture- tourists, business travelers, diplomats, and students alike.] (Although not everyone experiences culture shock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.)**

Adopted from (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 73).

#### 3.1.2. Planning an Introduction

Most introductions are planned using the "*funnel approach*". The latter is so called because the ideas of the introduction are shaped like a funnel – wide at the top and narrow at the bottom. Accordingly, a funnel introduction begins with a broad, interesting idea about the essay topic **[the hook]**. Then it continues with several sentences **[the background information, minimum three sentences]** that narrow progressively the focus of the essay. Finally, it ends with a sentence **(the thesis statement)** that states specifically the central idea

of the essay, it may list the subdivisions a propos the topic as it may simply indicate how the main idea is going to be developed.

The Hook is about a very general, interesting idea about the topic (It is when the writer cites that travelling may be an exciting experience).

In the background information, the ideas become increasingly focused on the topic of the essay (this is when the writer states several exciting instances of culture shock that travelers are subject to live when in a foreign country).

In the thesis statement, the main idea of the essay and how its body will be developed are explicitly stated (this is when the writer mentions that regardless people's experiences, culture shock may have five stages).

[Moving to a new country can be an exciting, even exhilarating experience.] [In a new environment, you somehow feel more alive. Seeing new sights, eating new food, hearing the foreign sounds of a new language, and feeling a different climate against your skin stimulate your senses as never before. Soon, however, this sensory bombardment becomes sensory overload. Suddenly, new experiences seem stressful rather than stimulating, and delight turns to discomfort. This is the phenomenon known as culture shock. Culture shock is more than jet lag or homesickness and it affects nearly everyone who enters a new culture- tourists, business travelers, diplomats, and students alike.] (Although not everyone experiences culture chock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.)

### 3.1.3. Making an Introduction Interesting

Without a doubt, the introduction is the most important paragraph in the essay. This is because any piece of writing is most of the time judged from its start. To this point, it is significant to learn about the strategies writers use to make their introductions interesting. The common strategies include.

- *Giving interesting facts/statistics:*

Attention-grabbing facts and statistics are good to provide the reader with some kind of surprising information about the topic especially when writing about something familiar and fearing that readers will lose interest in reading.

- *Defining a key-term or a concept:*

When writing about a less familiar issue or when writing to get readers convinced about what something is, providing a short definition of a key-term or a concept in the introduction is of great importance for readers understand the topic of the essay from the beginning of the essay.

- *Telling an interesting or a funny story:*  
An anecdote that obviously relates to the topic of the essay and that logically leads to the thesis statement of the essay can be a useful opening attention-getter device.
- Asking a stimulating question:  
Opening an essay with a provocative question will not only arouse the readers' curiosity but also their interest in reading as well.
- *Including an interesting quotation:*  
Inserting common sayings or attention-grapping quotes are good for capturing the reader's interest.

### 3.1.4. Strong Introduction Vs. Weak Introduction

Common dos and don'ts in introduction writing are summed up in the table below.

Dos in Introduction Writing	Don'ts in Introduction Writing
- Introduce the topic clearly	- Talk about too many different topics.
- Take in enough sentences of information about the topic (five to ten-sentence introduction).	- Have many or few sentences of information about the topic.
- Be inviting enough for the reader carries on reading.	- Be boring with no attractive pieces of information about the topic of the essay.
- Have a strong thesis statement.	- Have no thesis statement, or an unclear and a weak thesis statement.

## 3.2. Practice

### Activity 1: Analysing Structural Elements of an Introduction

Read the introduction to the essay in Unit 1, activity 2 on page 6. Complete this diagram.

General Ideas:

Most Americans would probably say that their language comes from England.

.....  
.....  
.....

Specific Idea (Thesis statement):

.....  
.....

## Activity 2: Identifying Structural Elements of Introductions

In these introductory paragraphs, put the [hook] between square brackets and the (background information) in brackets. Then underline the thesis statement, circle the topic and draw another line under the main idea in each thesis statement.

a/ Before I travelled to the UK last year, I thought that British food was just fish and chips, roast beef, apple pie, rice pudding and endless cups of tea. These foods are popular in Britain, but during my travels, I discovered that there is so much more to eating in the UK. People from all over the world have made their home in Britain, and they have brought with them their own food. Even in small towns, you can find Chinese, Indian and Italian restaurants, amongst authors. The UK can be divided into different regions that each has its own characteristic foods influenced by the culture of the people who live there.

b/ Everybody knows the koala, that sweet Australian animal that resembles a teddy bear. Although koalas look like toys, they are actually strong climbers and spend their days in the treetops. Mother koalas carry their babies around from tree to tree in a pouch, or pocket, on their stomach. Although there were millions of koalas in Australia in the past, they are now a protected species of animals. As a result of human population growth, deforestation and hunting, the number of koalas has declined.

c/ Taoism is an ancient philosophy from Asia that places great importance on the natural world. Taoists believe that spirit can be found in every person or thing, living or non-living. For the Taoist, even a mountain or a stone contains spirit. Lao Tsu, a Taoist writer and philosopher, said, "people follow Earth, Earth follows heaven. Heaven follows the Tao. The Tao follows what is natural". For thousands of years in China and other Asian countries, gardens have been an important way to create a place where people can feel the spirit of the natural world. Creating a Taoist garden is an art. No two Taoist gardens are exactly alike, but all Taoist gardens include four essential elements: water, mountains, buildings, and bridges.

Adapted from (Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 58).

## Activity 3: Analysing Types of Information in Introductions

Read the three introductions below then answer the questions that follow:

1. What types of information does each introductory paragraph contain?
2. In your opinion, which type of information captures the reader's interest the best?  
Why?

a. ....

Do people in your country greet each other the way people in Saudi Arabia, India, or Britain do? In point of fact, the way people greet each other when they meet for the first time varies from culture to culture. In some cultures, people bow, and in others, they shake hands. In English-speaking countries, shaking hands is the custom. How one shakes hands sends an important message about one's character. If done properly, a handshake gives the impression of strength and honesty, and if done improperly, it conveys weakness and dishonesty. A proper handshake has four ingredients: pressure, pumps, eye contact, and verbal message.

b. ....

When the first Europeans came to the North American continent, they encountered the completely new cultures of the Native American peoples of North America. Native Americans, who had highly developed cultures in many respects, must have been as curious about the strange European manners and customs as the Europeans were curious about them. As always happens when two or more cultures come into contact, there was a cultural exchange. Native Americans adopted some of the Europeans' ways, and the Europeans adopted some of their ways. As a result, Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern US culture, particularly in the areas of language, art, food, and government.

c. ....

In an average year, earthquakes kill 10,000 people worldwide and cause millions of dollars worth of property damage. In 1976, an earthquake in Tangshan, China, killed over 250,000 people. Iran suffered more than 80,000 deaths in two massive quakes in 1990 and 2003. Scientists keep trying to find ways to predict earthquakes—so far without much success. Currently under study are four main methods for predicting when and where the next Big One will occur.

Adapted from (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 62, 60, 63)

**NB:** *You can do the same with the introductions of Activity 2 on p.22*

#### Activity 4: Identifying Weak Introductions and Strong Introductions

Read and discuss the following introductions with a partner. Mark the strong introductions with a tick (✓) and the weak introductions with a cross (x). Suggest what the writers would do to make the weak introductions strong.

a. ....

Family structure has changed a lot in the last fifty years in Asia. The decrease in the number of extended families and nuclear has caused several social problems.

b. ....

The number of businesses using the Internet of selling products has increased greatly in recent years. Shoppers, too, are using the Internet in greater numbers to buy all types of products, such as books, cameras, and clothing. Although e-business has become popular, there are certain risks involved in Internet shopping that are a concern for both businesses and consumers.

c. ....

Stargazing – looking at the stars – is something everyone should try. I love it. When looking at the night sky, most people observe that the moon, planets, and stars move from the east side of the sky to the west over a period of several hours. In fact, this movement is actually the movement of the Earth rotating on its axis. In addition, as the Earth revolves around the sun through the year, different stars are visible at different times.

d. ....

The origins of Irish music can be traced back nearly 2000 years to the time when the Celts arrived in Ireland. Music thrived under the rule of Chieftans, but later declined during the British colonization of Ireland. However, during the Great Famine of the 1840s, thousands of Irish people emigrated to North America in search of a better life, taking their music with them. Irish music soon became established in American cities with a high proportion of Irish immigrants, such as Chicago and Boston. These cities are popular tourist destinations with many interesting sights. However, Irish music really became known to a wider audience in the 1970s, when musicians experimented with more modern arrangements of traditional songs and fashion with rock, world music, and jazz. Jazz originated in the American South in the early twentieth century. Now, in the twenty-first century, Irish music is more popular and successful than ever.

e. ....

Adjusting to another culture's food can be a challenge for many travelers. The geography of a country can greatly affect the typical foods that are eaten by its people.

Adopted from (Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 72-73)

### **Activity 5: Writing and Editing Introductions**

*Choose one of the topics below. Think of one specific idea and four general ideas about it.*

*Arrange all ideas from general to specific. Then write the first draft of your introduction.*

*Exchange the introduction with a partner. As you read your partner's introduction, identify its structural elements (hook, background information, thesis statement, topic and main idea) and so does your partner. Discuss the introductions.*

#### **Topics:**

- Exercise
- The Internet
- University study

## Unit 4

## Thesis Statement

### Time

---

Lesson Duration: (3H: 30)

Practice Duration: (7H:30)

### Unit Goals

---

- Components of a thesis statement.
- Functions of a thesis statement.
- Characteristics of weak thesis statements.
- Characteristics of strong thesis statements.
- Types of thesis statements.
- Writing a thesis statement.



## 4.1. Rhetorical Focus

The sections involving Unit 4 expose all what concerns components, types and functions of thesis statements as well as dos and don'ts in writing one.

### 4.1.1. Definition of the Thesis Statement

A thesis statement is the main, focused, debatable statement of an essay - usually the last sentence of the introduction.

The thesis statement concisely gives the topic of the essay and the author's opinion or main idea about it <sup>1</sup>. It can possibly mention how the author is going to prove it either by stating the points of support <sup>2</sup> or the pattern of organization that the author will follow, such as chronological order, logical division of ideas, comparison and/or contrast<sup>3</sup>.

e.g. <sup>1</sup> Young people in our culture have less freedom than young people in the U.S.

e.g. <sup>2</sup> Young people in our culture have less freedom than young people in the U.S. in four main areas.

e.g. <sup>3</sup> Young people in our culture have less freedom than young people in the U.S. in their choice of where they live, whom they marry and what their job is.

### 4.1.2. Components of the Thesis Statement

Following the above definition, three components make a thesis statement; they are topic, controlling idea and supporting points.

- *The topic* is the subject of your essay.  
e.g. Teenage smokers.
- *The controlling idea* is your opinion about the topic of your essay.  
e.g. Public health departments need aggressive promotional campaigns.
- *The supporting points* are the subtopics or the areas (generally three) that you will develop in your essay.  
e.g. damages the lungs, increases the risk of cancer, and raises the chance of heart disease.

In brief, the formula of a thesis statement is:

Topic + Controlling idea + Supporting points
--

e.g. Public health departments need to target teenage smokers with aggressive promotional campaigns in order to combat lung damage, cancer, and heart disease among this social group.

### 4.1.3. Functions of the Thesis Statement

In view of what is mentioned above, a thesis statement is basically set to:

- begin the essay with clear direction by stating the topic of the essay and echoing a main claim or opinion about it to the reader.
- permit the reader to make predictions about the reading by providing him/her with a blueprint of what is going to be discussed in the body.

Yet, it is worth noting here that in achieving these ends one should consider the way he/she states his/her thesis statement.

### 4.1.4. Characteristics of Effective thesis statements

To create a strong thesis statement, the author should always remember the 6 Cs that follow:



Clear language

(Its language should be unambiguous.)



Contestable statement

(It should be a debatable statement, not a fact.)



Concentrated statement

(It should be specific; not too broad and not too narrow.)



Complex statement

(It should indicate the point of the discussion that can be explained with supporting points.)



Compelling statement


(It should attract the reader's attention.)





Connected statement

(It should relate to the prompt of the essay.)

In addition to this and, a thesis statement to be effective enough:


 should state a single topic and one precise thought (controlling idea) about it.  
Radioactive waste from nuclear power has several destructive effects on people, plants, and our environment in general.


 may list the supporting points or mention the method of organization to indicate how the controlling idea of the essay will be proved.  
- Smoking is unhealthy because it can cause several serious diseases.  
-Smoking is unhealthy because it can cause narrowing of the arteries, heart problems, and lung cancer.


 should not include vague words like fun, important, amazing, awful... because they do not give a clear meaning.  
- ~~A hobby is fun.~~  
- A bobby can be an extra source of happiness.


#### 4.1.5. Characteristics of Ineffective Thesis Statements

To avoid creating a weak thesis statement the author should always remember that a thesis statement:


 should not take the form of a question.  
- ☹ To this point, what are the advantages of credit cards?  
- ☺ To this point, credit cards are convenient to use for two main reasons.

 should not state a fact.  
- ☹ iPods are devices that transport and play music.  
- ☺ iPods are the best source of transporting and playing music not only because they are compact and user-friendly but also because they store large amount of music.


 should not be a quote.  
- ☹ Because “Time is money” people should consider the importance of time.  
- ☺ Proper time management is a skill that can change people’s life on a fundamental basis for the better.

 should not be an announcement.


- ☹ The subject of this essay is the rising crime rate in Algeria / I am going to talk about the rising crime rate in Algeria / The rising crime rate in Algeria is the main topic of this essay.
- ☺ The recent increase in the rate of crime in Algeria is the result of political, social, and economic factors.

 should not state two sides of an argument equally.


- ☹ Studying in groups has advantages and disadvantages.
- ☺ Though there are some disadvantages, studying in groups can help students do research in many ways.

 should not express more than one topic / controlling idea.

- ☹ Radioactive waste and burning of fossil oil have several destructive effects on people, plants and our environment in general. (In this example there exist two topics)
- ☺ Radioactive waste from nuclear power has several destructive effects on people, plants, and our environment in general.

 should not be a general statement.

- ☹ Men and women are very different.
- ☺ Men and women are treated differently at work for three main reasons.

 Should not be a narrow statement.

- ☹ In Hong Kong, number eight is lucky.
- ☹ There are many superstitious beliefs about numbers around the world.

#### **4.1.6. Types of Thesis Statements**

A thesis statement can take two forms: *direct (stated) thesis statement* (also called enumerative thesis statement) and *indirect (implied) thesis statement* (also called umbrella thesis statement).

- *Direct thesis statements*: they outline the organization of the essay by listing the supporting points or the subtopics that each body paragraph will discuss that the main ideas and the organization of the body are made clear. They are called

'direct' because the reader learns about all what will be discussed in the essay from the thesis statement.

e.g. Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture, particularly in the areas of: language, art, food, and government.

e.g. The large movement of people from rural to urban areas has major effects on a city's ability to provide: housing, employment, and adequate sanitation services.

It is worthy to note that when writing direct thesis statements, it is important for authors to:

- use paired conjunctions (*both... and, not only ... but*) when writing a thesis with two subtopics.

e.g. Young people in my culture have less freedom than young people in the United States **not only** in their choice of lifestyle **but also** in their choice of careers.

- put colons before listing three or more subtopics in a thesis statement.

e.g. Young people in my culture have less freedom than young people in the United States in three areas: where they live, whom they marry, and what their job is.

- write the subtopics in parallel form, i.e., all subtopics should have the same grammatical pattern (for example, they should be all nouns or adjectives + noun phrases or prepositional phrases).

e.g. ☹ The students who do well attend class, they do their homework, and are asking questions.

☺ The students who do well **attend class, do their homework, and ask questions.**

- *Indirect thesis statements*: they point out the pattern of organization that the essay will follow (e.g. chronological order, comparison / contrast, cause / effect) without naming the pieces of support that the author intends to employ in his/her discussion. They are called '*indirect*' because it is after reading the body paragraphs that the reader learns about the supporting points.

e.g. Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S.culture.

e.g. The large movement of people from rural to urban areas has major effects on cities.

It is worth noting that both types are feasible but most authors and instructors use and favour respectively the direct thesis.

#### 4.1.7. Developing a Thesis Statement

Writing a thesis statement is a process that takes in several steps:

- *Step 1: Brainstorming topics*

This is to mull over topics that inspire, confuse, annoy, excite, or surprise you or topics that are important for you to comprehend and you believe others need to know about.

- *Step 2: Selecting a topic*

This is to decide on one topic of interest.

- *Step3: Narrowing a topic*

This is to give a derivative subject of the chosen topic in step 2.

- *Step 4: Asking a complex question about the narrower topic*

This is to set a query about the derivative subject by asking a question that would be answered with opinion, not facts or yes/no answers.

- *Step 5: Answering the question with an opinion*

This is to create a rough thesis statement by starting the opinion with ‘I think that...’

- *Step 6: Omitting ‘I think that’ and asking yourself ‘so what?’*

This is to get the impact, importance, outcomes, or implications so as to strengthen and deepen your thesis statement.

- *Step 7: Using your opinion with its significance and writing a 1-sentence thesis statement*

This is to refine and focus your thesis statement.

- *Step 8: Seeing whether your thesis has strong and enough evidence of support*

This is to test if the pieces of evidence involving your thesis statement could possibly prove or illustrate your argument.

**N.B.** If you find weak or insufficient evidence to support your argument, then you should rethink your thesis.

## 4.2. Practice

### Activity 1: Analyzing Components of Thesis Statements

In each of the following thesis statements:

- Draw a box around the topic.
- Underline the subtopics.
- Draw a circle around the words or punctuation marks that introduce the subtopics.

The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. Capital punishment should be abolished not only because it deprives another person of life but also because it does not stop crime.
2. Women generally live longer than men for two main reasons: They tend to take better care of their health, and they have better resistance to stress.
3. Teenagers declare their separateness from their parents by the way they dress and by the way they talk.
4. In choosing a major, a student has to consider various factors, such as personal interest, job opportunities, and the availability of training institutions.
5. An architect should be both an artist and an engineer.
6. A healthy lifestyle involves eating a nutritious diet, exercising regularly, and getting enough sleep at night.

**Activity 2: Identifying Strong and Weak thesis statements** (Adopted from Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p.51)

Read the thesis statements below. Then write (✓) for strong thesis statement, *F* fact only (a weak thesis statement), and *N* no clear opinion (a weak thesis statement).

- a. .... The top government official in my country is the prime minister.
- b. .... Some people prefer digital cameras while others like traditional cameras.
- c. .... India became an independent country in 1947.
- d. .... To be a successful student, good study habits are more important than intelligence.
- e. .... There are several advantages of owning a car, but there are also many disadvantages.
- f. .... Half of the families in my country owe a house.

- g..... Using public transport would be one of the best ways to solve the traffic and pollution problems in cities around the world.
- h..... While travelling, staying in a hotel offers more comfort, but sleeping in a tent is less expensive.
- i. .... Classical music concerts are very popular in my country.
- j. .... In order to create a successful advertisement, it is necessary to consider three issues: who should be targeted, where the advert should be placed, and what type of advert should be made.
- k..... The United States contains citizens of many different ethnicities.
- l. .... Penalties for using mobile phones and driving should be more severe.
- m..... Television networks air a lot of reality shows nowadays.
- n..... Violent crime is up.

### **Activity 3: Identifying Types of Thesis Statements**

*Read the statements below then write 'd' if the thesis is a direct thesis statements and 'I' in case it is an indirect thesis statement.*

- 1..... Teenagers demonstrate their independence in several ways.
- 2..... On their eighteenth birthdays, U.S. citizens receive two important rights or responsibilities: they can vote and they can sign legal contracts.
- 3..... In most occupations women are still unequal to men in three areas: salary, power, and status.
- 4..... Living in a dormitory offers several advantages to first-year students.
- 5..... A college degree in international business requires a knowledge of business procedures and a knowledge of cultural differences.
- 6..... A computer is both faster and more accurate than a human.
- 7..... Going for a vacation requires careful planning.

### **Activity 4: Discussing Strong Thesis Statements and Weak Thesis Statements**

*Read the thesis statements below and say whether each of them is 'strong' or 'weak' and why.*

- a. .... Douglass makes an interesting point that there are some negative and positive effects to reading.
- b. .... People should not follow unjust laws and showing strong determination is what helped Douglass to be successful.



- c. ....Slavery in the USA damaged many lives.
- d. ....The state of women in Turkey has improved remarkably in the recent years in the areas of economic independence, political rights, educational opportunities and social status.
- e. .... Christians practised slavery in the U.S.
- f. .... Television is destroying the unity of modern family.
- g. .... The main reasons of traffic accidents in Algeria are the aptitude of Algerian drivers, the poor state of roads, and the poor condition of vehicles.
- h. .... Buffalo and Toronto differ in four major ways.
- i. .... In this essay, I will discuss abortion.
- j. .... Vigorous exercise is a good way to reduce the effects of stress on the body.
- k. .... Several things make me adore Ismir: its friendly atmosphere and people, its cheap prices, and its convenient location.
- l. .... Developing colour film is more complicated than developing black and white.

**Activity 5: Adding Subtopics or Supporting Ideas to Thesis Statements**

*Complete the following thesis statements by adding the appropriate subtopics in parallel from. Use your own ideas.*

1. There are three types of drivers that make our streets unsafe: speeders, ....., and .....
2. Disneyland and Disney World appeal to both children and .....
3. Living in a small town has several advantages: little traffic, ....., ....., and .....
4. Learning to write in a foreign language takes work, ....., and .....
5. Eating junk food results in poor nutrition, ....., and .....
6. Healthy lifestyles require individuals to get enough sleep, ....., and .....
7. An ideal environment for studying includes good lighting, , ....., and .....

**Activity 6: Writing Thesis Statements**

*Each item below contains a general subject and a narrower subject that is derivative of it.*

*Write a direct and an indirect thesis statement for each narrower subject.*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Narrower topic</b>	<b>Indirect thesis statement</b>	<b>Direct thesis statement</b>
Schools	Wearing uniforms	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
Volunteerism	Participating in volunteer work	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
Food	Vegetarian diet	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....

## Unit 5

## From Thesis Statement to Body Paragraph Writing

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (3H: 30)

Practice Duration: (7:30H to 9H)

### Unit Goals

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- Breaking-down of the thesis statement into topic sentences.
- Body paragraph structure and development.
- Unity and coherence in body paragraph writing.

## 5.1. Rhetorical Focus

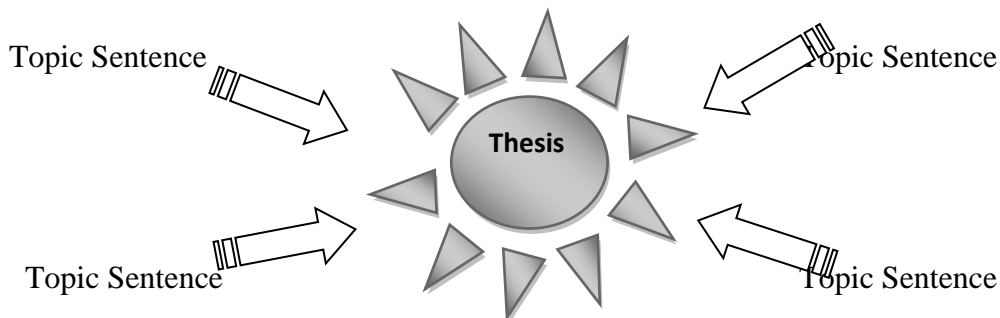
In the present unit, the first section concerns itself with the processes involving the breakdown of the thesis statement and the formation of topic sentences, while the next sections proceed with explanation about the development of the obtained topic sentences into body paragraphs.

### 5.1.1. The Break-down of the Thesis Statement and the Formation of Topic Sentences

Since the body paragraphs of the essay should turn around the thesis statement, it is important to know why we get to the body from the thesis statement. A way to help understand this relationship is to consider the following analogies:

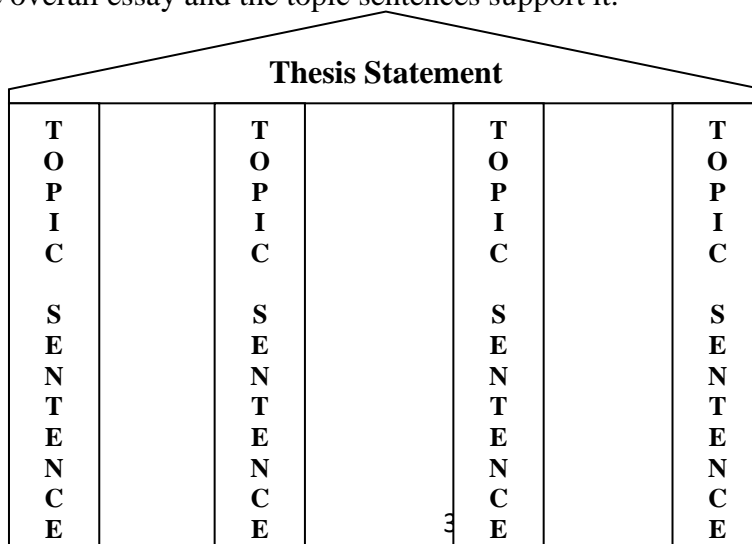
#### The Solar System Analogy

Just like the sun, the center of the solar system and all planets orbit it, the thesis statement is the center of the essay and all the topic sentences revolve around it.



#### The Roof and Pillar Analogy

Similar to the roof, it covers the house and the pillars support it, the thesis statement covers the overall essay and the topic sentences support it.



The move from the thesis statement to the body is done by breaking down of the thesis statement into topic sentences.

#### **5.1.1.1. The Break-down of Direct Thesis Statements**

To break down a direct thesis statement into topic sentences one needs to consider the supporting points that are embodied in the thesis statement to form the appropriate topic sentences.

e.g. As a result of *human population growth, deforestation and hunting* **the number of Koalas has declined.**

This thesis statement has the topic (Koalas), the main idea (their number has declined) and the supporting points (*human population growth, deforestation and hunting*). Accordingly, the topic sentences are:

- Because of the human population growth the number of Koalas has declined.
- Deforestation is another reason for the decrease in Koalas number.
- The fact that makes Koalas in an increasing decline is humans' hunting activities.

#### **5.1.1.2. The Break-down of Indirect Thesis Statements**

To break down indirect thesis statements, one needs to go through the phases that follow:

- a. Turn the thesis statement into a question.
- b. Write some key-answers (maximum three).
- c. Turn the key-answers into appropriate topic sentences.

e.g. **Watching television is not a waste of time.**

This thesis statement has the topic (watching TV), the main idea (is not a waste of time) and no supporting ideas. Accordingly, the steps above should be followed to break-down this thesis.

e.g. Watching television is not a waste of time.

##### **a. Question:**

Why watching TV is not a waste of time?

##### **b. Key-answers:**

- It is a valuable educational tool.
- it helps us to relax.
- it raises the viewers' awareness and attention on several social problems.

### c. Topic Sentences:

- Spending time in front of television is not a waste of time, since TV is a valuable educational tool.
- TV is not a waste of time because it helps us to relax.
- The fact that makes watching TV not a waste of time is that it raises the viewers' awareness and attention on several social problems.

### 5.1.2. Body Paragraphs Structure and Development

In an essay, there are by and large three body paragraphs. The latter present the supporting ideas, arguments, or evidence that support the essay's main point in the thesis statement. Each body paragraph must:

- discuss one facet of the main point in detail,
- contain a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.
- open with a topic sentence which should echo the main idea in the thesis statement and mention the aspect to be discussed in the paragraph.

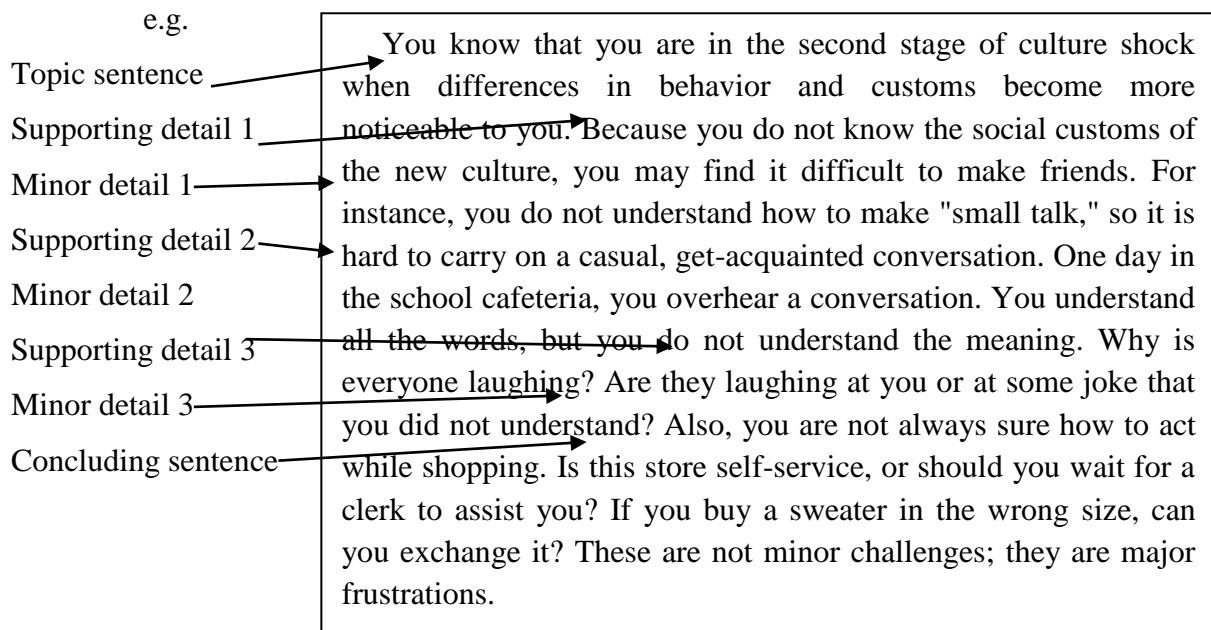
e.g.

*Thesis statement:*

Although not everyone experiences culture shock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.

*Topic sentences:*

1. In the first stage, you experience excitement towards the new environment.
  2. You know that you are in the second stage of culture shock when differences in behavior and customs become more noticeable to you.
  3. In the third stage, you no longer have positive feelings about the new culture.
  4. Sooner or later, you have negative feelings about almost everything; this is the fourth stage of culture shock.
  5. Finally, you reach the fifth stage when your language skills improve and you begin to have some success in meeting people and in negotiating situations.
- have at least three supporting details - each with one minor detail; they can be: facts, example (personal experience), details, explanations, examples, statistics ... to develop the topic sentence and flesh out the body of the essay.



Adapted from (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p.73)

- end with a statement that signals the end of the paragraph by restating its main idea (repeating a keyword or phrase from the topic sentence); reviewing the main discussed points in the paragraph; giving a finale comment; leaving the reader with an important idea to reflect on like a suggestion, an insight or a prediction; or by using transitions- a statement that serves as a transition to the next paragraph.

e.g.

*Topic sentence:* It may surprise some people to learn that citizens of the United States are also indebted to the native people for their form of government.

*Concluding sentence:* As a result, the present form of government of the United States can be traced back to a Native American model.

In this example, the writer concludes the paragraph by the restatement of the main idea in the topic sentence.

### 5.1.3. Unity and Coherence

Initially, unity and coherence are two important elements of proper writing. To have unity in writing, all ideas must be about a single topic and all ideas must relate to each other. In order to have coherence in writing, the movement from one idea to another must be clear, logical and smooth.

### **5.1.3.1. Unity**

Accordingly, an essay is said to have unity or to be unified when the topic sentence of each body paragraph relate to the thesis statement and the supporting sentences in each body paragraph relate to the main idea in the topic sentence of each paragraph. For instance, if the controlling idea of the thesis statement is the *advantages of owning a compact car*, the main idea of each body paragraph should be about one advantage and all supporting ideas should discuss only that advantage.

Another point in unity is that aspects of the same idea (aspects in the same advantage in that case) that are closely related to each other can be discussed in the same paragraph. For instance, the aspects of *gas economy* and *low maintenance costs* can be argued in one paragraph because the two aspects are closely related to each other. However, the aspects of *gas economy* and *easy parking* should not be discussed in the one paragraph because these two aspects are not closely related to each other.

### **5.1.3.2. Coherence**

As to coherence, the ideas of the essay should hold together and flow logically and smoothly with no gaps or sudden jumps throughout the essay, i.e. the ideas should be arranged in a clear, logical, way. Coherence in writing can be achieved through the use of cohesive devices. The latter are words and phrases that tie sentences and paragraphs together; they include:

- *Transition signals*: They are words such as *first, however, furthermore* or phrases like *to start with, on the other hand, in addition* that connect sentences together and guide the reader from one idea to the next just like traffic signs guide drivers in roads. For example, they inform the reader to go forward if the next idea or sentence expresses an addition (*additionally, furthermore, also*), to slow down if there is a contrast (*however, in contrast, yet, but, in spite of*), a result (*therefore, so, thus*), examples (*specifically, typically, for instance, to illustrate that point*) and to stop in case of a closure (*to conclude, to finish with, lastly*). (See the table below for more examples)



### Transition signals

<b>Function</b>	<b>Transition Phrases</b>	<b>Conjunctive Adverbs</b>	<b>Coordinating Conjunctions</b>	<b>Subordinating Conjunctions</b>
<i>To introduce an additional idea</i>	In addition	Furthermore Moreover Besides Also too	And	
<i>To introduce an opposite idea or contrast</i>	On the other hand In contrast	However Nevertheless Instead nonetheless	But Yet	Although Though Even though Whereas While
<i>To introduce a choice or alternative</i>		Otherwise	Or	If Unless
<i>To introduce a restatement or explanation</i>	In fact Indeed	That is		
<i>To list in order</i>	First, second, third, next, last, finally			
<i>To introduce an example</i>	For example For instance			
<i>To introduce a conclusion or summary</i>	Clearly In brief In conclusion Indeed In short In summary			
<i>To introduce a result</i>	Accordingly As a result As a consequence	Therefore Consequently Hence Thus		

Adapted from (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 27)

- *Consistent pronouns*: An easy way to connect between two sentences is to replace a noun or a noun phrase that refer to a person, place, thing or idea with a pronoun reference such as *he, she, it, they*.

e.g. **Students** who know a few Latin and Greek roots and prefixes have an advantage of guess the meaning of new words. If for example **they** know that the prefix *omni* means ‘all’, **they** have a better chance to guess the meanings of words such as *omnibus* and *omnipresent*.

It is worth reminding that when using pronouns one should keep the same person and number of the original noun or noun phrase throughout the paragraph (In case of the above example, *students* should not be changed *he* or *she* (change in number) or from *a student* to *I* (change in person).

- *Repetition of key nouns or ideas*: repeating keywords and ideas frequently in a text is the easiest way to connect ideas in a paragraph or an essay. Another advantage of repeating key nouns or phrases is to help readers remember the main points in the text.

e.g. In the model paragraph below, the key noun is *gold*. Read the paragraph to see how it uses this technique to smooth the flow of sentences and circle the word *gold* and all pronouns that refer to it.

### **Gold**

Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics. First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. Therefore, it is suitable for jewelry, coins, and ornamental purposes. Gold never needs to be polished and will remain beautiful forever. For example, a Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was made 25 centuries ago. Another important characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry and science. For many years, it has been used in hundreds of industrial applications, such as photography and dentistry. The most recent use of gold is in astronauts' suits. Astronauts wear gold-plated heat shields for protection when they go outside spaceships in space. In conclusion, gold is treasured not only for **its** beauty but also for its utility.

Adopted from (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 22)

- *Arranging ideas in logical order*: One more way to achieve coherence in writing is to organize ideas in a logical way. The choice of one type of organization over another will evidently depend on the type of writing. Below are some common types of writing and the ways to organize them:

<b>Type of writing</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>
Chronology (historical events, personal narratives, or processes)	Order by time, events or steps
Description	Order by position, size, and then shape of things
Classification	Group ideas and explain ideas in a logical order
Comparison/contrast	Organize ideas in point-by-point or block style
Argumentation, persuasion, and cause/effect,	Order from least important to most important

e.g. Read again the paragraph about gold and decide on the type of organizational pattern the paragraph uses. Explain why.

It is wise to use all four types of cohesive devices, namely transition signals, consistent pronouns, repetition of key nouns and ideas, and arranging ideas in logical order, throughout a paragraph or an essay because regardless their genres, they all have one role to play which is to create a smooth flow of ideas and to achieve coherence in writing.

To end with, unity and coherence are two sides of the same coin; they should go together in the process of writing because they not only help the essay progress logically but also enhance the reader's understanding of the main points.

## 5.2. Practice

**Activity 1: Checking Unity between a Thesis Statement and Topic Sentences** (Adopted from Davis & Liss, 2006, p. 14 - 71)

Listed with the thesis statements below are possible topic sentences. Tick (✓) the topic sentences that align with the thesis statement.

**1. Thesis statement:** After two years of job hunting, I have finally found the perfect for me.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... I am enthusiastic about the challenges that I confront at work every day.
- b. .... Last year, I almost got a good job.
- c. .... I am making more money than I have never made, and have so many benefits.
- d. .... My boss is very supportive and is helping me to succeed.
- e. .... I did not like the job I had before.

**2. Thesis statement:** Skiing is a great sport, but it is not good for everyone.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... Not everyone has the ability..? to ski well.
- b. .... Becoming a good skier means taking certain risks that some people are afraid to take.
- c. .... Skiing is more difficult than ice skating.
- d. .... A day on the slopes is not always affordable for everyone.
- e. .... Skiing down the highest slope can be dangerous.

**3. Thesis statement:** The media should be as hard on non-players as they are on players when it comes to cheating in baseball.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... Gamblers do a lot of damage to the game.
- b. .... Fans steal signals from opposing teams and relay them to players and coaches.
- c. .... Non-starting players also steal signals.
- d. .... Groundskeepers have been known to “fix” fields for a home-team advantage.

**4. Thesis statement:** Kansas is a great place to live.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... The state has great roads and traffic is seldom congested.
- b. .... Kansas City offers many fun attractions, especially east of State Line Road.
- c. .... It has many community colleges that enhance local economies.
- d. .... Kansans have a rich history of looking out for one another.

**5. Thesis statement:** Being a happy person can benefit your life in many ways.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... A happy person can make friends more easily.
- b. .... There are many happy people all over the world.
- c. .... Happy people can solve their problems effectively.

**6. Thesis statement:** It is important to get a college education.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... A college education provides more job opportunities.
- b. .... A person's life-long earning capacity is increased.
- c. .... Many colleges offer scholarships.

**7. Thesis statement:** Air pollution has many negative effects.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... An example of air pollution is car exhaust fumes.
- b. .... Asthma rates increase in highly polluted areas.
- c. .... Unclean air destroys the natural environment.

**8. Thesis statement:** Watching too much television affects everyone.

**Topic sentences:**

- a. .... Watching TV reduces the amount of time people read.
- b. .... Research has shown that children who watch television a lot become more aggressive.
- c. .... Many homes have more than one TV.

## **Activity 2: Breaking-down of Thesis Statements**

*Read the thesis statements below. Decide if they are direct or indirect thesis statements.*

*Choose three direct thesis statements and break-down them into the appropriate topic sentences. Then, choose three indirect thesis statements and break-down them into three topic sentences.*

1. The village is the best environment for me to live in.
2. The wide range of goods, lower prices and convenience while shopping make super markets my favourite place to buy food.
3. Travelling abroad is a valuable learning experience.
4. A computer is necessary for college students for three reasons.
5. School uniforms provide many benefits to students, parents and educators.
6. Media violence is harmful to society for certain reasons.
7. Stress in the fast-food workplace has led to serious physical, psychological, and emotional problems for employees.
8. Teenagers declare their separateness from their parents by the way they dress and by the way they talk.
9. In choosing a major, a student has to consider various factors.

## **Activity 3: Improving Coherence in Essay Writing**

1. *Read the following essay.*
2. *Circle the transition signals that link the sentences in each paragraph.*
3. *Connect the body paragraphs by adding a transition word, phrase, or clause to the topic sentences of the second, third, fourth, and fifth body paragraphs. Try to vary the transitional linking expressions you use. You may rewrite the topic sentences if necessary. The first one has been done for you as an example.*

## **Culture Shock**

Moving to a new country can be an exciting, even exhilarating experience. In a new environment, you somehow feel more alive: seeing new sights, eating new food, hearing the foreign sounds of a new language, and feeling a different climate against your skin stimulate your senses as never before. Soon, however, this sensory bombardment becomes sensory overload. Suddenly, new experiences seem stressful rather than stimulating, and delight turns into discomfort. This is the phenomenon known as culture shock. Culture shock is more than jet lag or homesickness, and it affects nearly everyone who enters a new culture—tourists, business travelers, diplomats, and students alike. Although not everyone experiences culture shock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.

**In the first stage**, you are excited by your new environment. You experience some simple difficulties such as trying to use the telephone or public transportation, but you consider these small challenges that you can quickly overcome. Your feelings about the new culture are positive, so you are eager to make contact with people and to try new foods.

..... differences in behavior and customs become more noticeable to you. This is the second stage of culture shock. Because you do not know the social customs of the new culture, you may find it difficult to make friends. For instance, you do not understand how to make "small talk," so it is hard to carry on a casual, get-acquainted conversation. One day in the school cafeteria, you overhear a conversation. You understand all the words, but you do not understand the meaning. Why is everyone laughing? Are they laughing at you or at some joke that you did not understand? Also, you aren't always sure how to act while shopping. Is this store self-service, or should you wait for a clerk to assist you? If you buy a sweater in the wrong size, can you exchange it? These are not minor challenges; they are major frustrations.

..... you no longer have positive feelings about the new culture. You feel that you have made a mistake in coming here. Making friends hasn't been easy, so you begin to feel lonely and isolated. Now you want to be with familiar people and eat familiar food. You begin to spend most of your free time with students from your home country, and you eat in restaurants that serve your native food. In fact, food becomes an obsession, and you spend a lot of time planning, shopping for, and cooking food from home.

..... you have negative feelings about almost everything, you know that you are in the fourth stage of culture shock. In this stage, you actively reject the new culture. You become critical, suspicious, and irritable. You believe that people are unfriendly, that your landlord is trying to cheat you, that your teachers do not like you, and that the food is making you sick. In fact, you may actually develop stomachaches, headaches, sleeplessness, lethargy, or other physical symptoms.

..... you reach the fifth stage. As your language skills improve, you begin to have some success in meeting people and in negotiating situations. You are able to exchange the sweater that was too small, and you can successfully chat about the weather with a stranger on the bus. Your self-confidence grows. After realizing that you cannot change your surroundings, you begin to accept the differences and tolerate them. For instance, the food will never be as tasty as the food in your home country, but you are now able to eat and sometimes even enjoy many dishes. You may not like the way some people in your host country dress or behave in public, but you do not regard their clothes and behavior as wrong-just different.

In conclusion, nearly everyone moving to a new country feels some degree of culture shock. Symptoms may vary, and not all people experience all five stages. Newcomers with a strong support group may feel at home immediately in the new culture, while others may take months to feel comfortable. Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and, above all, learning the language as soon as possible are ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.

Adopted from (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 73-74)



#### Activity 4: Improving Coherence in Paragraph Writing

Fill in each blank: with an appropriate transition signal from the list provided. Use each signal only once. Add punctuation if necessary.

for example	in fact	also	similarly
indeed	final and most convincing	third	second

#### Time

One stereotype about North Americans says that they are obsessed with time. It sometimes seems true that for North Americans, time seems as valuable as money. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ they even say, "Time is money." (2) \_\_\_\_\_ have you noticed how many verbs can be followed by both time and money? (3) \_\_\_\_\_ you can *spend time, save time, lose time, find time, make time, waste time, and run out of time*. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ you can spend, save, lose, find, make, waste, and run out of money. (5) \_\_\_\_\_ North Americans seem to regard time as a "thing" that one can own. You can *have time, buy time, and take time*. (One wonders how much it costs and where it is taken.) A (6) \_\_\_\_\_ piece of evidence that North Americans are obsessed with time is their fanaticism about always being on time. (7) \_\_\_\_\_ people who are habitually late risk punishment ranging from frowning disapproval to losing their jobs. The (8) \_\_\_\_\_ proof is that these poor people sometimes take courses in time management! That is really overdoing it, don't you agree?

Adopted from (Oshima & Hogue, p. 31, 2006)

#### Activity 5: Checking Unity in Essay Writing

Read the thesis statement and the body paragraphs.

The writer has begun to cross out sentences that are not relevant to the thesis because he/she has broken the rule of unity. There is still one large piece of the text that should be removed. Find it and compare your answer with a partner.

**Thesis statement:** Sign language, the language used by many deaf people, has a 500-year history.

The first sign language for deaf people was developed in Europe in the 1500s. In Spain, a man named Pedro de Ponce was the first person to teach deaf children using sign language. Another Spaniard, Juan Bablo de Bonet, was the first person to write a book on teaching sign language to deaf people. ~~Most of his students were from rich families.~~ Another important teacher who influenced the development of sig language was a Frenchman named Abbé de L'Epée. L'Epée understood that deaf people could communicate without speech. He started to learn the signs used by a group of deaf people in Paris. Using these signs, he developed a more complete French sign language. L'Epée also taught religion classes. Another Frenchman, Louis Braille, also lived during this time. He invented a system of reading and writing for blind people, using raised bumps that can be felt by the fingers. In Germany, a man named Samual Heinicke was another important teacher of the deaf during this time. However, he did not use sign language for instruction. Instead, he preferred to teach the deaf to understand other people by looking carefully at other people's mouths when they spoke. This is called lip or speech reading.

Speech reading became a popular way of teaching deaf in the United States in the mid-1800s. Alexander Graham Bell, who invented the telephone, was one of the strongest supporters of teaching deaf people to do speech reading. Bell became interested in deafness and teaching deaf people. With his interest in science and the production of sound, he focused on ways of helping the deaf communicate with listening tools and speech reading. He eventually opened a training school for teachers of the deaf.

The early 1800s were an important period in the development of American Sign Language. In 1815, a man named Thomas Gallaudet became interested in teaching deaf people. He was twenty-seven years old at this time, and he studied at a school for deaf students in Paris for several months. In 1817, Gallaudet returned to the United States, and he brought with him Laurent Clerc, a deaf sign language teacher from Paris. Gallaudet started the first school for the deaf, and Clerc became the first sign language teacher in the USA. ~~The school, called the American School for the Deaf, still exists in Harford, Connecticut.~~ American Sign Language developed from the mixture of signs used by deaf Americans and French Sign Language. Today, it is used by more than 500,000 deaf people in the United States and Canada. ~~About twenty million people in the United States have hearing problems, and about two million of these are deaf.~~

Adopted from (Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 80-81)

**Activity 6: Checking Unity in Paragraph Writing** (Adopted from Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 19)

*The three paragraphs that follow all discuss the same topic. Only one of them shows unity. First read the paragraphs. Then answer these questions.*

1. Which paragraph has unity?
2. Which paragraph does not have unity because it discusses two different topics?
3. Which paragraph does not have unity because it has sentences that are not related to the main topic?

### **Paragraph 1**

#### **Effects of Color**

Colors create biological reactions in our bodies. These reactions, in turn, can change our behavior. In one study, prisoners were put in a pink room, and they underwent a drastic and measurable decrease in muscle strength and hostility within 2.7 seconds. In another study, athletes needing short bursts of energy were exposed to red light. Their muscle strength increased by 13.5 percent, and electrical activity in their arm muscles increased by 5.8 percent. Athletes needing more endurance for longer performances responded best when exposed to blue light. Other studies have shown that the color green is calming. Green was a sacred color to the Egyptians, representing the hope and joy of spring. It is also a sacred color to Moslems. Many mosques and religious temples throughout the world use green (the color of renewal and growth) and blue (the color of heaven) to balance heavenly peace with spiritual growth. To sum up, color influences us in many ways (Daniels 10).'

### **Paragraph 2**

#### **Effects of Color**

Colors create biological reactions in our bodies. These reactions, in turn, can change our behavior. In one study, prisoners were put in a pink room, and they underwent a drastic and measurable decrease in muscle strength and hostility within 2.7 seconds. In another study, athletes needing short bursts of energy were exposed to red light. Their muscle strength increased by 13.5 percent, and electrical activity in their arm muscles increased by 5.8 percent. Athletes needing more endurance for longer performances responded best when exposed to blue light. Other studies have shown that the color green is calming. After London's Black friars Bridge was painted green, the number of suicides decreased by 34

percent. These and other studies clearly demonstrate that color affects not only our moods but our behavior as well (Daniels 10).

### **Paragraph 3**

#### **Effects of Color**

Colors create biological reactions in our bodies. These reactions, in turn, can change our behavior. In one study, athletes needing short bursts of energy were exposed to red light. Their muscle strength increased by 13.5 percent, and electrical activity in their arm muscles increased by 5.8 percent. Athletes needing more endurance for longer performances responded best when exposed to blue light. Blue is not a good color for dinnerware, however. Food looks less appetizing when it is served on blue plates, perhaps because very few foods in nature are of that color. Other studies have shown that the color green is calming. After London's Black friars Bridge was painted green, the number of suicides from it decreased by 34 percent. It is clear that color affects not just our moods, but our behavior as well (Daniels 10).

### **Activity 7: Writing Body Paragraphs**

*Select one the listed thesis statements and their possible topic sentences in Activity 1 on p. 46, and then write the appropriate body paragraphs. Use what you have learned about the structure and the development of body paragraphs and unity and coherence.*

# Unit 6

## Conclusion Writing

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (1H: 30)

Practice Duration: (3H)

### Unit Goals

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- Purposes of a conclusion.
- Types of information in conclusions.
- Strong Conclusion vs. Weak Conclusion.

## **6.1. Rhetorical Focus**

The structural sections of Unit 3 are as follows. The first section pinpoints the purposes of a conclusion. In the next two sections, techniques for writing conclusions are provided. The last section concludes the unit with dos and don'ts in introduction writing.

### **6.1.1. The Functions of a Conclusion**

The conclusion, the last paragraph of the essay, wraps up the essay by bringing it to a logical end. Accordingly, a concluding paragraph has three functions:

1. It marks the end of the essay (to do this, the conclusion should start with conclusion transition signals such as *to conclude, in brief, to sum up, all in all*).
2. It reviews the main points of the essay either by summarizing briefly the main points discussed in the body paragraphs of the essay or restating the thesis in different words to avoid being repeated.
3. It emphasizes a thought or an action that a reader should reflect on or take respectively by: giving a prediction or a final comment on the topic, suggesting some results or solutions on the subject or making a recommendation or a call for an action for readers to take.


### **6.1.2. Hints about Writing Conclusions**


To write a good concluding paragraph, it is important to consider the hints listed below:

- Start the conclusion with conclusion transition signals *in conclusion, to sum up, in a nutshell, to end with*.
- Rewrite the thesis statement in different words.
- Write a summary of the main points discussed in the main body remind the reader with the key ideas of the essay.
- Finish with a strong, important point about the subject of the essay to that you would like your readers to think of or remember very well.

### 6.1.3. Things to Avoid in Conclusion Writing

There are only two don'ts to remember in writing conclusions:

 - do not add further relevant details, facts, explanations, statistics...  
Those data should be included in the body paragraphs).

 - do not introduce new topics, information or arguments.  
Only the ideas that were developed in the essay are summed up and used in the conclusion)

Next is a sample outline and conclusion of an essay about '*Tips for making a good impression at a job interview*'.

**Thesis statement:** In order to make a good impression at a job interview, you should prepare well for the interview."

**Topic sentences of the body paragraphs:**

1. The first thing you should do is plan your answer to the possible questions the interviewer might ask.
2. Then you should carefully plan and prepare what you are going to wear.
3. you should make sure you arrive on time.

**Conclusion:**

As you can see, it is necessary to be well prepared to the job interview. Having the answer ready, being properly dressed, and being on time can help to make a good impression on the interviewer. If you follow these steps, you will find yourself sitting behind the desk at the coveted job in no time at all.

## 6.2.Practice

**Activity 1: Finding the Relevant Conclusion** (Adopted from Dorothy & Rumisek, 2005, p. 76)

Read the introduction 'a' in Unit 3 on page 22 and then select the best concluding paragraph, below:

a.

The British eat many different kinds of food, but the typical diet of many people includes eating a lot of fast food and ready-made dishes. The popularity of hamburger and pizza restaurants has increased greatly over the years. As a result of this diet, many British people have food-related health problems. To create a healthier society, people should learn about eating a good diet and should teach their children to do the same.

b.

Clearly, it is difficult to say that there is one type of British food. Every part of the country has its own special dishes based on the produce and tastes of that region. From the Ancient Britons and the Roman, Saxon, and Viking invasions to present-day immigrants, the cuisine of the UK continues to change with its changing population.

c.

People who have come from other countries to the UK have brought their own traditions and customs with them and added them to the British culture. It is possible to find restaurants from all different ethnic backgrounds, especially in larger cities around the country. Immigrants may also maintain their traditions by building places to practise their religion, such as mosques, temples, and churches. By continuing to follow some of their customs and beliefs, immigrants can stay in touch with their past while also living a new life in a new country.

**Activity 2: Analysing a Conclusion** (Adopted from Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 73-74)

*Read the following "skeleton" essay (only the thesis statement and topic sentences for the body paragraphs are given) and the two possible concluding paragraphs, then answer the questions that follow:*

**1. Thesis statement:** Although not everyone experiences culture shock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.

**2. Topic sentences for body paragraphs:**

- a. In the first stage, you experience excitement towards the new environment.
- b. You know that you are in the second stage of culture shock when differences in behavior and customs become more noticeable to you.
- c. In the third stage, you no longer have positive feelings about the new culture.
- d. Sooner or later, you have negative feelings about almost everything; this is the fourth stage of culture shock.
- e. Finally, you reach the fifth stage when your language skills improve and you begin to have some success in meeting people and in negotiating situations.



### 3. Concluding Paragraphs:

#### A.

To sum up, culture shock is a very real phenomenon that has been studied for more than 30 years by psychologists and anthropologist. Its five phases are (1) positive feelings toward the new culture, (2) awareness of small differences, (3) growing discomfort and need for contact with home culture, (4) negative feelings, and (5) acceptance and adjustment. Symptoms may vary, and not all people experience all five phases. In the end, however, people who suffer culture shock are stronger from having overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.

#### B.

In conclusion, nearly everyone moving to a new country feels some degree of culture shock. Symptoms may vary, and not all people experience all five stages. Newcomers with a strong support group may feel at home immediately in the new culture, while others may take months to feel comfortable. Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and, above all, learning the language as soon as possible are ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.

1. Which concluding paragraph is a summary of the subtopics? Which one paraphrases the thesis statement?
2. Which concluding paragraph gives suggestions? Which one makes a prediction?

### Activity 3: Writing Conclusions

*Now write a conclusion for each "skeleton" essay below:*

#### I.

1. **Thesis Statement:** Communication in a foreign language can create some embarrassing misunderstandings.
2. **Topic Sentences of the Body Paragraphs:**
  - a. Mispronouncing words can lead to real embarrassment.
  - b. Misunderstanding what someone says to you can create amusing problems.
  - c. Misusing vocabulary can really make you blush.

**3. Conclusion:**

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II.

**1. Thesis Statement:** A person can learn to control stress in four ways. .

**2. Topic Sentences of the Body Paragraphs:**

- a. A good way to reduce stress is to set realistic goals.
- b. Another way has to do with regular exercise.
- c. It may surprise some people to learn that maintaining close relationships with family and friends is effective in reducing stress.

**3. Conclusion:**

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**SEMESTER**

**2**

# Unit 1

## Descriptive Essays

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (3H:00)

Practice Duration: (6H:00)

### Unit Goals

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Descriptive Essay Organization

Exploring Description Language

Outlining and Writing a Descriptive Essay

## 1.1. Definition

A descriptive essay simply describes something or someone by appealing to the reader's senses: sight, sound, touch, smell and taste. In other words, it portrays people, places, or things with vivid details to help the reader create a mental picture of what is being described.

## 1.2. Sample

### **The Best Pizza in Town and Maybe in the World**

I have suffered a great deal because of a terrible addiction to pizza. Basically, I enjoy pizza too much. In fact, I enjoy it so much. I won't share it, not even with my mother. People in my hometown of Cabimas, Venezuela, laugh at me and call me the pizza King of Cabimas, but it is a name that I am proud of. I have eaten pizza in many places, and none is as good as the pizza of Cabimas.

The best place to eat pizza in Cabimas is at Papa's. Customers have to wait in line to get a table but the wait is worth it. Once they are seated, pizza-lovers can choose from many varieties of pizza, such as pizza with shrimp and smoked oysters or pizza with pine nuts and garlic, but my favorite is the sausage and pepperoni. First of all, it is big. When the waiter puts it down in front of me, I feel happy because I will get enough to eat. It smells of garlic, oil, and spices. And it looks delicious too. The sauce oozes out from under a layer of rich melted cheese. The best part is the first bite. I sink my teeth into a slightly crunchy crust, thick tomato sauce and gooey cheese, and I am in heaven. I can eat two of these pizzas in one night.

Now that I am in the United States, I am trying different kinds of pizzas here. I have never seen so many different pizza restaurants! I want to try them one by one. So far, some of them are delicious, but I am convinced that the best pizza in the world is still at Papa's restaurant a couple of blocks from the house where I grew up.

## 1.3. Organisation

### A. *Introduction*

- Establishes in general the purpose and why it is interesting to make the description
- Sets the tone for the overall impression
- Finished by a more specific statement related to the purpose (thesis statement)

### B. *Body/Middle*

- First, bear in mind that there is no prescribed number of paragraphs in a descriptive essay. The number corresponds to the facets being described.
- Specific details, examples or reasons
- Anecdotes or “narrative chunks” may serve as details or examples
- Transitions connect the ideas in a logical way
- Transitions assist the flow from paragraph to paragraph

### C. *Conclusion/End*

- Gracefully ends the essay
- May include a restatement of the writer’s opinion or the main idea (thesis statement)
- May summarize the information given in the body

**Activity 1: Read the sample essay carefully and reflect on its organization in accordance with this organization.**

### **Activity 2: Creating an Outline**

**Think about the food you want to write about. Then fill in the necessary information to create your essay outline.**

**Introduction**

*Topic:* .....

*Hook:* .....

.....

*Background Information:* .....

.....

.....

*Thesis Statement:* .....

.....

**Body Paragraphs**

*Topic Sentence:* .....

.....

*Supporting Sentences (with details):*

.....

.....

.....

*Concluding Sentence:*

.....

.....

**Conclusion**

*Final Opinion (and/or comment):* .....

.....

.....

.....

## 1.4. Language

The main tip that the student should take into account is to not use vague words or generalities (such as good, nice, bad, or beautiful). Be specific and use sensory, descriptive words (adjectives). For example:

I ate a good dinner. OR I devoured a steaming hot, cheese-filled pepperoni pizza for dinner.

Also, provide sensory details: Smells that are in the air (the aroma of freshly brewed coffee), Sounds (traffic, honking horns), Sights (“The sun scattered tiny diamonds across dew-covered grass as it peeked out from beyond the horizon.”), Touch (“The texture of the adobe hut’s walls resembled coarse sandpaper.”), and Taste: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, tart (“Giant goose bumps formed on my tongue when I accidentally bit into a sliver of lemon.”)

## 1.5. Practice

### Activity 1:

**A. Think about the food you want to write about. Add two more words to each set to describe the food. Then circle the words you would like to use in each set.**

1. Taste: salty, sour, bitter, sweet, juicy, ....., .....
2. Touch: soft, hard, chewy, tough, crunchy, ....., .....
3. Smell: sweet, comforting, sharp, strong, faint, ....., .....
4. Sight: small, big, tempting, smooth, ....., .....

**B. On a separate piece of paper, practice writing these words in sentences. Use your dictionary for your help.**



**Activity 2: Rewrite the general sentences below with more specific details. Use adjectives, nouns, verbs and adverbs.**

*General*

1. He bought a vegetable.
2. We returned from the store.
3. I entered the room.
4. My friend cleaned the spinach.
5. We put the spinach in the pan.
6. Our guests enjoyed the dinner.

*With Specific Details*

He bought some green spinach  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Activity 3: Follow the outline you have already created, and write your essay using the above mentioned language details.**

## Unit 2

## Narrative Essays

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (3H:00)

Practice Duration: (6H:00)

### Unit Goals

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Narrative Essay Organization

Exploring Narration Language

Outlining and Writing a Narrative Essay

## **2.1 Definition**

The purpose of a narrative is to tell a story in which the writer talks about their feelings, thoughts, or actions. In narrative essays, the writer creates a story that will not only entertain the readers, but will have a concluding point or message.

Since a narrative relies on personal experiences, it often is in the form of a story. When the writer uses this technique, he or she must be sure to include all the conventions of storytelling: plot, character, setting, climax, and ending. It is usually filled with details that are carefully selected to explain, support, or embellish the story. All of the details relate to the main point the writer is attempting to make.

## **2.2 Sample**

*(In the following page)*

## **An Embarrassing Incident**

Where I grew up, the rules for family life are very strict. I had five brothers and five sisters, and we spent a lot of time with our relatives. My parents taught us we should respect grandparents more than anyone in the world because grandparents had lived the longest. They had more knowledge about life, and no matter what they said, even if it does not make sense, they were right. We were taught that to hug or kiss grandparents was disrespectful and that we should greet them by kissing their hand. I was young, and I thought that everyone lived and thought just as I did. Well, I soon found out this is not true.

One day, an American friend invited me to her birthday party. I was very excited but at the same time very nervous. I wanted her family to like me, and I wanted to use my best manners. Slowly, I walked up to the house and rang the bell. My friend came running out with a big smile, telling me she was happy that I came. Then she let me in and introduced me to her parents. They smiled and said hello. Later she said, "Come here, I want you to meet my grandpa". I followed her into the living room where her grandfather was sitting. She introduced us, and he reached out his hand. He was going to shake hands, but I thought he was expecting me to kiss his hand, so I did. He pulled his hand away and looked at me in a strange way as if he did not like what I had done. Everyone else in the room looked at me, and my friend started laughing. I was very confused. I sat down and tried to figure out what happened. Just then, a little boy ran to my friend's grandfather and jumped to his lap. The little boy started to hug and kiss the grandfather. When I saw this, I got up and took the little boy by the hand and said, "NO". I guess I said it pretty loudly because the room became very silent and all eyes were on me.

The next day at school my friend asked me why I kissed her grandfather's hand and why I told the little boy to get away from his grandfather. I explained my customs to her and she explained hers to me. Finally, I learned that good manners are not always the same in different countries. Fortunately, my friend and I stayed very good friends.

## 2.3 Organisation

Because narrative essays are the telling of personal stories, the writer is able to be more creative with the structure and organization. However, there are certain guidelines that should be followed when writing a narrative.

### *A. Introduction*

The main idea of the narrative is established in the introductory paragraph. This is where a writer provides background information and presents it in a way that captures the readers' attention. An introduction should also include a hook. This is an opening sentence written in the form of a quote or a description used to capture the reader's attention in the first paragraph.

*E.g.: In a neighborhood of well-groomed lawns, House 71 stood apart with its dusty cobwebs, dirty bricks, and creaky wooden porch.*

A narrative's **thesis statement** is not exactly like the thesis statements used in other essays. The thesis statement for a narrative essay does not necessarily need to outline the whole essay. Instead, it should be a sentence including one of two things: the overall theme of the narrative or a lesson learned.

*E.g.: Everybody thought that the woman who lived in House 71 was a witch, until one Halloween night when I uncovered her true nature.*

### *B. Body Paragraphs*

Narratives can be told in chronological order or in the order of importance. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence that expresses the main idea of the paragraph. It is important that writers do not just list events or summarize experiences, but that they also explain what makes their experiences significant and how they relate to the essay's thesis statement. In addition, the writer should keep in mind that the narrative should be entertaining from beginning to end. There is no prescribed number of paragraphs to stick to.

Below are some elements of the narrative essay that can help a writer create stronger body paragraphs.

1. Dialogue: Adding quotations that were part of a conversation can help bring a writer's experiences to life and show the personalities of key characters.

2. Descriptive language: Thinking about the five senses (touch, smell, sound, sight, and taste) while writing, can create a vivid image in the reader's mind.

*E.g.: With the sound of the howling wind as my only companion, I walked towards the decrepit house guided by the yellow moonlight.*

3. Transitions: When telling a story, flow and clarity are key. Using transition words or phrases such as *next, finally, during, after, when, and later*, between sentences and paragraphs will make it easier for the reader to follow the events in the essay.

*E.g.: After what seemed like hours, she opened the door. Despite the horrifying rumors, I felt no fear as the Witch of 71 gave me a warm smile and said hello.*

### C. Conclusion

At the end of every story there is a resolution. Just like any story, the narrative essay provides a sense of closure in the conclusion. By the time the reader gets to the last paragraph, they should gain a deeper understanding of what the writer has learned and why the story they told is important.

## 2.4 Language

When you write a narrative essay, you are telling a story. Narrative essays are told from a defined point of view, often the author's, so there is feeling as well as specific and often sensory details provided to get the reader involved in the elements and sequence of the story. The verbs are vivid and precise. In writing your narrative essay, keep the following conventions in mind:

- Narratives are generally written in the first person, that is, using I. However, third person (he, she, or it) can also be used.

- Narratives rely on concrete, sensory details to convey their point. These details should create a unified, forceful effect, a dominant impression. More information on the use of specific details is available on another page.
- Narratives, as stories, should include these story conventions: a plot, including setting and characters; a climax; and an ending.

## 1.5. Practice

### ➤ Subordinating Conjunctions

We use subordinating conjunctions such as *as soon as*, *before*, *after*, *when* and *while* in complex sentences as connectors. As students have seen in the CWE L1, complex sentences contain a main clause (independent) and a dependent clause (subordinate).

- The main clause expresses the principal and independent idea of the sentence. The dependent clause expresses additional information about the main idea (for example, where and when it happened) but would be meaningless without the main idea.
- Subordinating conjunctions establish the time relationship between the dependent time clause and the main clause in the sentence. The subordinating conjunction starts the dependent clause, but the clauses can come in either order. We use a comma when the time clause comes before the main clause.

#### **time clause**

After our parents left the hotel,  
While we were unpacking,

#### **main clause**

we went into the street.  
the lights went out.

#### **main clause**

We went into the street  
The lights went out

#### **time clause**

after our parents left the hotel.  
while we were unpacking.

**Activity: Combine each pair of sentences into one complex sentence. Use the subordinating conjunctions in parentheses to clarify time relationships.**

1. We went to the movies. We ate lunch at a restaurant. (after)
2. We waited a long time for the bus. It arrived. (before)
3. They saved enough money. They took a great vacation. (as soon as)
4. She thought carefully about which dress to buy. She bought the red one. (before)
5. I listened to the radio. I prepared dinner. (while)
6. She worked very hard for many years. She retired. (then)
7. I was very surprised. You knocked on my door. (when)
8. He had a cup of coffee. He got up in the morning. (as soon as)

➤ **Using the Past Continuous in Narrative Essays**

In a narrative essay, you often need to describe actions in progress, or to describe background actions.

- To form the past continuous use *was/were* and the base form of the verb + *ing*.
- Use the past continuous to talk about the activities that were in progress at a specific time in the past. The activities began before the specific time and may also have continued after that time.

E.g.: At three o'clock we **were walking** home from school. My friend **was riding** his bicycle.

- Also use the past continuous to describe background actions.

E.g.: The sun **was going** down and the children **were still playing** on the grass.

**Activity: Complete the following sentences using past continuous.**

1. I am sorry I was not home yesterday afternoon; *I was walking my dog in the park.*
2. When my uncle visited in 2004, I  
.....
3. Last week was very busy, my roommate and I had many tests and assignments to complete. While I .....,  
she.....



4. I am sorry I could not talk last night. When you called, we  
 .....
5. I am so tired! Last night, my sister and I  
 ..... until two in the  
 morning!
6. I did not hear the doorbell. The radio  
 ..... too loudly.

**Activity: Rewrite the sentence (s) as either one or two correctly punctuated sentences. Use the words in parentheses.**

1. The day of my brother's birthday was very exciting first we went to the store to buy all the ingredients we came home and prepared the food for the party. (then)  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....
2. We went to the store to buy all the ingredients. We came home and prepared the food for the party. (before)  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....
3. In the beginning, writing was difficult it is easier. (now)  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....
4. Writing became easier for him. He started doing it more frequently. (after)  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

5. When I was a child, I used to think I would never learn to play baseball, but I was wrong I became good at it. (eventually)

.....  
.....  
.....

6. I used to think I would never learn how to play baseball. I was a child. (when)

.....  
.....  
.....

7. I never enjoyed eating vegetables when I was young I started to like the taste. (later on)

.....  
.....  
.....

8. I was young I never enjoyed eating vegetables. (when)

.....  
.....  
.....

9. I was afraid of the water until we moved to a house near a lake I learned how to swim. (after that)

.....  
.....  
.....

10. I was not afraid of the water. I learned to swim. (as soon as)

.....  
.....  
.....

11. The movie was long and boring. Sebastian thought It would never end it did.  
(finally)

.....  
.....  
.....

12. Sebastian was watching the long and boring movie. He had the feeling that it  
would never end. (while)

.....  
.....  
.....

## 2. Writing a Narrative Essay

### *Step 1: BRAINSTORMING*

Think about a formative experience from your past. Write ideas and vocabulary for your essay on a separate piece of paper. You may want to cluster your ideas.

### *Step 2: OUTLINING*

Write an outline for your essay.

#### **Introduction**

Hook.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

#### **Background Information**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Thesis Statement

.....  
.....  
.....

**Body**

Topic Sentence

.....  
.....  
.....

Descriptive Details

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Conclusion**

.....  
.....  
.....

*Step 3: WRITING*

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your essay. As you write, remember to include specific details about the experience.

# Unit 3

## Opinion Essays

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (3H:00)

Practice Duration: (6H:00)

### Unit Goals

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Descriptive Essay Organization

Exploring Description Language

Outlining and Writing a Descriptive Essay

### **3.1 Definition**

One key skill to composition is learning how to make a successful argument. The argumentative/opinion essay brings all of the argument-related skills – research, support, critical thinking – together into one project. The argumentative essay is one of the most important essays in university composition because it develops skills that will be used frequently in other classes and even beyond the university classroom.

This is because argument and persuasion are part of everyday life: advertisers try to convince you to buy their products, political candidates try to convince you to vote for them, and that one friend on Facebook tries to convince you that vaccines are some deep-seeded government conspiracy. Winning an argument or debate is not a matter of who is smarter: it is a matter of authoritative, well-supported presentation. It is a matter of not simply having a strong opinion, but being able to support that opinion.

### **3.2 Sample**

*(In the following page)*

## **The Best Medicine**

Last week, I notice that my son had a bad cold. I took him to the pediatrician, and she told me that he had an infection. Then she gave me a prescription of antibiotics. After two days, my son was happy and healthy thanks to this important medicine. Every day doctors prescribe antibiotics to help thousands of patients around the world fight infections. I do not like to think about what might happen if we did not have antibiotics.

Antibiotics are one of the greatest medical inventions in human history for several reasons. First, infections are frequent. Almost everyone has experienced an ear infection or a sinus infection. These common illnesses cause pain and discomfort to millions of people around the world every year. In addition, infections can be life-threatening. For example, sepsis, a dangerous infection in the blood, is responsible for one out of every one hundred hospitalizations. The victims are usually very young, old, or weak. Another reason why antibiotics are important is that they stop an infection from spreading to others. Infectious diseases can quickly travel from person to person if they are not treated right away. Antibiotics are the most effective way to control the spread of these serious illnesses. Recently, many people have argued that doctors prescribe antibiotics too often and that the bacteria that cause infections are becoming stronger as a result. This may be true; however, this evidence does not mean that antibiotics are not important. It simply shows that we must learn to use them wisely.

Infections can attack anyone at any time. They can also attack entire populations. While many infections create minor discomfort and suffering, some are quite dangerous. Antibiotics are the most effective way to treat infections. Without antibiotics, many more people would get seriously ill, and others would die.

### **3.3 Organisation**

There are many different ways to organize an argumentative essay. The most important thing to remember about an argumentative essay is that you must show both sides of a contentious issue. In other words, your topic must be debatable:

- 1) You have considered both sides of the argument before choosing your position
- 2) You are able to anticipate and refute any opposing arguments

### A. Introduction

In the introduction, you should not include too much detail. The introduction is a three-step process:

- Get the reader's attention (hook).
- Introduce the issue being discussed (background information).
- State where *you* stand on the issue and why (thesis statement).

### B. Body

1. Supporting the argument: The body is where you'll make your key points and support them with research. You need a transition of some kind so the reader knows exactly which point you are discussing. This transition sentence functions as the topic sentence for a body paragraph.

*E.g.: One of the main reasons gun owners should need a license is because it would make it much easier for the state to prosecute gun crime.*

From that sentence, your reader knows exactly what the next paragraph or two will discuss. From there, you have to support your statement. The first thing to do is present research.

*E.g.: An article in the Chicago Tribune describes the difficult legal challenges, saying that Congress often fails to create gun legislation because it would be too complex to enforce without substantial legal hurdles (Ingram).*

Simply stating the research, however, is not enough. You also have to explain how it applies to the argument.

*E.g.: Requiring a gun license would solve this problem because it would substantially answer the question of whether the offender had a right to a gun. If there were a federal gun license that everyone had to go through the same process to get, it would get rid of the state-level patchwork of regulations that makes gun crime so hard to prosecute.*

The above example does not need; the previous example already had a sourced statement with a citation, and this example is the writer's analysis. When research and statistics are used to support a point, *every* cited statement needs to be similarly analyzed and deconstructed.



2. **Refutation:** Usually when you are assigned to write an argumentative/opinion essay, one of the requirements is that you have to “give at least one opposing view.” Writers often mistakenly believe this to mean they have to give *support* to the other side or “play fair,” but that is not the case. The reason for presenting an opponent’s viewpoint in your essay is so you can explain why it does not work. You have to show your readers that you have examined both sides of the argument, but you also have to explain why your opponents have not changed your mind about the topic. The best way to begin is by simply and briefly presenting the other side’s argument.

*E.g.: Opponents of stricter gun control laws argue that making guns harder to obtain will endanger law-abiding citizens because only criminals would have guns.*

The reason for presenting the above statement is *not* to support the other side, but to explain it. At this point, you have to explain why you do not agree. Deconstruct the argument and point out the flaws in it, using research as needed.

*E.g.: The problem with this thinking is that it assumes guns will be easy to get illegally. This isn’t true; when Australia banned firearms, the black market costs for semi-automatic handguns went from \$2000 to over \$15000 (Tanquintie-Misa), meaning that criminals will need large amounts of money to purchase a gun, making crimes of passion much less likely.*

### *C. Conclusion*

Once you have supported all your main points with research and personal analysis, you have to bring everything back together and leave *all* of your points fresh in the readers’ minds. This is your last chance to make an impression on the audience, so you want to make the conclusion especially convincing. However, there is a balance in this; writers often make the mistake of including overt moralizations or introducing new points that were not discussed anywhere in the body. Another frequent mistake is being repetitive. Because of the nature of the conclusion, it frequently mimics the introduction in form, but it is completely different in function.

Just like the introduction, the conclusion should not include any details; presumably, all of the important details have already been given in the body. This means that you should not need to include any sourced information. The conclusion should take on a tone that provides a sense of resolution. You know what this tone sounds like: you have likely read a magazine article or listened to a public speaker (such as a politician or a preacher), and you can usually tell when they are almost finished saying what they are going to say. Your conclusion needs to take such a tone.

### 3.4 Language

#### ➤ Using Quantity Expressions in Opinion Essays

In an opinion essay, writers often make general statements about a group or a category. It is important to avoid making a statement that is true for some, but not all for members of a group or category. This is called overgeneralization. Compare the following statements.

Cats hate water.

Most cats hate water.

The first statement suggests that all cats in the world hate water. It is untrue because some cats, such as tigers, are good swimmers and enjoy being in water. In the second statement, the writer uses the quantity expression *most*. The quantity expression qualifies, or limits the generalization, so that the statement is true.

The following patterns guide the use of quantity expressions:

- *Most*, *a lot of*, and *some* are used with both plural countable nouns and uncountable nouns. For example,

*Most* dormitories have internet access.

*Some* cafeterias offer healthy alternatives to traditional student food.

- *Much* and *a little* are used with uncountable nouns. (*Much* is not usually used in affirmative statements. Use *a lot of* instead). For example,

Some people have *a lot of* intelligence, but they do not have *much* common sense.  
Students might have *a little* money left for entertainment after paying expenses.

- *Many, several* and *a few* are used with plural nouns. For example,  
Many web sites charge a fee for information.  
A few uncooperative participants can destroy a meeting.

### 3.5 Practice

**Activity 1: Circle the correct quantity expression in each sentence.**

1. (Many/A lot of) creativity is necessary for certain types of technology jobs.
2. There are (a few/a little) places where the sea level is rising.
3. (A little/Several) bills in Congress have tried to protect Internet users from fraud.
4. In the history of the Internet, only (a little/a few) computer viruses have created serious damage.
5. (Many/A lot of) time is spent doing research on cures for cancer.
6. Did you know that (a little/ a few) sleep-deprivation can harm a person's judgment?

#### ➤ Using Connectors to Show Support and Opposition

When we explain an opinion, we can use connectors to clarify the relationship between ideas. Connectors can be used to signal that the second idea will support the first in some way. They can also be used to contrast the first idea with an opposite or very different idea. When they introduce an independent clause, the connector is followed by a comma.

#### A. *Connectors that Show Support*

- One way to support an idea is to give an example that illustrates the idea.

Connectors like *for example* and *in particular* introduce examples.

E.g.: Most people are willing to spend money to make their lives easier; *for example*, nearly every new house has automatic garage door opener.

E.g.: Children should avoid junk food; *in particular*, they should stay away from sugary snacks.

- A second way to show support is to add facts or explanations that clarify the idea. E.g.: The automobile industry is responding to consumer demands for more fuel-efficient cars; in fact, the number of available models has tripled in the past three years.

*B. Connectors that Show Opposition*

It is sometimes difficult for the writer to show that two ideas are opposed to each other. Connectors like however, in contrast, on the other hand help the writer focus the reader’s attention on differences. For example,

I am late very morning; however, I never get into trouble.

Many people enjoy listening to CD’s; in contrast, live concerts are more exciting.

**Activity 2: Each of the sentences below has two clauses joined by a connector. Write *O* for opposition if the clauses show opposing information and *S* for support if they show supporting information, such as an example or a similar idea.**

1. The Western calendar is used around the world; however, many countries have a traditional calendar that they also use. ....
2. Most people say that they want to exercise; however, only one in ten adults works out three times a week or more. ....
3. Frank Lloyd Wright was an architect who liked straight lines; in contrast, Antonio Gaudi preferred bends and curves in his designs. ....
4. Surgeons try hard to protect their hands; for example, they avoid sports such as baseball that might cause an injury on their fingers. ....
5. The place where I grew up only has two seasons; however, my new home, New York, has four. ....
6. Men often buy a house before getting married; in fact, single men purchase approximately one in five homes. ....

➤ **Writing an Opinion Essay**

*Step 1: BRAINSTORMING*

Topic: Would you consider marrying someone from another culture?

Consider this topic and write down ideas and vocabulary for your essay on a separate piece of paper.

*Step 2: OUTLINING*

Write an outline for your essay.

**Introduction**

Hook:

.....  
.....  
.....

Background Information:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Thesis Statement:

.....  
.....

**Body Paragraphs**

Topic Sentence:

.....  
.....  
.....

Example Reasons:

.....  
.....

Counter-argument:

.....

Refutation:

.....  
.....  
.....

**Conclusion**

.....  
.....  
.....

*Step 3: WRITING*

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your first draft on a separate piece of paper.

# Unit 4

## Comparison and Contrast Essays

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (3H:00)

Practice Duration: (6H:00)

### Unit Goals

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Comparison/Contrast Essay Organization

Exploring Comparison/Contrast Language

Outlining and Writing a Comparison/Contrast Essay

## **4.1 Definition**

A comparison and contrast essay focuses on how two items or texts are similar, different, or similar in some ways and different in others. You can compare and contrast any number of items including theories, events, books, or people. Comparison focuses on the ways in which these two things or ideas are similar to; Contrast deals with how these two elements are different from one another.

By mastering such type of essay, you are going to make connections between texts or ideas, engage in critical thinking, and go beyond mere description or summary to generate interesting analysis: when you reflect on similarities and differences, you gain a deeper understanding of the items you are comparing, their relationship to each other, and what is most important about them.

## **4.2 Sample**

*(In the following page)*



## My Two Homes

There are two places that have had a profound impact in my life. One of them is New York City, and the other one is Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. When you compare them, they seem dramatically different places, but they have some things in common, and I love them both.

There are many reasons why New York seems like my home away from home. Both cities are striking and distinctive. For example, each has its own nickname. Everyone knows New York is “the Big Apple”. Quetzaltenango is known as “Xela” (pronounced as shey-la), which is a lot easier to say! Second, both cities have a “Central Park” where people like to go and walk. Although Central Park in Xela is smaller, its tropical flowers and colonial architecture mean it is just as beautiful as New York’s. Furthermore, when you walk around Xela, you find many tourists and people from other countries, just like in New York. For me, this means conversations in Xela are just as interesting as conversations in New York.

Despite their similarities, these cities are different. Life in Xela is more colorful and the pace of life is slower. For this reason, whenever I return to Xela, it is like an escape. When I arrive, the first thing I notice is the color. In New York, many people wear black to be stylish, but in Xela stylish clothing is the rainbow-colored clothing of the indigenous people. And because Xela is smaller, the beautiful green mountains outside the city are always visible. The second thing I notice is the pace of life. They say New York never sleeps, and it must be true, because I always see people walking and cars on the streets, even late at night. In the evening, my Guatemalan city definitely sleeps. Some younger people go out dancing and some families take a walk in the city’s Central Park, but by ten o’clock the streets are pretty deserted. On the other hand, New Yorkers are often in such a hurry, they don’t even stop to eat. For breakfast they buy food on the street, and eat it while they are walking or on the subway. At lunch they order food from work and eat it at their desks. In Xela people eat their breakfast at home and most come home from work for a much more relaxed and longer lunch.

In conclusion, these are the two cities I love. For me, both are home, are unique, and filled with interesting people. These places represent the best of both worlds. New York is more hurried and rushed when I need energy, and Xela gives me a slower pace when I need to relax. Together they keep me balanced.

## 4.3 Organisation

There are two ways to organize a comparison and contrast essay: The first (and often the clearest) method is the **Point-by-Point** method, and the second method is called the **Block** method.

### A. Introduction

In both methods, the introduction

- presents the subject that is to be compared or contrasted.
- ends with a thesis statement that focuses the comparison or contrast.

### B. Body Paragraphs

#### ✓ *Body Paragraphs for Point-by-Point Essays*

- There are two body paragraphs, each with a clear topic sentence.
- Each body paragraph presents one main point to be compared or contrasted between the two subjects.
- Within each body paragraph, the topic sentence states the point of comparison or contrast between the subjects. The supporting sentences that follow provide two or three examples.
- The body paragraphs use sequence transitions, such as first, second, furthermore, etc., to connect the point-by-point analysis within the paragraph.

#### ✓ *Body Paragraphs for Similarities and Differences Essays*

- There are two body paragraphs, each with a clear topic sentence.
- One body paragraph is devoted to similarities between the two subjects and one body paragraph is devoted to differences.

### C. Conclusion

In both cases, the conclusion of a comparison/contrast essay allows the writer to summarize the differences and similarities and state his/her feeling about the topic.

## 4.4 Language

### ➤ Using Comparison and Contrast Connectors

In comparison and contrast essays, connectors help create coherence by indicating the relationship between ideas and sentences.

#### ✓ *Connectors that Show Similarity*

Use connectors such as *like* (+ noun phrase) or *similarly* to show similarity.

E.g.:

*Like* her sister, Angela was very tall.

I grew up overseas in Shanghai. *Similarly*, my wife spent her childhood abroad in Laos.

#### ✓ *Connectors that Show Contrast*

Use connectors like *unlike* (+ noun phrase), *in contrast*, *on the one hand ... on the other hand* to show contrast

E.g.:

*Unlike* the fathers in Morella, the fathers in Houston do not watch their teenagers carefully.

The pace of life in New York is very rapid. *In contrast*, life in Xela is slower.

*On the one hand*, I enjoy the fast pace of New York. *On the other hand*, the pace of life in Xela relaxes me.

## 4.5 Practice

**Activity 1: Re-write the following sentences to show similarity or contrast. Choose the correct connector in parentheses to add more coherence.**

- Lemons are yellow. Limes are green. (unlike/similarly)
- Many families can live in apartment building. Only one of two families usually live in a house. (on the one hand ... on the other hand/ like)
- A frog can live in water or on land. A fish cannot. (like/unlike)

- d. A parrot can fly. An ostrich cannot. (similarly/in contrast)
- e. Rome is a city rich in history. Athens is too. (like/ in contrast)
- f. Mozart composed his first opera at the age of 12. Mendelssohn composed his first masterpiece in his teens. (in contrast/similarly)

**Activity 2: Complete the paragraph. Write *like, similarly, on the one hand... on the other hand, or in contrast* in the blanks.**

The Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, and the Statue of Liberty in New York City may seem to be very different structures. However, they have many similarities, .....(1) the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty was designed by a French architect. ....(2), the Statue of Liberty and Eiffel Tower, represented great advancement in metalwork. The Eiffel Tower, however, is taller than the Statue of Liberty. The Eiffel Tower measures 986 feet. ....(3), the Statue of Liberty is only 305 feet from the water to the top of her torch. ....(4) you have the elegant black frame and sharp point of the Eiffel Tower, and .....(5) you have the long, flowing robe and lifelike torch of the Statue Liberty. Both monuments are equally beautiful.

➤ **Writing a Comparison/Contrast Essay**

*Step 1: BRAINSTORMING*

Consider a comparison between two people you know. First, write down ideas and vocabulary for your brainstorm on a separate piece of paper.

*Step 2: OUTLINING*

Write an outline for your essay. Decide if you want to use a similarities and differences essay or a point-by-point essay. Use the appropriate outline for the body paragraphs.

**Introduction**

Hook:

.....  
.....

Background Information: .....

.....  
.....

Thesis Statement: .....

.....

**Body Paragraph 1 (Block Comparison)**

Topic sentence about *similarities*: .....

.....

Details:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Body Paragraph 2 (Block Comparison)**

Topic sentence about *differences*:

.....  
.....

Details:

.....  
.....  
.....

Or,

**Body Paragraph 1 (Point-by-Point Comparison)**

Topic sentence about *point of comparison 1*: .....  
.....

Details:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Body Paragraph 2 (Point-by-Point Comparison)**

Topic sentence about *point of comparison 2*: .....  
.....

Details:

.....  
.....  
.....

**Conclusion**

Summary of points of comparison and contrast:

.....  
.....  
.....

*Step 3: WRITING*

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your essay on a separate piece of paper.

# Unit 5

## Cause and Effects Essays

### Time

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Lesson Duration: (3H:00)

Practice Duration: (6H:00)

### Unit Goals

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Cause and Effect Essay Organization

Exploring Cause and Effect Language

Outlining and Writing a Cause and Effect Essay

## 5.1 Definition

The cause and effect essay is an exploration of the *reasons for* or *results of* things or events. This type of essay can include both causes and effects, but generally contains only one of the two.

## 5.2 Sample

### Why Students are Poor

It is easy to recognize a college student because he or she carrying books and usually wearing old pants or jeans and a T-shirt. You will not see a college student driving a new car. Instead, you will see him at a bus or on bicycle. And at mealtimes, a college student is more likely to be eating a slice of pizza than dining in a fine restaurant. Very few college students have extra money to spend on clothes, cars, or good food. There are two main reasons why being poor is an unavoidable part of the college experience.

The first reason college students are poor is that they cannot work full-time. An eighteen-year old is an adult with the needs and wants of an adult; however, if that young person is taking courses at a university or a community college, he or she must as much time as possible studying. Therefore, the student has to sacrifice the extra money that a job would provide in order to have the freedom to concentrate on classes.

A second reason college student have little money is that they have other expenses that working adults do not have. A college student must pay tuition fees every semester. A full-time student usually takes three or four classes each semester, and the fees of these classes can cost thousands of dollars per year. Also, students need to buy several expensive textbooks each semester. A single textbook can cost as much as a hundred dollars. Other necessary expenses include computers, paper, pens, notebooks, and other items needed for school projects.

Many students cannot afford to attend college full-time, so they have a job and go to school part-time, but they are still poor because of the cost of attending college. Fortunately, the causes of student poverty are temporary. Most students do not mind because they have the hope that a college degree will get them a good job and they will have good prospects in the future.



### 5.3 Organisation

A cause and effect essay explains why something happens. Both causes and effects are examined in longer essays. Your short essay will focus only on causes that lead to an event or situation. Consider the following organization for a short essay.

#### A. *Introduction*

- The hook engages the reader's interest by *personalizing* the topic or showing why it is important for the reader to know about it.
- The middle sentences describe the event or situation that is the result of the causes. This background information helps the reader understand the relationship between the causes and effects.
- The thesis statement at the end of the introduction states two causes that lead up to the event or situation. It may also include a comment by the writer that explains why it is important to understand the causes of the event.

#### B. *Body Paragraphs*

- There are two body paragraphs in the essay, which support the thesis statement by explaining the causes in detail.
- Each body paragraph begins with a topic sentence that states one cause for the event or situation.
- The sentences that follow support the idea in the topic sentence. These supporting sentences include details such as examples, description, reasons, and facts to help the reader understand the relationship between the cause and the event.

#### C. *Conclusion*

- The conclusion restates the thesis statement, often using different language.
- It summarizes the main causes and their relationship to the event.
- It may include a comment by the writer that explains why it is important to understand the causes of the event.

## 5.4 Language

### ➤ Using Transitional Words/Phrases

When moving between causes and effects in your essay, the following transitional words/phrases may be used.

#### A. *Transitions for Cause & Effect Essays*

##### ✓ *Transitions for Causes:*

as a result of, results from, the reason for, since, because (of), due to, leads to, is caused by

##### ✓ *Transitions for Effects:*

so, so that, so then, a consequence of, consequently, therefore, thus, then, for this reason, as a result

#### B. *Signal Words for Cause & Effect Essays*

You also may want to use words to indicate the certainty of your statements. Be sure not to overstate the strength of your arguments. You also want to use words to indicate the level of importance of your points.

##### ✓ *Degrees of Certainty:*

certainly, may, necessarily, perhaps, probably, undoubtedly, unquestionably

##### ✓ *Levels of Importance:*

above all, equally important, finally, first, initially, last, primarily, second, third

### ➤ Using Will with *So that*

The future with *will* can also be used with the logical connector *so that*. In this type of sentence, the main clause uses the simple present and states the cause. It is followed by *so that* and a second main clause with *will*.

#### **main clause (present)**

Students work hard in  
school

***So that***

#### **time clause (future)**

they ***will be*** successful.

## 5.5 Practice

### Activity 1: Rewrite the sentences below using *so that* and *will*.

- a. Some drivers drink a lot of caffeinated drinks in order to stay awake.

*Some drivers drink a lot of coffee so that they will stay awake.*

- b. Students sacrifice many things in order to save money for school.

.....  
.....

- c. Many stores advertise sales in order to attract customers.

.....  
.....

- d. Many people pay bills online in order to save money and time.

.....  
.....

- e. Some people carpool to work in order to save money.

.....  
.....

- f. Many people work very hard in order to be successful.

.....  
.....

#### ➤ **Expressing Future Possibility with if Clauses**

Sentences with an *if* clause show a cause and effect relationship. The *if* clause introduces a possible situation (the cause). The main clause talks about the possible result (the effect) of the situation.

- Use the present tense in the *if* clause and *will* in the main clause.

**Cause**

**Effect**

**If X happens**

**Y will happen, too.**

- The cause and effect clauses can come in either order. When the *if* clause comes first, it is followed by a comma.

**If Clause**

**Main clause**

**If Pedro plays,**

**we will win the game.**

**Main clause**

**If Clause**

**We will win the game**

**if Pedro plays.**

**N.B:** Do not use *will* in the *if* clause.

If the price of oil will increase, people will drive less. (INCORRECT)

If the price of oil increases, people will drive less.

**Activity 2: Combine the ideas so that they will form one sentence with an *if* clause.**

- a. (money managers/be discipline/achieve financial goals)

If money managers are disciplined, they will achieve financial goals.

- b. (applicant/interview well/ receive job offers)

.....

- c. (you/ exercise regularly/ be healthy in old age)

.....

- d. (restaurant/serve delicious food/ be successful)

.....

- e. (I/work hard/be promoted)

.....

f. (parents/ be good at solving problems/ be successful at raising children)

.....

g. (she/invests money wisely/become wealthy)

.....

h. (students/ study hard/ graduate college)

.....

➤ **Writing a Cause and Effect Essay**

Topic: What causes people to get a pet, such as a cat or a dog?

*Step 1: BRAINSTORMING*

Consider the above-mentioned topic, and write down ideas and vocabulary for your brainstorming here or on a separate piece of paper.

*Step 2: OUTLINING*

Write an outline for your essay.

**Introduction**

Hook:

.....  
.....

Background Information:

.....  
.....  
.....

Thesis Statement:

.....  
.....

**Body Paragraph 1**

Topic Sentence:

.....  
.....

Supporting Detail: .....

.....  
.....

Supporting Detail:

.....  
.....  
.....

Supporting Detail:

.....  
.....  
.....

**Body Paragraph 2**

Topic Sentence:

.....  
.....

Supporting Detail:

.....  
.....  
.....

Supporting Detail:

.....  
.....  
.....

Supporting Detail:

.....  
.....  
.....

**Conclusion**

Summary:

.....  
.....

Comment:

.....  
.....  
.....

*Step 3: WRITING*

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your essay on a separate piece of paper.

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