Five Elements of Good Writing

A teaching unit of five lesson plans closely following Unit 2 of *From Great Sentences to Great Paragraphs*¹

Purpose
Audience
Clarity
Unity
Coherence

¹Folse, Solomon, Clabeaux. Heinle, 2010
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**Five Elements of Good Writing - Unit Overview**

**Class Description**
- Class: College of Marin, Low-advanced ESL Writing and Grammar. This is the class I was involved with for my TESL mentorship.
- Class length: 1 hour and 40 minutes
- Students' needs / purpose in learning English: These are students who have likely worked their way up the non-credit ESL class ladder to the low-advanced level. They all appear to have achieved secondary education and many have had post secondary or college education in their country. There may be a number of working professionals in the group. I can assume that all are primarily interested in improving their English to advance in their work and to have greater comfort and success in communicating with other English speakers.

**Theme and Resource Materials**

**Text Books**
- This unit closely follows “Unit 2, Five Elements of Good Writing,” *From Great Paragraphs to Great Essays* (Folse, Solomon, Clabeaux. Heinle, 2010).
  What they have already covered: Unit 1 of FGPtoGE – Paragraph form: topic sentences, supporting sentences, concluding sentences; Writing process: brainstorming

**Worksheets**
- Simple Present Tense - Third Person Singular
  Centre for Education and Training (CET)
- Transitions

**Goal**
To help the students develop an understanding of the importance of purpose, audience, clarity, unity, and coherence in their academic writing.
Lesson 1 – Element 1: Purpose

**Goal:**
Students will comprehend the importance of purpose to good writing.

**Objectives:**
- Introduce the theme of this 5-lesson unit:
  *What makes a good paragraph? Five Elements of Good Writing.*
  - Purpose
  - Audience
  - Clarity
  - Unity
  - Coherence
- Students will gain facility with the first element and be able to write purpose statements.

**Introduction and Review:**
(15 min.)

T: Previously (previous unit), we have learned about writing three kinds of sentences: (write these on the board) *topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence*. Who can tell me what a topic sentence is?

(The answer we are looking for is 1. the topic of the paragraph, and 2. the controlling idea, i.e., the direction the writer is taking the topic. Lead the students to this understanding. Give an example of a topic sentence if necessary.)

T: Ok, and who can tell me what supporting sentences are?

(We are looking for something like: *Supporting sentences give evidence, examples, or reasoning that support the controlling idea.*)

T: And how about the concluding sentence?

(We are looking for answers such as: The concluding sentence restates the main idea; It offers a suggestion, opinion, or prediction.)

T: Now we are going to take a further, deeper look at paragraphs by examining five key elements of good writing (write on the board): purpose, audience, clarity, unity, and coherence. These principles build upon the sentence types that we have been practicing. The first element, which we will look at today, is *purpose*.

Explain that the three most common goals of academic writing are:
- to inform the readers
- to persuade the readers
- to entertain the readers

**Rationale:** Lesson material is more likely to be retained and reinforced if Ss are reminded of its features. A transition is made from the idea of sentence types (topic, supporting, concluding) to begin a deeper understanding of underlying principles of good writing.
**Activity 1: Analyzing a Paragraph**

(25 min.)

- Use Questions #1 and #2, about the topic of grilling (FGPtoGE, p.32), for a brief whole-class discussion to activate the context for example paragraph 10.

- Have Ss read Example Paragraph 10 and write answers to questions 3, 4, and 5 (FGPtoGE, p. 33). Point out the accompanying vocabulary definitions. After students have had time to write their answers, ask Ss to volunteer some of their answers verbally.

- Have students read (silently) the section, Purpose Statement (p. 33 – 34). After Ss have read the section, invoke a brief discussion about topic, purpose, and goal. As a review of the previous unit, ask Ss how topic sentences relate to the purpose or goal of a paragraph.

**Rationale:** From my experience working with Ss at this level, there is often a tendency to write in generalities, without a controlling idea, and this usually results in unfocused paragraphs. So there is a need to emphasize the importance of clear purpose in writing. Relating purpose to the concept of the controlling idea in a topic sentence is a natural progression in understanding.

**Activity 2: Writing Purpose Statements**

(20 min)

Read aloud (or ask a S to read aloud) example topic 1 (FGPtoGE, p.34).

Ask Ss to write purpose statements for topics 2 through 6 (FGPtoGE, p.34, 35).

After 10 minutes, ask for five volunteers to write their purpose statements on the board (one each for topics 2 – 6). Review and discuss any questions, corrections, or suggestions with whole class.

**Rationale:** After having analyzed some purpose statements, Ss are given the opportunity to experiment with generating their own. Class discussion helps to ground understanding.

**Reading and Discussion: Developing the Central Point**

(20 min.)

Read aloud the introductory paragraph, “What is a Paragraph?” from Transitions, p.7

Ask a S volunteer to read the paragraph in Activity 1.1 (Transitions p. 7).

Have students break into pairs or triplets and have them discuss questions 1 and 2 on p. 8 (Transitions).

Have students work together to write what they feel is a good purpose statement for the paragraph.

After students have had a chance to discuss and write their purpose statements, ask for volunteers to write their group's purpose statement for the paragraph on the board. Review and invite comments.

**Rationale:** Students are given inducement for further discussion and experimentation with purpose statements. This concluding exercise provides a chance for assessment of how well the students have assimilated the lesson.
Homework Assignment, Wrap up

(5 - 8 min.)

Tell Ss that the next element of good writing to be covered in the next class will be *audience*.

Ask Ss for the meaning of *audience*. Answers might be a movie audience, or TV audience. Ask if they think that readers are an audience—if yes, how so?

Ask Ss to read the section, Element 2: Audience, on p. 35 of FGPtoGE before coming to next class.

**Rationale:** Reading of lesson book material prepares Ss for receptivity to the next lesson. As there is more lesson material—especially text—than can be covered in class, it is more efficient to have Ss do some reading outside of class.
Lesson 2 – Element 2: Audience

**Goal:**
Students will comprehend the importance of writing to a specific audience.

**Objectives:**
- Ss will become familiar with the three persons: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd
- Ss will begin to recognize and be conscious of the difference between informal and formal language.

**Introduction and Review**
(10 min.)
Remind students that last week's lesson was about *purpose* and solicit explanations of what a purpose statement does.

Now tell Ss that they will be considering the importance of writing to an *audience* for today's lesson.

Ask some questions:
- Who is the audience when we write?
- What does it mean when we use the word “person” when talking about writing?

Review the section on page 35 of FGPtoGE, “Element 2: Audience.” Ask for the names of first person pronouns, second person pronouns, and third person pronouns.

Next, ask Ss what “formality” means. Explain that language used in normal everyday speech and emails are more informal, while language used in most academic writing is more formal.

Explain that formality has to do with word choices. For instance, in informal language we might say that we “put off” the meeting. Whereas in more formal writing, as in a business letter, we might say that the meeting was “postponed.”

Explain that formality also has to do with *voice*, that third person is more formal than first person. The third person voice is what is most often used in academic writing.

Have volunteers read aloud the section, “Choosing Person in Formal or Informal Writing,” on page 37 of FGPtoGE.

**Rationale:** Formality is an important concept to make students aware of as there is sometimes a tendency to use an informal, casual speech style initially when writing academic essays.

**Activity 4: Identifying Audience**
(10 min.)
Go over the instructions and example topic #1 with Ss (FGPtoGE, p. 37). Ask them to complete the rest (2 – 5).

When the students are done, ask for their answers and discuss any variation.
Rationale: Formality is an important concept to make students aware of as there is a sometimes a tendency to use an informal, casual speech style initially when writing academic essays. Conversely, there can sometimes be a tendency to write in too formal a style when the assignment asks the student to make personal observations about some topic, or to write about a personal experience.

**Reading and Discussion: Announcing the Central Point Directly**

(25 min.)

Ask a S volunteer to read the paragraph under the heading “Announcing the Central Point Directly” in *Transitions* on p. 24.

Have students silently read the paragraph that starts, “When I became seven years old...” under Activity 2.1 (Transitions, p. 24)

Have students break into pairs or triplets and have them discuss questions 1 - 4 on page 25.

After Ss have had time to discuss the questions, solicit their answers.

Ask the Ss: What person's voice is the paragraph written in? Is the writing formal or informal?

**Worksheet: Third Person Singular**

(15 min.)

Hand out the “Third Person Singular” worksheet and go over the conjugation chart to highlight the fact that third person singular verbs end with an “s.”

Have students complete the exercise questions.

Check answers as a class, calling on each student in succession, going around the room.

**Independent Writing: A favorite thing that belongs to someone I know**

(30 min)

Ask Ss to think of someone they know—a friend or family member, perhaps—who has a favorite object that they love or care a lot about. Have students think about the example paragraph they read earlier about the writer's memory of a special playhouse. Ask for volunteers to offer examples they can think of. As Ss offer their associations, it may prompt other Ss to think of their own example.

Prompt Ss to write a short paragraph about someone they know who has a favorite object or possession of some kind. It could be a piece of jewelry, a car, a pet, or something else.

T: What is the central point that you want to make about your subject? Start first by writing a purpose statement for your paragraph. See if you can use specific details about your subject that will appeal to the reader's senses, such as sights, sounds, feel, smells, or taste.
When the students are finished writing, ask them to share their paragraph with a partner. Partners can help each other by checking to make sure that all verbs are conjugated correctly, especially that third person singular verbs end in “s.”

Ask for volunteers to share aloud their paragraphs and purpose statements.

**Rationale:** By modeling their topic on the playhouse paragraph they have read, writing about someone they know, having practiced conjugating third-person singular verbs, and starting by writing a purpose statement, Ss should be adequately prepared to experiment with writing a third person paragraph of their own.

**Wrap up**

Ask students to bring dictionaries or a Thesaurus, if they have one, to the next class.
Lesson 3 – Element 3: Clarity

Goal:
Students will better understand the importance of writing for clarity.

Objectives:
- Ss will gain facility using descriptive words to create specific detail.
- Ss will develop awareness of the importance of clear pronoun references.

Introduction: Language Focus
(15 min.)
Start out by asking Ss if they have any favorite athletes. Who are they? What is unique or exceptional about them. What are their specific abilities. If students are not forthcoming about particular athletes, shift to asking about any exceptional person that they admire, such as a musician, an artist, or something else. Echo the descriptive language that the student uses.

Have the a few volunteers successively read aloud the section, “Using Clear, Descriptive Language” on page 38 of FGPtoGE.

Activity 5: Choosing Clear and Precise Words
(10 min.)
Have Ss complete the exercise at the top of page 39 in FGPtoGE.

Ask Ss to share some of their synonyms.

Inform Ss that, in general, it is a very good practice to develop the ability to come up with synonyms—words that have the same or similar meaning as the original word.

**Rationale:** As stated, the ability to generate synonyms is very important for building vocabulary and for developing a robust thinking process.

Activity 6: Choosing Descriptive Phrases
(20 min)
Have Ss take turns reading each version of the evolving sentence in the Writer's Note on page 39 of FGPtoGE.

Have Ss complete Activity 6, Choosing Descriptive Phrases, on p. 39 of FGPtoGE.

When enough students have finished writing their new phrases, ask for some volunteers to come write their favorite example that they came up with on the board. Review and comment as a class.

**Rationale:** The ability to write with vivid, specific detail enables the writer to connect with his/her readers in an immediate way through their senses. Readers respond emotionally to written sensory detail more so than through writing about vague generalities or abstractions.
**Activity 7: Rewriting for Clarity and Description**

(20 min.)
Have Ss take turns reading the examples under Clarity in Sentences at the top of page 40 in FGptoGE.

Have Ss rewrite the sentences in Activity 7 on page 40 in FGptoGE.

When most students are finished writing, ask for volunteers to come to the board and write their examples. Review and comment as a class.

**Rationale:** A note about sharing at the board: Ss benefit from seeing what others have written, sharing their own writing and having it appraised and appreciated, and recognizing their own uniqueness in what they write.

**Activity 10: Editing for Clear Pronoun References**

(15 min.)
Have two students successively read the section, “Clear Pronoun Reference,” at the top of page 43 in FGptoGE.

Have Ss complete the three sentence exercises in Activity 10 on page 43.

Ask for three volunteers to read one of their versions.

**Rationale:** Non-specific pronoun references are a very common issue with Ss at this stage. This is a good exercise to develop awareness of the difficulty that vague pronoun references can cause for the reader.

**Homework Assignment 1: Activity 8 – Analyzing a Paragraph**

(5 min.)
Ask students to complete Activity 8 on pages 40 and 41 by first answering questions 1 and 2 about their own experience, then reading the Example Paragraph 11 and answering the subsequent questions in writing.

This homework will be reviewed at the next lesson.

**Rationale:** This activity assesses several target skills so far taught: recognition of topic sentence, controlling idea, purpose, and concluding sentence. It is beneficial for the Ss to continue to analyze examples that model the target skills.

**Homework Assignment 2: Activity 11 – Editing for Clear Pronoun References**

Have students complete Activity 11 on page 44 of FGStoGE at home and bring it to the next class for review.

**Rationale:** This exercise provides important practice for developing awareness of non-specific pronoun usage that is often apparent in Ss writing at this level.
Lesson 4 – Element 4: Unity

Goal:
Students will gain further understanding of the importance of paragraph unity and how to create it.

Objectives:
- Students gain greater ability to recognize when sentences in a paragraph do not relate to the topic sentence.
- Students gain further implicit understanding of the importance of a paragraph's purpose and of it having a topic sentence with a controlling idea.

Homework Review
(15 min.)
Collect Homework Assignment 1: Activity 8 – Analyzing a Paragraph. (Review and assess understanding outside of class)

Ask Ss six successive volunteers for their answers for Activity 11 on page 44 of FGStoGE. Check for agreement, alternative answers, check for understanding, and answer any questions about editing vague pronouns to provide better clarity.

Introduction: Paragraph Unity
(5 min.)
Ask a volunteer to read the first paragraph under the heading, “Element 4: Unity” on page 45 in FGPtoGE.

Ss: Unity in a paragraph means that all the sentences are related to the topic sentence and its controlling idea. Good writers stay on topic by making sure that each supporting sentence relates to the topic sentence.

Activity 12: Analyzing Unity
(10 min.)
Have Ss read the Example Paragraph 13 on page 45 of FGPtoGE and underline the sentence that does not belong. Ask Ss to peer-check with another S for agreement. Then check for agreement with the class as a whole. Discuss with any dissenters.

Activity 13: Maintaining Unity
(25 min.)
Have Ss read the questions and answers about Example Paragraph 13 on page 46 of FGPtoGE. When they have finished reading that, ask them to do Activity 13, Maintaining Unity, on page 47. They are to identify two sentences that do not belong in the paragraph and write the reasons that they do not belong.
Go around the room and check with students as they work on the exercise.

When most students have finished writing their sentences, ask for volunteers to come to the board and write theirs. Compare versions and briefly discuss.

**Rationale:** Problems of paragraph unity are common with Ss at this stage. After having directed Ss awareness to the importance of a paragraph having a specific purpose, maintaining focus of each supporting sentence upon the topic sentence and controlling idea becomes an important issue.

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**Reading and Discussion: Looking for Paragraph Unity Problems**

(20 min.)

Ask three volunteers to each read one paragraph of the section under the heading, “Paragraph Unity,” on page 8 in *Transitions*.

Then assign Ss to do Activity 1.2, “Looking for Paragraph Unity Problems,” on page 9. After they have had a few minutes to read the paragraph ask them to discuss the unity problems and how to fix them with a partner.

After a few minutes of pair discussion, ask for volunteers to state their identification of the problems and their suggestions for the fix. Check for understanding and general agreement from the class.

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**Homework Assignment 1: Five Proofreading Strategies**

(5 min.)

Assign Ss to read the list of “Five Proofreading Strategies” on page 50 of FGStoGE. In particular, emphasize the usefulness of Strategy #2, “Read your writing aloud.” Even though this course focuses on writing, emphasize that language is primarily a verbal phenomenon and that hearing language is a primary way that we learn a language. Therefore, it is important to hear what our language sounds like—even the language that we have written on the page. Hearing it can help us to judge how well it conveys what we want to say.

**Rationale:** Development of proofreading plays an important part in the ability for students to develop awareness for ways to improve their writing. It is surprising to see how often Ss will give a paper to a tutor or teacher to read that they themselves have not carefully proofread.

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**Homework Assignment 2: More Practice with Clear and Precise Words**

(5 min.)

Ask Ss to complete the *Clear and Precise Words* worksheet. They will practice choosing more interesting and precise words over dull and generalized words.

**Rationale:** This worksheet provides a very useful approach for vocabulary building for this unit as it helps to grow awareness of language that is specific and interesting, instead of being mundane and over-used.
Lesson 5 – Element 5: Coherence

Goal:
Ss will gain an understanding of the importance of coherence in their writing, and how to create it.

Objectives:
• Ss will understand the concept of logical order and how to enhance the reader's perception of it.
• Ss will develop and awareness of the importance of the repetition of key words.
• Students will gain practice and familiarity with transitional words and phrases.

Introduction and Review
(15 min.)
Go over the Clear and Precise Words worksheet homework assignment by calling on individual students for their responses to each of exercise questions. For each answer, check for agreement. When there is disagreement, check understanding of the application of the terms vague and general vs. precise and clear. Since many of these words will probably be new to the Ss, the deductive nature of this discussion should be useful. Urge Ss to also look up in their dictionaries any words they don't know and are interested in (at least a few!).

Activity 14: Sequencing Information
(15 min.)
Ask for a volunteer to read the short paragraph under the heading, Logical Order, on page 48 of FGStoGE.
Ask another student to read the instruction for Activity 14.
Instruct the students to number the five sentences in logical order.
Ask three students to write their sequences on the board (key letters only). Check for general agreement and discuss any disparities.

Repetition of Key Words
(10 min.)
Ask a volunteer to read the paragraph under the heading, Repetition of Key Words, on page 49 of FGStoGE.
Have Ss read the paragraph that they assembled in Activity 14 and then answer the three questions at the top of page 49.

Transitional Words and Phrases
(10 min.)
Ask volunteers to read each of the seven rows of examples in the table, “Commonly Used Transitional Words and Phrases,” on page 49.
**Worksheet: Transitions**

(15 min.)

Have the students work in pairs to decide upon the best transition for each of the example questions.

**Rationale:** Practice with using transitions can be achieved economically with a series of fill-in-the-blanks with multiple choice.

**What is Coherence: Reading and Discussion**

(25 min)

Ask two volunteers to read aloud the first two paragraphs under the heading, “What is Coherence,” on page 127 of *Transitions*.

Ask a third volunteer to read aloud, “Paragraph B,” on page 126.

Ask students if they agree that the paragraph is clearly written and easy to understand. Why does it flow so well? What is it that connects one idea (sentence) to the next? After some discussion, point out that the term “extended family” appears in almost every sentence. Point to other phrases such as, “The past...” “Now...” “For example...” “Therefore,...” “Also,...” “They also...”

Now ask a volunteer to read the indented paragraph on page 128 that starts, “One very important value...”

Ask a volunteer to read the paragraph that follows the previous.

Ask for opinions about why the paragraph doesn't have good coherence. How is the idea in one sentence connected to the idea in the next—or is it?

**Rationale:** It is a good idea to compare an example of clear coherence with writing that lacks it so that the contrast can be highlighted.

**Homework Assignment: Activity 17 – Writing Your Own Paragraph**

Instruct students to read and follow the instructions for Activity 17 on pages 52 and 53. Emphasize that they should follow the guidelines on page 53 with one exception: they do not have to use five vocabulary words from Activities 15 and 16—because they were not assigned—but rather, they should use five vocabulary words from the either the *Transitions* worksheet or the *Clear and Precise Words* worksheet.

Teacher will collect and read the paragraphs at the next class.

**Rationale:** This paragraph writing assignment is the culmination of the unit. The student is asked to use all of the principles that they have learned in the unit: consideration of the audience and person (1st, 2nd, or 3rd), whether to write in a more formal or informal style, focus on clarity, unity, and coherence (using logical order, repetition of key words, and transitions), and use clear and precise adjectives and sensory details.
Excerpts from

Transitions, An Interactive Reading, Writing, and Grammar Text
by Linda Bates
Writing about a Treasured Possession

Writing Assignment: Writing about a Treasured Possession

In this chapter, you will first review the basics of paragraph writing and then work through the stages of the writing process to develop a paragraph about your most prized possession. Before beginning your prewriting (the first stage in the writing process), discuss the following question with your classmates. Your answer to this question will become the focus of your paragraph.

Question: What is your most treasured possession and why is it special to you?

Write a paragraph about your most prized possession. Include specific details to describe the possession and explain to your reader why it means so much to you.

Before you begin writing your paragraph, study the following guidelines on paragraph writing.

Guidelines on Paragraph Writing

What is a Paragraph?

A paragraph is a group of sentences that develops one central point. A writer often directly states this point in a sentence near the beginning of the paragraph; this statement is called a topic sentence. The writer then develops the topic sentence more fully within the body of the paragraph.

Activity 1.1: Developing the Central Point

Have one member of the class read aloud this student paragraph about a prized possession. Then discuss the questions that follow it:

My most treasured possession is an old-fashioned gold pocket watch. My father gave me this watch when I left home to come to the United States to study. When I open the cover of the watch, I see the clock face with its numbers written in faded black roman numerals: I, II, III, and so forth. After I snap the cover shut, I look at the scratched and dull gold cover. Then I can faintly see the engraved picture of a bird in flight on the watch's cover. As I hold the watch in my hand, it reminds me of my grandfather Nemo, who first owned the watch. Most of all, it makes me think of my father, who with tears in his eyes, placed the watch lovingly in my hand as I prepared to make my first flight from home.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the central point of this paragraph?
2. How does the writer develop the central point in the body of the paragraph?

FORMAT OF A PARAGRAPH

The format of a paragraph is the way the sentences are arranged on the page. Examine the preceding student paragraph again. What do you notice about the format of the paragraph? Now answer the following questions about the format of the paragraph:

1. At the beginning of the first sentence in the paragraph, the writer indents or moves the beginning of the line to the right _________ spaces.
2. After the first line, the writer then begins each additional line ________ spaces from the left margin.

MARGINS

A margin is the space between the paragraph and the edge of the page. Whether you are writing by hand on notebook paper, typing on a sheet of typing paper, or writing on a word processor or computer, you need to leave 1-inch margins on the left-hand and right-hand sides of the page, as shown in the accompanying example.

PARAGRAPH UNITY

The first principle of paragraph writing is unity, which means that the entire paragraph should focus on one central point. As you write and then revise your paragraph on a prized possession, make certain that all of the sentences within it relate to the central point you are making.

When you are writing, your mind may not always stick to one point. As you begin writing about one idea, other related thoughts usually occur to you. Yet these related thoughts are sometimes not focused exactly on the central point you are trying to make in a paragraph. Instead, these digressions only lead you away from the central point.

In conversation, digressions are often acceptable. Your listeners will wait patiently, for instance, when you wander away from the point you are making, perhaps to tell a funny story that is not directly related to your central point. Most readers, however, and especially those in the academic world, are not as patient as listeners. Readers expect you to write unified paragraphs in which you stick to one central point throughout each paragraph.
that is, what makes the place special to you. Perhaps the place is important to you because of the memories attached to it or because it makes you feel comfortable when you go there to read or be alone.

**DESCRIPTIVE DETAILS**

Much of your central point can be communicated to the reader through descriptive details. As noted in Chapter 1, concrete and specific details appeal to the reader's five senses; they also bring to mind feelings. Thus, you want to choose selectively those descriptive details that convey your central point by bringing to the reader's mind vivid images, smells, tastes, and sounds, as well as feelings associated with the details.

**CONVEYING YOUR CENTRAL POINT TO THE READER**

**Announcing the Central Point Directly**

One way to convey the central point of your descriptive paragraph is to state directly why the place is special to you. You can do this by announcing the subject of your description early in the paragraph in a topic sentence—a sentence placed near the beginning of the paragraph that announces the topic or central point of the paragraph. Later in the paragraph, you can analyze or explain to the reader why the place is special.

**Activity 2.1: Using a Direct Statement of the Central Point**

Read this student paragraph and discuss the questions that follow it with your classmates:

When I became seven years old, my father made for my birthday a small playhouse that is now the most memorable place of my childhood in Korea. My father worked hard to build the house for three days, and I helped him as an assistant by looking for tools or holding a board while he drove a nail into it. After we finished putting the playhouse together, we painted the outside blue and made a little white door with a tiny bell hanging on it for visitors. Also, we covered its floor with green, soft carpet and opened two windows on each side of the walls. I loved to look through the windows to the outside world. Finally, I moved into the playhouse all of my favorite things, such as sketchbooks, color pens, comic books, and a bear doll. At that time, I really thought that nobody could get in my playhouse, so I felt very comfortable and secure when I was inside its shelter. When I felt sad or lonely, my playhouse was always there, so I ran into it. Now, I cannot have my playhouse anymore because of my age, but I keep the memories of my old playhouse in my heart.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In which sentence early in the paragraph does the writer announce the subject (the special place) to be described?

2. In which sentences does the writer explain why this place is special to him?

3. What is the central point the writer is making about the playhouse?

4. What details in the paragraph help convey the central point?

Suggesting the Central Point

Another way to convey the central point of your paragraph is to suggest it rather than announcing it directly. Early in the paragraph, you can tell your reader about the subject to be described; throughout the remainder of the paragraph, you then let the details convey your central point about the place, using only a small amount of explanation.

ACTIVITY 2.2: LETTING THE DETAILS SUGGEST THE POINT

After reading this student paragraph, discuss the questions that follow it with your classmates:

As a child growing up in China, I lived on a farm with my grandmother during the first seven years of my life. The main entrance to her two-story brick house was just one and a half blocks away from the rice fields; therefore, the adults and the children usually gathered around the front lounge eating meals, telling stories, and resting from work. The large apple tree, famous for its cool shade during the long hot summer, stood just a few feet away from the front of the house. Little kids like myself always sat under the shade of the tree while playing stones and cards. We loved to climb the apple tree to see if there were any apples to pick or birds’ eggs to take home. A very attractive part of my grandmother’s house was the open ceiling in the middle of the living room, which had a built-in pool just beneath it. Although the pool was used to save water for washing clothes, I liked to jump in it and pour water all over myself. Living on the farm allowed me to realize that the most precious and valuable things about living are to enjoy life and appreciate a happy family. Even though picking flowers, climbing trees, and running around the rice field may seem silly and awkward to some people, I feel that these were some of the best experiences I had to help identify myself.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In which sentence does the writer announce the subject of the paragraph?

2. What is the central point the writer is making about this subject?

3. In what ways do the specific details help convey the central point?

4. In which sentences does the writer directly explain why this place is special?
specific details in the evidence? If needed, what specific evidence could the writer add?
3. Analysis: Does the writer analyze the value, explaining clearly and thoroughly why he or she rejects or accepts it?

PARAGRAPH A

One value of the Taiwanese culture that I do not accept is the Taiwanese belief that boys are more important than girls. In Taiwanese families, this value shows itself in the way boys receive more attention from parents and grandparents, more education, and more privileges. Boys have the priority to dominate the great things in the world in Taiwan. Taiwanese people value boys more because in centuries of old, the position of the king was dominated by males. Also, after boys get married, they have to take care of their parents. Therefore, the parents think that the boy is more important than his sister. Yet I do not believe in this value of my culture because I feel that boys and girls should have the same level in society. They should both have the same opportunity to show their abilities in terms of education and to show their responsibility by the privileges they have. If men and women have equal rights, then our Taiwanese society will have more excellent and intelligent people in different jobs and schools. Therefore, Taiwan will have rapid improvement and a successful future.

PARAGRAPH B

One value of Korean culture that I thoroughly accept is the Korean people's belief in the importance of the extended family. In an extended family, several generations live together in a big house or in several small living units around a courtyard. The past origin of the extended family was for the family's protection from animals in the prehistoric age. Now, Koreans have kept the extended family in order to keep good relationships among relatives. For example, three or four generations usually live together in a house and create a rural village with just the same relatives (same last name). Therefore, when they work on their farm, they work easily and effectively by helping each other. I like this value very much because in the extended family there is intimacy between father and son in terms of love and obedience. Also, because of the extended family, Koreans do not have problems caring for old people, or with suicide, loneliness, or starving. Old people keep their position of authority within the extended family, and they are able to give good advice because of their plentiful experience. They also enjoy taking care of their grandsons and granddaughters. I believe that all these things are benefits of the extended family.
ACTIVITY 8.3: PEER RESPONSE

Now share your draft paragraph with your writing group. Use the following procedure:

1. One group member should begin by reading aloud his or her draft. The group should then discuss the paragraph in terms of the questions listed on the Peer Response Sheet for Activity 8.3 on page 325. Another group member should record the group's suggestions on the sheet.

2. After you are finished filling out the sheet, give it to the writer so that he or she can consider the comments when revising.

3. Repeat the procedure for each group member.

4. Then revise your own draft paragraph, keeping in mind the suggestions of your writing group.

Editing: Coherence

In earlier chapters, you have had considerable practice in writing paragraphs. Now, as you take on the more challenging task of writing about an abstract concept, you are ready to turn your attention to one of the more difficult principles of good writing—coherence. Studying coherence in this and the following chapter will help you to strengthen your writing.

WHAT IS COHERENCE?

The term coherence in written English means that a paragraph or group of sentences has a smoothly developing train of thought—that is, one idea follows from the previous idea and leads to the next idea. In other words, as the ideas advance, there is an emerging train of reasoning or thought being developed:

one idea ——— next idea ——— next idea

Read Paragraph B again on page 126. As you read, notice how the ideas advance smoothly from one sentence to the next. The ideas seem to develop or emerge logically, with one idea leading to the next idea. After reading this paragraph, you can say, "Yes, I see what the writer means by 'the extended
Worksheet

Simple Present Tense - Third Person Singular

Simple Present Tense is used generally for habitual or permanent situations.

Example: I work every morning.

The third person singular forms end with an "s."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>first</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>works</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third Person Singular Formation

1. Add "s" to the base verb or (infinitive) carry => works
2. Add "ies" to verbs ending in consonant + "y" carry => carries
3. Add "es" to verbs ending in "s, z, ch, sh, x" push => pushes
4. Irregular forms (no rules apply) have => has

TEST YOURSELF:

Select the correct form of the verb in parentheses for the following:

1. Mary and I __________ at the store. (work)
2. Ted, Rick and I __________ to school everyday. (walk)
3. Mr. and Mrs. Thatcher __________ letters daily. (write)
4. Bob and Ted __________ the lawn. (weed)
5. Tommy __________ at the garbage dump. (work)
6. The dog __________ over the fence. (jump)
7. President Obama __________ to Washington. (hurry)
8. The boy __________ television. (watch)
9. You __________ all of the time. (cry)
10. Jenny __________ all of the time. (cry)
TEST YOURSELF:

Select the correct spelling of the simple present verb for the following:

1. I ___________ cars. (fix)
2. He ___________ cars. (fix)
3. She ___________ cars. (fix)
4. They ___________ cars. (fix)
5. You ___________ cars. (fix)
6. Ted and I ___________ cars. (fix)
7. It ___________ cars. (fix)
8. Tony ___________ cars. (fix)
9. Habib ___________ cars. (fix)
10. We ___________ cars. (fix)

TEST YOURSELF:

Write the correct verb in the box in the following sentences:

1. (miss) he ____________
2. (miss) I ____________
3. (do) I ____________
4. (do) she ____________
5. (sit) it ____________
6. (agree) I ____________
7. (meet) you ____________
8. (play) John ____________
9. (boil) they ____________
10. (stay) my best friends ____________

NOTES:

Infinitive: a verb form (to work) that does not show the times of actions or events
Worksheet

**Clear and Precise Words**

*Directions*: Identify the adjective that is vague, unclear, boring, and general and that does not give a clear and precise description.

1.  
   a. complex  
   b. hard  
   c. intricate  

2.  
   a. large  
   b. tremendous  
   c. gigantic  

3.  
   a. evil  
   b. mean  
   c. malicious  

4.  
   a. filthy  
   b. dirty  
   c. dusty  

5.  
   a. immaculate  
   b. spotless  
   c. clean  

6.  
   a. look  
   b. stare  
   c. glare  

7.  
   a. ecstatic  
   b. cheerful  
   c. happy  

8.  
   a. break  
   b. shatter  
   c. destroy  

9.  
   a. mad  
   b. furious  
   c. irate  

10.  
    a. exhausted  
    b. tired  
    c. drowsy  

11.  
    a. obese  
    b. plump  
    c. fat  

12.  
    a. thin  
    b. lean  
    c. slender  

13.  
    a. clever  
    b. smart  
    c. wise  

14.  
    a. scour  
    b. disinfect  
    c. clean  

15.  
    a. ugly  
    b. hideous  
    c. homely  

16.  
    a. gorgeous  
    b. pretty  
    c. stunning  

17.  
    a. loud  
    b. deafening  
    c. thunderous  

18.  
    a. stroll  
    b. amble  
    c. walk  

19.  
    a. sprint  
    b. run  
    c. dash  

20.  
    a. frigid  
    b. chilly  
    c. cold
## Transitions

*Directions:* Choose the transition that best completes the sentence.

1. Open up the word processing program. ________, using the menu bar, create a new document.
   
   a. Consequently  
   b. Next  
   c. In addition

5. Pour the foamy coffee into the cup. ________, tap the side of the cup with a spoon to break up the bubbles.
   
   a. Namely  
   b. At the same time  
   c. And

2. Making a delicious chicken salad sandwich is not as difficult as you might think. ________, you should boil some chicken in water that has onions and salt.
   
   a. First  
   b. Therefore  
   c. For instance

6. The Speedster 2000 has an eight-cylinder engine. ________, it is the most powerful car on the market today.
   
   a. At the same time  
   b. In contrast  
   c. Without a doubt

3. Robert is very outgoing and loves to meet new people. ________, Eric is very introverted, and he truly dislikes meeting strangers.
   
   a. Thus  
   b. Obviously  
   c. On the other hand

7. It is really difficult to get in touch with Michael, so I sent him two e-mails, four voice-mails, and two text messages. ________, he answered me back!
   
   a. For instance  
   b. Namely  
   c. Finally

4. In regeneration, an animal can recreate a lost or damaged body part. The starfish, ________, is able to grow a completely new limb if it loses one.
   
   a. for example  
   b. by comparison  
   c. before

8. The experimental mouse, which was fed the growth hormone, grew enormously in a short amount of time. ________, the control mouse, which received a placebo, did not grow at all.
   
   a. In contrast  
   b. In addition  
   c. For these reasons
9. Jared has gotten seven parking tickets and three speeding tickets. ________, his parents will no longer allow him to use the family car.

a. In contrast
b. For these reasons
c. Without a doubt

10. The gymnasium received a large amount of damage when students met in it unsupervised. ________, students will no longer be able to use the gym without a teacher being present.

a. Next
b. For example
c. Therefore