

Exercise 7 Evaluating coherence within a paragraph

Read the following paragraphs. Which one has better coherence? What is the pattern of organization?

Paragraph 1

Soccer brings the world together in many ways. During the World Cup, people watch from all over the world. If they cannot see the game in person, they watch it on television. Many countries participate in the World Cup. People learn about the teams from different countries, and they learn something about those countries. When people watch the World Cup, they do not care if the game is on at 4:00 a.m. in their country. They will stay up to watch it. They learn about the flags from different countries because they see the fans waving the flags.

Paragraph 2

The best way to meet new friends is to take a class. First, all the people in a class have something in common. They all want to learn about the subject, so there is something to talk about. Second, everyone sees each other every time the class meets, so there are many opportunities to get to know others. Third, there are often activities and group projects, so students can work together. This is the best way to get to know people. By the end of the class, it is hard not to know your classmates.

W In Writing Process Part 4 you will . . .

- learn about simple sentence structure.
- learn about end punctuation and capitalization.
- learn about fragments and run-on sentences.

Exercise 6 Identifying patterns of coherence

Read the paragraphs below. Then circle the word that best describes the paragraph's organization.

Paragraph 1

My favorite restaurant is in an old house. It is very convenient for my family to go there because it is in my neighborhood. We can drive, or if the evening is pleasant, we can walk there. It has a nice atmosphere and friendly service. We know some of the waiters and waitresses. We enjoy talking to them because they ask us about our children. We especially like the decorations. The walls are soft yellow, and fresh flowers sit on the tables. Finally, the food is excellent. The cook is the owner, and he makes delicious dishes with fresh ingredients. We always enjoy our meals at this great restaurant.

Time

Space

Order of Importance

Paragraph 2

My favorite restaurant is in an old house. My husband and I enjoy eating there on summer evenings. We usually walk from our house so we can enjoy our neighbors' gardens and get a little bit of exercise. The afternoon sun shines through the trees, but it is not too bright. We arrive at dusk. If we are lucky, we can sit outside. The waiter brings a basket of warm bread and cold drinks. We have an appetizer or a salad while the sun goes down. Then the waiter lights the candles while we enjoy the main course. By the time we finish dessert, it is nighttime. We walk home slowly, feeling full but happy in the moonlight.

Time

Space

Order of Importance

Exercise 5 Developing unity

Write two supporting sentences for each of the following topic sentences. Then exchange books with a partner, and check your partner's sentences for unity.

1. Computers are useful in many ways.

They are great for doing research on the Web.

Students can use computers for writing research papers.

2. Good restaurants have certain important characteristics.

3. People in my country always eat a healthy breakfast.

4. There are activities in a park for family members of all ages.

5. There are many ways to show respect to older people.

6. When you go camping, there are some things you should take with you.

Rhetorical Focus

Coherence Within a Paragraph

In addition to unity, a paragraph must also have **coherence**. This means that the supporting details are organized in a logical way.

Writers often use **time**, **space**, or **order of importance** to present the supporting information in a paragraph coherently. The following example is organized by space.

When you are close to the airport, you will see many signs for the different terminals. After you pass the signs, you will drive over a hill. The airport is on the other side of the hill. On your right, you will see the international terminal. This terminal is two stories tall. The front is all glass. On the left, you will see the domestic terminals.

6. My city is famous because of its architecture.
- ___ a. We have old red-tiled buildings around the main square.
 - ___ b. The restaurants near the beach are famous for their great lobster.
 - ___ c. The city has tree-lined boulevards with beautiful limestone buildings and bronze statues.
 - ___ d. A famous university is located on the side of a mountain and can be seen from all over the city.

Exercise 4 Editing for unity

Read the paragraph below, and find the three sentences that do not relate to the controlling idea. Cross them out.

Life in a New Place

Thai people living in Dallas, Texas, must make many adjustments to be like Texans. First of all, they must learn to eat many new kinds of food. For example, Texans eat hamburgers and pizza because these foods are inexpensive and easy to find. However, most Thai people like spicy dishes made with green or red curry. In addition, in Dallas, Thai people can meet people from other countries who have many different cultures and languages. For example, more than 30 percent of the population in Dallas is Mexican. Another 2 percent of the population is Vietnamese. More than 5 percent of Dallas's population is originally from Pakistan. Pakistan is also an interesting country to visit. The weather in Dallas requires another kind of adjustment. Like Thailand, Dallas has many months of hot weather, but Dallas is not as humid as Thailand. However, Dallas also has cold winters, which are strange for Thai people. Sometimes it even snows in Dallas. I never saw snow in Thailand. Before I came to the United States, I had worked in a bank. There are banks in Dallas, too. Although life is different in Texas, most Thai people find Dallas to be an interesting and exciting place to live.

Exercise 3 Recognizing unity in supporting sentences

Read the following topic sentences. Underline the controlling idea in each topic sentence. Then check (✓) each sentence that supports the topic sentence.

1. I am an organized person.
 - a. My desk is always neat and tidy.
 - b. I have a system for organizing my papers, and I can always find what I need.
 - c. I feel uncomfortable when I am in a strange place.
 - d. My friends always want me to help them put their closets in order.
2. Twenty Questions is an easy game to play when you are traveling.
 - a. One person must think of a person, place, or object.
 - b. Sometimes people travel by car and sometimes by train or airplane.
 - c. It is very important to travel with people that you get along with.
 - d. The other players take turns asking questions that can only be answered "yes" or "no."
3. Tea and coffee are very different from each other.
 - a. Coffee has more caffeine than tea does.
 - b. Coffee and tea both have caffeine.
 - c. People enjoy tea and coffee during social events.
 - d. Tea is much more common around the world than coffee is.
4. People should not buy expensive cars.
 - a. Some people spend a fourth of their income on a car payment, which is unnecessary.
 - b. Cars do not increase in value, so they are not good investments.
 - c. Car companies are always looking for ways to make cars safer on the road.
 - d. People who do not pay cash must also pay interest, so they lose even more money when they buy an expensive car.
5. It is easy to get a sports injury.
 - a. Many people enjoy sports.
 - b. Runners often have problems with their ankles and knees.
 - c. Basketball players can break their fingers or get knocked over by other players.
 - d. Many people join gyms but never go there to exercise.

Exercise 1 Reading a student paragraph

Read the paragraph. Where did the pink sheep come from?

The Pink Sheep

Many years ago, a special gift came to me in an interesting way. When I was a small boy, I enjoyed playing in my yard. One day, I found a hole in the wall of my yard. It was near the ground, so I could not see through the hole, but I knew that behind the wall was my neighbor's yard. I wanted to see that yard, so I used rocks to make the hole wider. One day, when I was trying to break through the wall, a small hand appeared from the hole. The hand was holding a rubber sheep. The sheep was pink, and it had wide eyes. I took the rubber sheep. Then I pushed my favorite wooden truck through the hole to give to the child on the other side. I bought the truck with money I received for the New Year. Years later, when I was old enough to go out by myself, I went around the corner to find the child who gave me that special gift, but nobody was in that house. Another neighbor said that a girl used to live there and that she was the same age as I was. I never found her, but her gift still has a special meaning for me.

Exercise 2 Examining the student paragraph

Respond to the questions and statements below.

1. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.
2. After you read the topic sentence, what did you expect the supporting ideas to explain? Write your answer in your own words.

3. One sentence in the paragraph is off-topic. It does not support the unity of the paragraph. Draw a line through it.
4. What other supporting sentences would you add to the paragraph?