

ENGL210/CA - WEEK 3 - DAY 2

INTRODUCTION TO ESSAY WRITING

What is missing from this paragraph?

- One of my favourite hobbies is travelling. I decided to get a job that paid me to travel because I just couldn't afford my habit. I worked for a company called Offroad where I led bicycle trips. It was a really hard job. I got to spend two months living and working in France's wine country. I went to the south and stood on the red carpet where they hold the Cannes Film Festival. Riding bikes all summer was great, and travelling around France was incredible. The job was too much work and not enough play. While it fed my travelling addiction, I knew that job wasn't for me.



TRANSITIONS

- ▶ **Transitions are words or phrases that link one idea to the next; they are signals that help the reader follow your thoughts. Transitions are used to connect ideas within paragraphs and when leading from one paragraph to the next.**

TYPES OF TRANSITIONS

- ▶ A transition can be
 - ▶ A single word
 - ▶ A phrase
 - ▶ A sentence
 - ▶ An entire paragraph
- ▶ All function the same way: a transition either directly summarizes the content of a preceding sentence, section, etc., or it helps the reader anticipate or comprehend **NEW** information that you're going to present.

TRANSITION MODES

TRANSITION CATEGORIES

- 1. To show a time relationship: first, second, third, next, before, during, after, now, then, finally, last.**
- 2. To add an idea or example: in addition, also, another, furthermore, similarly, for example, for instance.**
- 3. To show contrast: although, but, however, instead, nevertheless, on the other hand, in contrast, on the contrary.**

CATEGORIES

4. **To show comparison:** in the same way, similarly, likewise, as, also.
5. **To show cause-effect:** as a result, consequently, because, since, therefore, thus.
6. **To show conclusion:** as a result, therefore, finally, last, in conclusion, in summary, to sum up, all in all.
7. **To clarify:** in other words, for instance, that is, put another way.

What is missing from this paragraph?

- One of my favourite hobbies is travelling. I decided to get a job that paid me to travel because I just couldn't afford my habit. I worked for a company called Offroad where I led bicycle trips. It was a really hard job. I got to spend two months living and working in France's wine country. I went to the south and stood on the red carpet where they hold the Cannes Film Festival. Riding bikes all summer was great, and travelling around France was incredible. The job was too much work and not enough play. While it fed my travelling addiction, I knew that job wasn't for me.

That's Better

- One of my favourite hobbies is travelling. **Therefore**, I decided to get a job that paid me to travel because I just couldn't afford my habit. I worked for a company called Offroad where I led bicycle trips. It was a really hard job. I got to spend two months living and working in France's wine country. **In addition**, I went to the south and stood on the red carpet where they hold the Cannes Film Festival. Riding bikes all summer was great, and travelling around France was incredible; **however**, the job was too much work and not enough play. **Thus**, while it fed my travelling addiction, I knew that job wasn't for me.



Coherence



IS THIS PARAGRAPH COHERENT? WHY?

I don't wish to deny that the flattened, minuscule head of the large-bodied "stegosaurus" houses little brain from our subjective, top-heavy perspective, but I do wish to assert that we should not expect more of the beast. First of all, large animals have relatively smaller brains than related, small animals. The correlation of brain size with body size among kindred animals (all reptiles, all mammals, for example) is remarkably regular. As we move from small to large animals, from mice to elephants or small lizards to Komodo dragons, brain size increases, but not so fast as body size. In other words, bodies grow faster than brains, and large animals have low ratios of brain weight to body weight. In fact, brains grow only about two-thirds as fast as bodies. Since we have no reason to believe that large animals are consistently stupider than their smaller relatives, we must conclude that large animals require relatively less brain to do as well as smaller animals. If we do not recognize this relationship, we are likely to underestimate the mental power of very large animals, dinosaurs in particular.

PARAGRAPHS AND COHERENCE

I don't wish to deny that the flattened, minuscule head of the large-bodied "stegosaurus" houses little brain from our subjective, top-heavy perspective, **BUT** I do wish to assert that we should not expect more of the beast. **FIRST OF ALL**, large animals have relatively smaller brains than related, small animals. The correlation of brain size with body size among kindred animals (all reptiles, all mammals, **FOR EXAMPLE**) is remarkably regular. **AS** we move from small to large animals, from mice to elephants or small lizards to Komodo dragons, brain size increases, **BUT** not so fast as body size. **IN OTHER WORDS**, bodies grow faster than brains, **AND** large animals have low ratios of brain weight to body weight. **IN FACT**, brains grow only about two-thirds as fast as bodies. **SINCE** we have no reason to believe that large animals are consistently stupider than their smaller relatives, we must conclude that large animals require relatively less brain to do as well as smaller animals. **IF** we do not recognize this relationship, we are likely to underestimate the mental power of very large animals, dinosaurs in particular.

PARALLEL STRUCTURE

- ▶ In the paragraph about scientists and the sense of sight, several sentences in the body of the paragraph have been constructed in a parallel way. The parallel structures (which have been emphasized) help the reader see that the paragraph is organized as a set of examples of a general statement:

PARALLELISM

SCIENTISTS HAVE LEARNED TO SUPPLEMENT THE SENSE OF SIGHT IN NUMEROUS WAYS. In front of the tiny pupil of the eye they put, on Mount Palomar, a great monacle 200 inches in diameter, and with it see 2000 times farther into the depths of space. Or they look through a small pair of lenses arranged as a microscope into a drop of water or blood, and magnify by as much as 2000 diameters the living creatures there, many of which are among man's most dangerous enemies. Or, if we want to see distant happenings on earth, they use some of the previously wasted electromagnetic waves to carry television images which they re-create as light by whipping tiny crystals on a screen with electrons in a vacuum. Or they can bring happenings of long ago and far away as colored motion pictures, by arranging silver atoms and color-absorbing molecules to force light waves into the patterns of original reality. Or if we want to see into the center of a steel casting or the chest of an injured child, they send the information on a beam of penetrating short-wave X rays, and then convert it back into images we can see on a screen or photograph. **THUS ALMOST EVERY TYPE OF ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION YET DISCOVERED HAS BEEN USED TO EXTEND OUR SENSE OF SIGHT IN SOME WAY.**

PARALLELISM

SCIENTISTS HAVE LEARNED TO SUPPLEMENT THE SENSE OF SIGHT IN NUMEROUS WAYS. In front of the tiny pupil of the eye **they put**, on Mount Palomar, a great monacle 200 inches in diameter, and with it see 2000 times farther into the depths of space. **Or they look** through a small pair of lenses arranged as a microscope into a drop of water or blood, and magnify by as much as 2000 diameters the living creatures there, many of which are among man's most dangerous enemies. **Or**, if we want to see distant happenings on earth, **they use** some of the previously wasted electromagnetic waves to carry television images which they re-create as light by whipping tiny crystals on a screen with electrons in a vacuum. **Or they can bring** happenings of long ago and far away as colored motion pictures, by arranging silver atoms and color-absorbing molecules to force light waves into the patterns of original reality. **Or** if we want to see into the center of a steel casting or the chest of an injured child, **they send** the information on a beam of penetrating short-wave X rays, and then convert it back into images we can see on a screen or photograph. **THUS ALMOST EVERY TYPE OF ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION YET DISCOVERED HAS BEEN USED TO EXTEND OUR SENSE OF SIGHT IN SOME WAY.**

HOW TO ACHIEVE COHERENCE

- ▶ **Repeat key words or phrases:** Particularly in paragraphs in which you define or identify an important idea or theory, be consistent in how you refer to it. This consistency and repetition will bind the paragraph together and help your reader understand your definition or description.

HOW TO ACHIEVE COHERENCE

- ▶ **Create parallel structures:** Parallel structures are created by constructing two or more phrases or sentences that have the same grammatical structure and use the same parts of speech. By creating parallel structures you make your sentences clearer and easier to read. In addition, repeating a pattern in a series of consecutive sentences helps your reader see the connections between ideas.

HOW TO ACHIEVE COHERENCE

- ▶ **Be consistent in point of view, verb tense, and number:** Consistency in point of view, verb tense, and number is a subtle but important aspect of coherence. If you shift from the more personal "you" to the impersonal "one," from past to present tense, or from "a man" to "they," for example, you make your paragraph less coherent. Such inconsistencies can also confuse your reader and make your argument more difficult to follow.

HOW TO ACHIEVE COHERENCE

- ▶ **Use transition words or phrases between sentences:** Transitional expressions emphasize the relationships between ideas, so they help readers follow your train of thought or see connections that they might otherwise miss or misunderstand. The Dinosaur paragraph shows how carefully chosen transitions can lead the reader smoothly from the introduction to the conclusion of the paragraph.



IN-CLASS WRITING:

EDITING EXERCISE #2