

ACADEMIC ESSAY WRITING Lecture 2: Notes

VIDEO CONTENTS

Video 2A

- Body paragraph structure
 - Topic sentence
 - Points
 - Supporting ideas
 - Concluding sentence

Video 2B

- Cohesion / Coherence
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- Continuing ideas across sentences
- Pronouns
- Useful word lists

Video 2C

- Organising paragraph lengths
- Common phrases
- Pronouns revisited
- Academic language revisited

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE YOUR NEXT CLASS



1. Watch each video and complete the associated tasks.
2. Read the following pages and complete associated tasks.

EXERCISES

1. Write the missing words in the box to show the four main components of a body paragraph.

T
P
S
C

T _____

P _____ 1

S _____

S _____

P _____ 2

S _____

S _____

2. Read the body paragraph then follow the instructions below.

Australia has several species of lethal spiders. The Red-back is actually quite an attractive spider, but do not be misled. Victims can die without immediate medical attention. Symptoms of a bite can include intense pain which increases in intensity, fever, vomiting, stomach pain, weakness and vomiting. The young and the elderly are most at risk. The Funnel-web spider is Australia’s deadliest and is thought by many to be the deadliest in the world. It is found largely in New South Wales and is only 2 – 3 centimetres in size. Their poison can attack the human nervous system and affect all the organs. If a victim gets to hospital quickly and receives an antivenom, they can make a full recovery. The Trap door spider gets its name from the shape of its web which is generally underground and has a door-like opening. Although they can cause pain, there are no recorded cases of death after a bite. Most Australian spiders are not aggressive and they only attack when they sense danger.

3. Draw boxes around the four main components of the paragraph above and label them. Note that some of the components are repeated.

Connectors

<i>and, also, both, besides</i>	They add information
<i>but, however, on the other hand, although</i>	They show contrast
<i>because, as a result of</i>	They show results
<i>although, despite, even so, in spite of</i>	They show an exception
<i>firstly, secondly, previously, subsequently, since</i>	They show the order of ideas
<i>specifically, in particular</i>	They give an example or illustrate a point
<i>in the same way, similarly, just as ... so</i>	They show similarities
<i>if, unless, even if</i>	They show a condition

EXERCISES

4. Choose the best word/s to fill the gap.

- a. _____ she was late, she missed the beginning of the exam. (*if, unless, because*)
- b. _____ it rains, they'll cancel the activity. (*if, unless, in spite of*)
- c. I like ice-cream, _____ I love chocolate ice-cream. (*unless, despite, in particular*)
- d. Children need to be treated with respect _____ adults do. (*similarly, in the same way, even if*)
- e. I'm going to study in England _____ I get a better offer from Australia. (*because, and, unless*)
- f. Green would be great for the walls, _____ maybe cream would make it much lighter. (*previously, also, on the other hand*)
- g. _____ students could enroll in whatever subjects they liked, but now their options are much more limited. (*both, previously, specifically*)
- h. You'll enjoy the walk, _____ it'll be good for you. (*particularly, unless, besides*)
- i. She went to the movies _____ her mother's insistence that she stay home. (*in spite of, even if, specifically*)
- j. _____ Trent and Michel enjoy fashion shopping more than they enjoy studying! (*both, subsequently, as a result of*)

5. Choose the best word/s to fill the gap.

- a. I have to buy a lot of new text books this semester. _____ are mainly related to chemistry. (*The books, The text books, The new text books*)
- b. English classes are usually in the afternoon. _____ often start at 2pm. (*English classes, The class, Classes*)
- c. Susi would make a good comedian. _____ can make excellent money. (*Comedians, Comedian, The comedians*)
- d. Rubbish being thrown in the rivers is causing devastating environmental damage. _____ is affecting the mangroves and marine life. (*Devastating environmental damage, The damage, The devastating environmental damage*)
- e. When you are suffering ill-health a good kind of therapy is foot reflexology. _____ helps to get energy flowing through affected internal organs. (*The therapy, Foot reflexology therapy, The foot reflexology*)

Pronouns

Subject pronouns	Object pronouns	Possessive adjectives	Possessive pronouns
I	me	my	mine
you	you	your	yours
he	him	his	his
she	her	her	hers
it	it	its	its
we	us	our	ours
you	you	your	yours
they	them	their	theirs

EXERCISE**6. Choose the best word/s to fill the gap.**

- a. I have to buy a lot of new text books this semester. _____ are mainly related to chemistry. **(Their, It, They)**
- b. English classes are usually in the afternoon. _____ often start at 2pm. **(Theirs, Them, They)**
- c. Susi would make a good comedian. _____ can make excellent money. **(Hers, It, They)**
- d. Rubbish being thrown in the rivers is causing devastating environmental damage. _____ is affecting the mangroves and marine life. **(They, It, Them)**
- e. When you are suffering ill-health a good kind of therapy is foot reflexology. _____ helps to get energy flowing through affected internal organs. **(It, They, Can)**

More Connectors

addition	again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, last, moreover, next, second, still, too
comparison	also, in the same way, likewise, similarly
contrast	although, and yet, at the same time, but at the same time, despite that, even so, even though, for all that, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, regardless, still, though, yet
concession	granted, naturally, of course
emphasis	certainly, indeed, in fact, of course
example/illustration	after all, as an illustration, even, for example, for instance, in conclusion, indeed, in fact, in other words, in short, it is true, of course, namely, specifically, that is, to illustrate, thus, truly
summary	all in all, altogether, as has been said, finally, in brief, in conclusion, in other words, in particular, in short, in simpler terms, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to put it differently, to summarize
time sequence	after a while, afterward, again, also, and then, as long as, at last, at length, at that time, before, besides, earlier, eventually, finally, formerly, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, in the past, last, lately, meanwhile, moreover, next, now, presently, second, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, still, subsequently, then, thereafter, too, until, until now, when
place/direction	above, below, father on, nearby, to the right
relationships	therefore, so, consequently, for this reason, since

Table from: <https://gustavus.edu/writingcenter/handoutdocs/cohesion.php>

Academic Language

NON-ACADEMIC	ACADEMIC
kids	children
prang	accident
scream ahead	progress
won't	will not
don't	do not
can't	can not
car crash	car accident
couldn't care less	was not concerned
sparks	initiates
keen	enthusiastic
looked into	investigated
got	became / received
sci-fi	science fiction
out of work	unemployed
a hit	successful
turned down	rejected
a long shot	improbable
day after tomorrow	Sunday 25th may
thrashing	overwhelming defeat
smart	intelligent

PRINT THE FOLLOWING PAGES. YOU DON'T NEED TO COMPLETE THE ACTIVITIES NOW. YOUR TEACHER MAY ASK YOU TO DO THEM IN CLASS OR MAY SET THEM AS HOMEWORK.

The Concluding Sentence

A concluding sentence serves two purposes:

1. It signals the end of the paragraph.
2. It leaves the reader with the most important ideas to remember. It can do this in two ways:
 - By summarizing the main points of the paragraph
 - OR
 - By repeating the topic sentence in different words

A paragraph does not always need a concluding sentence. For single paragraphs, especially long ones, a concluding sentence is helpful to the reader because it is a reminder of the important points. However, a concluding sentence is not needed for every paragraph in a multiparagraph essay.

You may want to begin your concluding sentence with one of the signals in the list on page 14. You may also end a paragraph without a formal signal or perhaps by using an expression like those in the column on the right.

14 Part I | Writing a Paragraph

End-of-Paragraph Signals Followed by a Comma

Finally,
In brief,
In conclusion,
Indeed,
In short,

Lastly,
Therefore,
Thus,
To sum up,

End-of-Paragraph Signals Not Followed by a Comma

The evidence suggests that . . .
There can be no doubt that . . .
These examples show that . . .
We can see that . . .

Notes

1. Many writing teachers think *In conclusion* and *In summary* are overused and so will not want you to use them.
2. Do not use the phrase *At last* as an end-of-paragraph signal. *At last* means “at the end of a long period of time,” as in this sentence: *At last, you’ve come home.*

The models that follow demonstrate the two ways of writing a concluding sentence. As you read them, determine which concluding sentence summarizes the main points and which concluding sentence repeats the topic sentence in different words.

MODELS

Concluding Sentences

Greeting Cards

Have you noticed how many different kinds of greeting cards you can buy these days? In the old days, the local drugstore had one rack displaying maybe five or six basic kinds of cards. You could walk into the store and choose an appropriate card in five minutes or less. Nowadays, however, the display space for greeting cards is as big as a soccer field, and it may take an hour or two to hunt down exactly the right card with exactly the right message. There are at least 30 categories of birthday cards alone: birthday cards for different ages, from different ages, for different relatives, from different relatives, for different genders, from different genders, from a couple, from the office, for dog owners, for cat owners, and so on. There are cards for getting a job, for retiring from a job, for acquiring a pet, for losing a pet, for becoming engaged, for breaking up. There are also greeting cards to send for no reason—“Thinking of you” or “Just because” cards. The newest type of card is the “encouragement card.” An encouragement card offers comforting thoughts and helpful advice to someone who is sad or distressed in these troubled times. In short, there is now a greeting card for every possible life event and for a few nonevents as well.

THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE

A Hawaiian Legend

Native people create legends to explain unusual phenomena in their environment. A legend from the Hawaiian island of Kauai explains how the naupaka flower, a flower that grows on beaches there, got its unusual shape. The flower looks like half a small daisy—there are petals on one side only. The legend says that the marriage of two young lovers on the island was opposed by both sets of parents. The parents found the couple together on a beach one day, and to prevent them from being together, one of the families moved to the mountains, separating the young couple forever. As a result, the naupaka flower separated into two halves; one half moved to the mountains, and the other half stayed near the beach. This story is a good example of a legend invented by native people to interpret the world around them.

Writing Technique Questions

1. In which paragraph does the concluding sentence summarize the main points of the paragraph, which are not specifically stated in the topic sentence?
2. In which paragraph does the concluding sentence paraphrase (repeat in different words) the topic sentence?
3. Circle the conclusion signals in each paragraph.

Note: Never introduce a new idea in the concluding sentence.

INCORRECT

In conclusion, we now have more variety of greeting cards to choose from, but they are also becoming very expensive. (*This is a new idea.*)

INCORRECT

In conclusion, there are many other legends like this one in Hawaii. (*This is a new idea.*)

PRACTICE 5**Writing
Concluding
Sentences**

Step 1 Underline the topic sentence in each paragraph.

Step 2 Add a good concluding sentence to each paragraph. You may either paraphrase the topic sentence or summarize the main points.

Step 3 Practice using end-of-paragraph signals by starting each concluding sentence with one.

Paragraph 1

You can be a good conversationalist by being a good listener. When you are conversing with someone, pay close attention to the speaker's words while looking at his or her face. Show your interest by smiling and nodding. Furthermore, do not interrupt while someone is speaking; it is impolite to do so. If you have a good story, wait until the speaker is finished. Also, watch your body language; it can affect your communication whether you are the speaker or the listener. For instance, do not sit slumped in a chair or make nervous hand and foot movements. Be relaxed and bend your body slightly forward to show interest in the person and the conversation.

THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE

16 Part 1 | Writing a Paragraph

Paragraph 2

Modern communication technology is driving workers in the corporate world crazy. They feel buried under the large number of messages they receive daily. In addition to telephone calls, office workers receive dozens of e-mail and voice mail messages daily. In one company, in fact, managers receive an average of 100 messages a day. Because they do not have enough time to respond to these messages during office hours, it is common for them to do so in the evenings or on weekends at home.

Review

These are the important points covered in this chapter:

1. A good topic sentence
 - is a complete sentence with a subject, a verb, and a controlling idea.
 - is neither too general nor too specific. It clearly states the main idea of the paragraph but does not include specific details.
 - is usually the first sentence in the paragraph.
2. Good supporting sentences
 - explain or prove the topic sentence.
 - are specific and factual.
 - can be examples, statistics, or quotations.
3. A good concluding sentence
 - signals the end of the paragraph.
 - summarizes the important points briefly or restates the topic sentence in different words.

VOCABULARY FOR LINKING

Transition Signals for Logical Division of Ideas

Transition signals for logical division essays include many that you may already know.

Transition Words and Phrases	
first, first of all, second, third, etc. next, last, finally also, in addition, moreover, furthermore	First , excessive government spending can lead to inflation. In addition , unrestrained consumer borrowing can cause inflationary tendencies. Finally , an increase in the supply of paper money gives rise to inflation.
Coordinators	
and both . . . and not only . . . but also	Both an increase in the supply of paper money and unrestrained consumer borrowing can cause inflationary tendencies. To lose weight, one must not only exercise regularly but also eat wisely.
Others	
the first cause, reason, factor, etc. the/a second problem, result, advantage, etc. one problem, reason, important factor, etc. another way, reason, disadvantage, etc. an additional problem, result, etc. in addition to math and science, . . .	A second cause is an increase in the supply of paper money. Regular exercise is one way to get fit and lose weight. In addition to government spending, unrestrained consumer borrowing can cause inflationary tendencies.

VOCABULARY FOR LINKING

Chapter 4 | From Paragraph to Essay 69

Transition Signals between Paragraphs

Linking paragraphs with transitions helps your reader see how the subtopics are related. Link one paragraph to the next by adding a transition to the topic sentence of the second paragraph. This transition may be a single word, a phrase, or a dependent clause that repeats or summarizes the main idea in the preceding paragraph.

Study the following model, and notice how the paragraphs are linked.

MODEL**Paragraph Transitions**

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

Aggressive Drivers

The number of vehicles on freeways and streets is growing at an alarming rate. This increase of motor vehicles is creating hazardous conditions. Moreover, drivers are in such a rush to get to their destinations that many become angry or impatient with other motorists who are too slow or who are in their way. Aggressive drivers react foolishly toward others in several dangerous ways.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

TRANSITION WORDS

One way an angry driver may react is to cut off¹ another motorist.
(+ supporting sentences) _____

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

TRANSITION WORDS

Another way is to tailgate² the other car. (+ supporting sentences)

BODY PARAGRAPH 3

TRANSITION PHRASE

In addition to cutting off and tailgating other cars, aggressive drivers often use rude language or gestures to show their anger. (+ supporting sentences) _____

BODY PARAGRAPH 4

TRANSITION CLAUSE

Although law enforcement authorities warn motorists against aggressive driving, the number who act out their angry impulses has not declined. (+ supporting sentences)

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

To conclude, aggressive drivers are endangering everyone because they create hazardous conditions by acting and driving foolishly. They should control their anger and learn to drive safely. After all, the lives they save could be their own.

¹cut off: drive in front of

²tailgate: drive closely behind or on the tail of another car

EXAMPLE ESSAY

There are some problems with this essay. Can you see what they are? Write a list of the problems.

Many offenders commit more crimes after serving the first punishment. Why is this happening, and what measures can be taken to tackle this problem?

It is true that some criminals commit crimes again after they have been punished. While there are several reasons for this alarming trend, some effective measures can be taken by governments to tackle this problem.

There are two main reasons for re-offenders. Firstly, the prison system can make the situation worse. Criminals put together in prison and they make friends with other offenders. While they are locked up in prison, they do not have much to do there, and they would exchange information about what they have done before they came to the prison or they may plan crimes with other inmates. Secondly, offenders often do not have any other means of earning money. They are poor, uneducated and lacking skills needed to maintain a job. Also, a criminal record makes finding a job difficult as people usually avoid hiring ex-convict.

To solve this problem, governments should focus on rehabilitation of criminals rather than punishment. Above all, prisons need vocational training which makes inmates to prepare for life outside the prison. They can learn practical skills such as computer programming, car maintenance and graphic design. In this way, they can be hired for a position that requires this certain knowledge and skills. Community service is another way to reform offenders, Rather than being locked up in prison with inmates, offenders can help society and become useful to their local community, and these activities would eliminate the negative influence that prisons can have.

In conclusion, it is true the re-offenders are one of the problems in our community; it can be solved by focusing rehabilitation rather than punishment itself.

268 words

<http://www.ielts-blog.com/ielts-writing-samples/ielts-essays-band-8/ielts-essay-topic-why-do-criminals-commit-another-offence-after-being-punished/>

COHESION EXERCISE

Read this passage about **inspiring teachers**. Insert a subject, repeated subject or pronoun into each gap. Eg. What will the first gap be? - Inspiring teachers? They? People? Them?

_____ who are highly valued by their students have two outstanding characteristics. Firstly, _____ have excellent communication skills. Therefore _____ are able to arouse great interest in whatever _____ teach. Another important characteristic of _____ is that _____ have enormous patience. This means _____ never appear threatening to their students.

ESSAY COMPLETION EXERCISE

Write an introduction and body paragraph for this essay.

Examine how changes in technology related to phones and computers over the last 40 years have affected the lives of people today. Describe the changes and analyse the effects.

INTRODUCTION

.....

BODY
PARAGRAPH 1

Today's handphones have transformed lives in several ways. Forty years ago landline phones were the only choice. Many households could not afford the technology and were reliant on public phones. This meant that it was difficult to contact people. At best there would be one line into a home and maybe a few lines into a business. However, by the early part of this century things were changing. Research shows that there were almost 400,000 handphones in Brunei by December 2007 (Masters 2009). Thus there was one handphone for every person in the country. Numbers are similar in many other countries. Today this means that parents can easily contact their children, friends can let others know if they will be late for a social meeting and businessmen and women can contact clients to check on details. Today people take this easy contactability for granted, yet only 40 years ago it would have seemed like science fiction. Another important contribution made by today's handphones is their multi-functionality. They are entertainment devices, calculators, message machines, portals to the internet and importantly they enable easy social networking. They have changed the way people spend their spare time, the way they communicate and have provided easy access to information.

BODY
PARAGRAPH 2

.....

BODY
PARAGRAPH 3

Handphones and modern computers have brought great benefits, but they have also come at a cost. In the age before instant contact, instant information and instant entertainment, the pace of life was slower. Instead of individually spending time on their devices, family members would spend time together talking, cooking, planning and playing. It is not unusual today to see four or five young people or even a family walking together with each person on their own phone texting or speaking to someone who is in another location. Today meals and conversations are often interrupted by personal phone calls. The art of conversation is being lost. People are too busy checking their phones and computers for messages to be able to spend time simply listening to one another in real life. Another important issue related to technology is the possible link between cancers and the use of handphones (Boyer, 2009). A link has not yet been conclusively proven, but newspapers carry stories from time to time outlining research in this area.

CONCLUSION

Thus it appears that modern technology has both positive and negative impacts on our lives. While people have instant access to world events and easy access to friends, family and business colleagues and clients, there are some downsides. First the impact the devices have on face to face relationships with family and friends is changing as people rely more on their electronic devices. Secondly there are possible health issues that come with constant exposure to handphones and computers. It could be expected that in the future the devices we know today will have been replaced by as yet unimagined technologies, but hopefully issues related to health and interpersonal relationships will have been addressed.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Boyer, S.A., (2009) *Technology is Killing You*. NY: Barrett Inc.
Masters, K., (2009) *Brunei Leads the World*. BSB: UBD Press.