

Moreno 3

Specific  
examples to  
add interest

they're rested after a workout, our instructor taught us to work alternate muscle groups on different days. For example, a woman might work on her arms and abdomen one day and then her shoulders and chest the next day. Because I had had such trouble lifting my grandmother, I added exercises to strengthen my legs and back. Another student, who had hurt her neck in a car crash, added neck-strengthening exercises. Someone else, planning to be a physical therapist, added finger- and hand-strengthening exercises.

CONCLUSION:  
Reports  
writer's  
personal  
progress

At the end of our 10 weeks of weight training, we had to evaluate our progress. Was I impressed! I felt ready to lift the world. When I started, I could lift only 10 pounds over my head for 3 reps. By the end of the course, I could lift 10 pounds over my head for 20 reps, and I could lift 18 pounds for 3 reps. Also, I could swim laps for 20 sustained minutes instead of the 10 I had barely managed at first. I am so proud of my weight-training accomplishments that I still work out three or four times a week. I am proof that any woman can benefit from "pumping iron." Not only will she become stronger and have more stamina, but she will also feel energetic and confident. After all, there isn't a thing to lose—except maybe some flab.

## CHAPTER 4

# Writing Paragraphs

### 4a What is a paragraph?

A **paragraph** is a group of sentences that work together to develop a unit of thought. Paragraphing permits writers to divide material into manageable parts. When a group of paragraphs works together in logical sequence, the result is a complete essay or other whole piece of writing.

To signal the start of a new paragraph, indent the first line about one-half inch. Skip no extra lines between paragraphs. Business writing (Chapter 38) is an exception: It calls for *block format* for paragraphs, which means you do not indent the first line but rather leave a double space between paragraphs. If you're already double-spacing, then leave two double lines for a total of four lines.

## 4b How can I write effective introductory paragraphs?

An **introductory paragraph** leads the reader to sense what's ahead. It sets the stage. It also, if possible, attempts to arouse a reader's interest in the topic.

A **THESIS STATEMENT** can be an important component in an introduction. Many instructors require students to place their thesis statement at the end of the opening paragraph. Doing so disciplines students to state early the central point of the essay. If an introduction points in one direction, and the rest of the essay goes off in another, the essay isn't communicating a clear message. Professional writers don't necessarily include a thesis statement in their introductory paragraphs. Most have the skill to maintain a line of thought without overtly stating a main idea. Introductory paragraphs, as well as concluding paragraphs (4k), are usually shorter than body paragraphs (4c).

Be careful not to tack on a sloppy introduction at the last minute. The introductory paragraph plays too important a role to be tossed off with merely a few shallow lines. While many writers prefer to write only a thesis statement as an introduction in an early draft, they always return to write a complete introductory paragraph after the body—the main part—of the writing is finished. For a list of specific strategies to use—and pitfalls to avoid for introductory paragraphs—see Box 4-1 opposite.

Always integrate an introductory device into the paragraph so that it leads smoothly into the thesis statement. Some examples follow. In this chapter, each example paragraph has a number to its left for your easy reference. Here's an introductory paragraph that uses two brief examples to lead into the thesis statement at the end of the paragraph.

1 On seeing another child fall and hurt himself, Hope, just nine months old, stared, tears welling up in her eyes, and crawled to her mother to be comforted—as though she had been hurt, not her friend. When 15-month-old Michael saw his friend Paul crying, Michael fetched his own teddy bear and offered it to Paul; when that didn't stop Paul's tears, Michael brought Paul's security blanket from another room. Such small acts of sympathy and caring, observed in scientific studies, are leading researchers to trace the roots of empathy—the ability to share

## BOX 4-1 SUMMARY



## Introductory paragraphs

**Strategies to Use**

- Providing relevant background information
- Relating briefly an interesting story or anecdote
- Giving one or more pertinent—perhaps surprising—statistics
- Asking one or more provocative questions
- Using an appropriate quotation
- Defining a Key Term
- Presenting one or more brief examples (4i)
- Drawing an ANALOGY (4i)

**Strategies to Avoid**

- Don't write statements about your purpose, such as "I am going to discuss the causes of falling oil prices."
- Don't apologize, as in "I am not sure this is right, but this is my opinion."
- Don't use overworked expressions, such as "Haste makes waste, as I recently discovered" or "Love is grand."

another's emotions—to infancy, contradicting a long-standing assumption that infants and toddlers were incapable of these feelings.

—Daniel Goleman, "Researchers Trace  
Empathy's Roots to Infancy"

In paragraph 2, the opening quotation sets up a dramatic contrast with the thesis statement.

2 "Alone one is never lonely," says May Sarton in her essay "The Rewards of Living a Solitary Life." Most people, however, don't share Sarton's opinion: They're terrified of living alone. They're used to living with others—children with parents, roommates with roommates, friends with friends, spouses with spouses. When the statistics catch up with them, therefore, they're rarely prepared. Chances are high that most adult men and women will need to know how to live alone, briefly or longer, at some time in their lives.

—Tara Foster, student

**EXERCISE 4-1** Write an introduction for the three essays informally outlined below. Then, for more practice, write one alternative introduction for each. If you have a peer-response group, share the various written introductions and decide which are most effective. For help, see 4b.

1. Reading for fun

*Thesis statement:* People read many kinds of books for pleasure.

Body paragraph 1: murder mysteries and thrillers

Body paragraph 2: romances and westerns

Body paragraph 3: science fiction

2. Cellphones

*Thesis statement:* Cellphones have changed how some people behave in public.

Body paragraph 1: driving

Body paragraph 2: restaurants

Body paragraph 3: movies and concerts

Body paragraph 4: sidewalks, parks, and other casual spaces

3. Using credit cards

*Thesis statement:* Although credit cards can help people manage their finances wisely, they also offer too much temptation.

Body paragraph 1: convenience and safety

Body paragraph 2: tracking of purchases

Body paragraph 3: overspending dangers

## 4c What are body paragraphs?

Each **body paragraph**, which belongs between an introductory paragraph (4b) and a concluding paragraph (4k), consists of a main idea and support for that idea. To be effective, a body paragraph needs three characteristics: unity (4d and 4e), development (4f), and coherence (4g). The sections shown in parentheses explain how you can achieve each characteristic. Box 4-2 opposite gives an overview of all three characteristics.

Paragraph 3 is an example of an effective body paragraph. It's from an essay called "What's Bugging You?"

3 The cockroach lore that has been daunting us for years is mostly true. Roaches can live for twenty days without food, fourteen days without water; they can flatten their bodies and crawl through a crack thinner than a dime; they can eat huge doses of carcinogens and still die of old age. They can even survive "as much radiation as an oak tree can," says William Bell, the University of Kansas entomologist whose cockroaches appeared in the movie *The Day After*. They will eat almost anything—regular food, leather, glue, hair, paper, even the starch in book bindings. (The New York Public Library has quite a cockroach problem.) They sense the slightest breeze, and they can react and start running in

## BOX 4-2 SUMMARY



### Characteristics of effective body paragraphs

**Unity:** Have you made a clear connection between the main idea of the paragraph and the sentences that support the main idea (4d and 4e)?

**Development:** Have you included detailed and sufficient support for the main idea of the paragraph (4f)?

**Coherence:** Have you progressed from one sentence to the next in the paragraph smoothly and logically (4g)?

.05 second; they can also remain motionless for days. And if all this isn't creepy enough, they can fly too.

—Jane Goldman, “What’s Bugging You?”

Paragraph 3 has **UNITY** (4d) in that the main idea (stories we’ve heard about cockroaches are true), stated in the **TOPIC SENTENCE** (4e), which is also the first sentence, is supported by detailed examples. It has **COHERENCE** (4g) in that the content of every sentence ties into the content of the other sentences. Also, the paragraph *coheres*—sticks together—by word choices (repeating *they can* each time to put the emphasis on the interesting facts) and with consistent grammar (a different **ACTIVE VERB** [see **VOICE**, 8n through 8p] for each example). It has **PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT** (4f) in that the details provide support for the main idea.

#### 4d How can I create unity in paragraphs?

A paragraph has **unity** when the connection between the main idea and its supporting sentences is clear. Paragraph 3 in section 4c is a good example.

Unity is ruined when any sentence in a paragraph “goes off the topic,” which means its content doesn’t relate to the main idea or to the other sentences in the paragraph.

#### 4e How can topic sentences create paragraph unity?

A **topic sentence** contains the main idea of a paragraph and controls its content. Often, the topic sentence comes at the beginning of a paragraph, though not always. Professional essay writers, because they have the skill to carry the reader along without explicit signposts, sometimes decide not to use topic sentences. However, instructors often require students to use topic sentences. As apprentice writers, students might have more difficulty writing unified paragraphs.

### Topic sentence starting a paragraph

In ACADEMIC WRITING, most paragraphs begin with a topic sentence (shown here in italics) so that readers know immediately what to expect. Paragraph 4 is an example.

*To travel the streets of Los Angeles is to glimpse America's ethnic future.* At the bustling playground at McDonald's in Koreatown, a dozen shades of kids squirt down the slides and burrow through tunnels and race down the catwalks, not much minding that no two of them speak the same language. Parents of grade-school children say they rarely know the color of their youngsters' best friends until they meet them; it never seems to occur to the children to say, since they have not yet been taught to care.

—Nancy Gibbs, “Shades of Difference”

### Topic sentence ending a paragraph

Some paragraphs give supporting details first and wait to state the topic sentence at the paragraph's end. This approach is particularly effective for building suspense or for creating a bit of drama. Paragraph 5 is an example.

Most people don't lose ten dollars or one hundred dollars when they trade cars. They lose many hundreds or even a thousand. They buy used cars that will not provide them service through the first payment. They overbuy new cars and jeopardize their credit, only to find themselves “hung,” unable even to sell their shiny new toys. *The car business is one of the last roundups in America, the great slaughterhouse of wheeling and dealing, where millions of people each year willingly submit to being taken.*

—Remar Sutton, *Don't Get Taken Every Time*

### Topic sentence implied, not stated

Some paragraphs are a unified whole even without a single sentence that readers can point to as the topic sentence. Yet, most readers can catch the main idea anyway. Paragraph 6 is an example. What do you think might be a straightforward topic sentence for it?

The Romans were entertained by puppets, as were the rulers of the Ottoman Empire with their favorite shadow puppet, Karaghioz, teller of a thousand tales. In the Middle Ages, puppets were cast as devil and angel in religious mystery and morality plays until cast out entirely by the church. For centuries, a rich puppetry heritage in India has matched that country's multilayered culture. The grace of Bali is reflected in its stylized, ceremonial rod and shadow puppets. The Bunraku puppets of Japan, unequalled for technique anywhere in the world, require a puppet master and two assistants to create one dramatic character on stage.

—Dan Cody, “Puppet Poetry”

**EXERCISE 4-2** Working individually or with a peer-response group, identify the topic sentences in the following paragraphs. If the topic sentence is implied, write the point the paragraph conveys. For help, consult section 4e.

- A. A good college program should stress the development of high-level reading, writing, and mathematical skills and should provide you with a broad historical, social, and cultural perspective, no matter what subject you choose as your major. The program should teach you not only the most current knowledge in your field but also—just as important—prepare you to keep learning throughout your life. After all, you'll probably change jobs, and possibly even careers, at least six times, and you'll have other responsibilities, too—perhaps as a spouse and as a parent and certainly as a member of a community whose bounds extend beyond the workplace.

—Frank T. Rhodes, “Let the Student Decide”

- B. The once majestic oak tree crashes to the ground amid the destructive flames, as its panic-stricken inhabitants attempt to flee the fiery tomb. Undergrowth that formerly flourished smolders in ashes. A family of deer darts furiously from one wall of flame to the other, without an emergency exit. On the outskirts of the inferno, firefighters try desperately to stop the destruction. Somewhere at the source of this chaos lies a former campsite containing the cause of this destruction—an untended campfire. This scene is one of many that illustrate how human apathy and carelessness destroy nature.

—Anne Bryson, student

- C. Rudeness isn't a distinctive quality of our own time. People today would be shocked by how rudely our ancestors behaved. In the colonial period, a French traveler marveled that “Virginians don't use napkins, but they wear silk cravats, and instead of carrying white handkerchiefs, they blow their noses either with their fingers or with a silk handkerchief that also serves as a cravat, a napkin, and so on.” In the 19th century, up to about the 1830s, even very distinguished people routinely put their knives in their mouths. And when people went to the theater, they would not just applaud politely—they would chant, jeer, and shout. So, the notion that there's been a downhill slide in manners ever since time began is just not so.

—“Horizons,” *U.S. News & World Report*

## 4f How can I develop my body paragraphs?

You develop a **body paragraph** by supplying detailed support for the main idea of the paragraph communicated by your TOPIC SENTENCE (4e), whether stated or implied. **Paragraph development** is not merely a repetition of the main idea, using other words. When this happens, you're merely going around in circles. We've deliberately created paragraph 10 to show you a bad example of development. It goes nowhere because all that happens is that one idea is restated three times in different words. Compare it with the well-developed paragraph 3 that appears in section 4c.

- NO The cockroach lore that has been daunting us for years is mostly true. Almost every tale we have heard about cockroaches is correct. The stories about cockroaches have frightened people for generations.

**What separates most good writing from bad is the writer’s ability to move back and forth between main ideas and specific details.** To check whether you are providing sufficient detail in a body paragraph, use the RENNS Test. Each letter in the made-up word RENNS cues you to remember a different kind of supporting detail at your disposal, as listed in Box 4-3.

**BOX 4-3 SUMMARY**



**The RENNS Test: Checking for supporting details**

- R = Reasons** provide support.
- E = Examples** provide support.
- N = Names** provide support.
- N = Numbers** provide support.
- S = Senses**—sight, sound, smell, taste, touch—provide support.

Use the RENNS Test to check the quality of your paragraph development. Of course, not every paragraph needs all five kinds of RENNS details, nor do the supporting details need to occur in the order of the letters in RENNS. Paragraph 11 contains three of the five types of RENNS details. Identify the topic sentence and as many RENNS as you can before reading the analysis that follows the paragraph.

- U.S. shores are also being inundated by waves of plastic debris. On the sands of the Texas Gulf Coast one day last September, volunteers collected 307 tons of litter, two-thirds of which was plastic, including 31,733 bags, 11 30,295 bottles, and 15,631 six-pack yokes. Plastic trash is being found far out to sea. On a four-day trip from Maryland to Florida that ranged 100 miles offshore, John Hardy, an Oregon State University marine biologist, spotted “Styrofoam and other plastic on the surface, most of the whole cruise.”

—“The Dirty Seas,” *Time*

In paragraph 11, the first sentence serves as the topic sentence. Supporting details for that main idea include examples, names, and numbers. The writer provides examples of the kinds of litter found washed up on the beach and floating offshore. The writer names many specific things: Texas Gulf Coast, September, bags, bottles, six-pack yokes, Maryland, Florida, John Hardy, Oregon State University, marine biologist, and Styrofoam. And the writer uses specific numbers to describe the volume of litter collected

(307 tons), to give counts of specific items (such as 31,733 bags), and to tell how far from shore (100 miles) the litter had traveled.

Paragraph 12 contains four of the five types of RENNS. Identify the topic sentence and as many RENNS as you can before you read the analysis that follows the paragraph.

Tennyson called it a “flying flame,” Benjamin Franklin termed it a “sudden and terrible mischief.” In Roman mythology, the god Jupiter used spiky thunderbolts as letters to the editor when he chose to show displeasure to the poor mortals below. By whatever name, lightning is a 12 spectacular natural event. Captured in photographs, its grandeur and beauty are safely petrified in static portraits of primal energy. In reality, at 24,000 to 28,000 degrees C., it is four times hotter than the surface of the sun. It can vaporize steel, plough up fields, shatter giant trees, and scatter live incendiary sparks over vast forests. Each day it kills 20 people.

—Michael Clugston, “Twice Struck”

In paragraph 12, the third sentence is the topic sentence. Supporting details for the main idea include examples (vaporize steel, plough up fields, shatter giant trees); the writer also uses names (Tennyson, Franklin) and numbers (24,000 to 28,000 degrees C., 20 people). Sensory details, given in images, provide more support (flying flame, sudden and terrible mischief).

**EXERCISE 4-3** Working individually or with a peer-response group, look again at the paragraphs in Exercise 4-2. Identify the RENNS in each paragraph. For help, consult 4f.

## 4g How can I write coherent paragraphs?

A paragraph has **coherence** when its sentences relate to each other, not only in content but also in choice of words and grammatical structures. A coherent paragraph conveys continuity because the sentences follow naturally from one to the next. Techniques for achieving coherence are listed in Box 4-4, with the section that offers a complete explanation shown in parentheses.

### BOX 4-4 SUMMARY





#### Techniques for achieving coherence

- Using appropriate transitional expressions (4g.1)
- Using pronouns when possible (4g.2)
- Using deliberate repetition of a key word (4g.3)
- Using parallel structures (4g.4)
- Using coherence techniques to create connections between paragraphs (4g.5)

### 4g.1 Using transitional expressions for coherence

**Transitional expressions** are words and phrases that signal connections among ideas. **Transitions** are bridges that lead your reader along your line of thought. They offer cues about what follows. Commonly used transitional expressions are listed in Box 4-5.

 **ALERT:** In ACADEMIC WRITING, set off a transitional expression with a comma, unless the expression is one short word (23g). 

Vary your choices of transitional words. For example, instead of always using *for example*, try *for instance*. Also, when choosing a transitional word, make sure it correctly says what you mean. For example, don't use *however* in the sense of *on the other hand* if you mean *therefore* in the sense of *as a result*. The three brief examples below demonstrate how to use transitional expressions for each context.

#### COHERENCE BY ADDITION

Woodpeckers use their beaks to find food and to chisel out nests. In addition, they claim their territory and signal their desire to mate by using their beaks to drum on trees.

#### BOX 4-5 SUMMARY



#### Transitional expressions and the relationships they signal

addition	also, in addition, too, moreover, and, besides, furthermore, equally important, then, finally
example	for example, for instance, thus, as an illustration, namely, specifically
contrast	but, yet, however, nevertheless, nonetheless, conversely, in contrast, still, at the same time, on the one hand, on the other hand
comparison	similarly, likewise, in the same way
concession	of course, to be sure, certainly, granted
result	therefore, thus, as a result, so, accordingly
summary	hence, in short, in brief, in summary, in conclusion, finally
time	first, second, third, next, then, finally, afterward, before, soon, later, meanwhile, subsequently, immediately, eventually, currently
place	in the front, in the foreground, in the back, in the background, at the side, adjacent, nearby, in the distance, here, there

**COHERENCE BY CONTRAST**

Most birds communicate by singing. Woodpeckers, however, communicate by the duration and rhythm of the drumming of their beaks.

**COHERENCE BY RESULT**

The woodpecker's strong beak enables it to communicate by drumming on dry branches and tree trunks. As a result, woodpeckers can communicate across greater distances than songbirds can.

Paragraph 13 demonstrates how transitional expressions (shown in bold) enhance a paragraph's COHERENCE. The TOPIC SENTENCE is the final sentence.

13 Before the days of television, people were entertained by exciting radio shows such as *Superman*, *Batman*, and “War of the Worlds.” **Of course**, the listener was required to pay careful attention to the story if all details were to be comprehended. **Better yet**, while listening to the stories, listeners would form their own images of the actions taking place. When the broadcaster would give brief descriptions of the Martian space ships invading Earth, **for example**, every member of the audience would imagine a different space ship. **In contrast**, television's version of “War of the Worlds” will not stir the imagination at all, for everyone can clearly see the actions taking place. All viewers see the same space ship with the same features. Each aspect is clearly defined, and **therefore**, no one will imagine anything different from what is seen. **Thus**, television can't be considered an effective tool for stimulating the imagination.

—Tom Paradis, “A Child's Other World”

**4g.2 Using pronouns for coherence**

**Pronouns**—words that refer to nouns or other pronouns—allow readers to follow your train of thought from one sentence to the next without boring repetition. Without pronouns, you would have to repeat nouns over and over. For example, this sentence uses no pronouns and therefore has needless repetition: *The woodpecker scratched the woodpecker's head with the woodpecker's foot.* In contrast, with pronouns the sentence can be: *The woodpecker scratched **its** head with **its** foot.* Paragraph 14 illustrates how pronouns (shown in bold) contribute to COHERENCE.

14 The funniest people I know are often unaware of just how ticked off **they** are about things until **they** start to kid around about **them**. Nature did not build **these** people to sputter or preach; instead, in response to the world's irritations, **they** create little plays in **their** minds—parodies, cartoons, fantasies. When **they** see how funny **their** creations are, **they** also understand how really sore **they** were at **their** sources. **Their** anger

is a revelation, one that works backward in the minds of an audience: the audience starts out laughing and winds up fuming.

—Roger Rosenblatt, “What Brand of Laughter Do You Use?”

### 4g.3 Using deliberate repetition for coherence

A key word is a strong word that’s central to the main idea of the paragraph. **Repetition** of a key word is a useful way to achieve COHERENCE in a paragraph. The word usually appears first in the paragraph’s TOPIC SENTENCE (4e) and then again throughout the paragraph. The idea of key-word repetition is to keep a concept in front of the reader.

Use this technique sparingly to avoid being monotonous. Also, limit your selection of a key word to one or at the most two words. The shorter a paragraph, the more likely a repeated key word will seem repetitious, and the less likely it’ll be effective. In a longer paragraph, however, the repetition of a key word can be effective. Paragraph 15 contains repeated words (shown in bold) closely tied to the concept of emotions, making the paragraph more coherent.

**Emotions** are, technically speaking, chemical impulses to act. The root of the word **emotion** is *motere*, the Latin verb meaning “to move,” plus the prefix *e* which means “away,” suggesting a tendency to act is implicit in every **emotion**. One of the primary functions of **emotion** is to warn us of danger. Goleman refers to this warning process as an “**emotional** alarm.” When you experience an **emotional** alarm, like an unexpectedly loud noise, the **emotional** part of your brain takes over the analytical part of your brain, and you react.

—Carol Carter and Lynn Quitman Troyka,  
*Majoring in the Rest of Your Life*

### 4g.4 Using parallel structures for coherence

**Parallel structures** are created when grammatically equivalent forms are used in series, usually of three or more items, but sometimes only two (see PARALLELISM, Chapter 18). Using parallel structures helps to give a paragraph coherence. The repeated parallel structures reinforce connections among ideas, and they add both tempo and sound to the sentence.

In paragraph 16, the authors use several parallel structures (shown in bold): a parallel series of words (*the sacred, the secular, the scientific*); parallel phrases (*sometimes smiled at, sometimes frowned upon*); and six parallel clauses (the first being *banish danger with a gesture*).

Superstitions are **sometimes smiled at** and **sometimes frowned upon** as observances characteristic of **the old-fashioned, the unenlightened**, children, peasants, servants, immigrants, foreigners, or backwoods people. Nevertheless, they give all of us ways of moving back and

forth among the different worlds in which we live—the **sacred**, the **secular**, and the **scientific**. They allow us to keep a private world also, where, smiling a little, we can **banish danger with a gesture** and **summon luck with a rhyme**, **make the sun shine in spite of storm clouds**, **force the stranger to do our bidding**, **keep an enemy at bay**, and **straighten the paths of those we love**.

—Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metraux, “New Superstitions for Old”

### 4g.5 Creating coherence among paragraphs

The same techniques for achieving COHERENCE in a paragraph apply to showing connections among paragraphs in a piece of writing: transitional expressions (4g.1), pronouns (4g.2), deliberate repetition (4g.3), and parallel structures (4g.4).

Example 17 shows two short paragraphs and the start of a third. The writer achieves coherence among the paragraphs by repeating the key word *gratitude* and the related words *grateful*, *thankful*, and *thank* and by using them as a transition into the next paragraph. The writer also uses PARALLELISM within the paragraphs in this example.

To me, gratitude and inner peace go hand in hand. The more genuinely grateful I feel for the gift of my life, the more peaceful I feel. Gratitude, then, is worthy of a little practice.

If you're anything like me, you probably have many people to be thankful for: friends, family members, people from your past, teachers, 17 gurus, people from work, someone who gave you a break, as well as countless others. You may want to thank a higher power for the gift of life itself, or for the beauty of nature.

As you think of people to be grateful for, remember that it can be anyone—someone who held a door open for you, or a physician who saved your life. . . .

**EXERCISE 4-4** Working individually or with a peer-response group, locate the coherence techniques in each paragraph. Look for transitional expressions, pronouns, deliberate repetition, and parallel structures. For help, consult 4g.

- A. Kathy sat with her legs dangling over the edge of the side of the hood. The band of her earphones held back strands of straight copper hair that had come loose from two thick braids that hung down her back. She swayed with the music that only she could hear. Her shoulders raised, making circles in the warm air. Her arms reached out to her side; her open hands reached for the air; her closed hands brought the air back to her. Her arms reached over her head; her opened hands reached for a cloud; her closed hands brought the cloud back to her. Her head moved from side to side; her eyes opened and closed to the tempo of the tunes. Kathy was motion.

—Claire Burke, student

- B. Newton's law may have wider application than just the physical world. In the social world, racism, once set into motion, will remain in motion unless acted upon by an outside force. The collective "we" must be the outside force. We must fight racism through education. We must make sure every school has
- 19 the resources to do its job. We must present to our children a culturally diverse curriculum that reflects our pluralistic society. This can help students understand that prejudice is learned through contact with prejudiced people, rather than with the people toward whom the prejudice is directed.

—Randolph H. Manning, "Fighting Racism with Inclusion"

**EXERCISE 4-5** Working individually or with a peer-response group, use RENNS (4f) and techniques for achieving coherence (4g) to develop three of the following topic sentences into paragraphs. When finished, list the RENNS and the coherence techniques you used in each paragraph.

1. Newspaper comic strips reflect current concerns in our culture.
2. The contents of trash in the United States says a great deal about US culture.
3. Dramas on television tend to have several common elements.
4. Part-time jobs can be very unappealing.
5. Time management is a lifesaver for college students.

## 4h How can I arrange a paragraph?

When you choose a **paragraph arrangement** during DRAFTING, you order the sentences to communicate the paragraph's message most clearly and effectively. Later, during REVISION, experiment with other arrangements to see how else your sentences might be arranged for greatest impact. You may find sometimes that only one possible arrangement can work. For example, if you're explaining how to bake a cake, you want to give the directions in a particular order. At other times, you may find that more than one arrangement is possible. For example, if you're writing about solving a problem and therefore using the problem-to-solution arrangement, you might also use the technique of ordering from least to most important—or its reverse. Box 4-6 opposite lists the most common ways to arrange a paragraph.

**EXERCISE 4-6** Working individually or with a peer-response group, rearrange the sentences in each paragraph below so that it flows logically. To begin, identify the topic sentence, use it as the paragraph's first sentence, and continue from there. For help, consult 4h.

### PARAGRAPH A

1. Remember, many people who worry about offending others wind up living according to other people's priorities.

## BOX 4-6 SUMMARY



## Ways to arrange sentences in a paragraph

- By time
- By location
- From general to specific
- From specific to general
- From least to most important
- From problem to solution

2. Learn to decline, tactfully but firmly, every request that doesn't contribute to your goals.
3. Of all the timesaving techniques ever developed, perhaps the most effective is the frequent use of the word *no*.
4. If you point out that your motivation isn't to get out of work but to save your time to do a better job on the really important things, you'll have a good chance of avoiding unproductive tasks.

—Edwin Bliss, “Getting Things Done: The ABC's  
of Time Management”

## PARAGRAPH B

1. After a busy day, lens wearers often don't feel like taking time out to clean and disinfect their lenses, and many wearers skip the chore.
2. When buying a pair of glasses, a person deals with just the expense of the glasses themselves.
3. Although contact lenses make the wearer more attractive, glasses are easier and less expensive to care for.
4. However, in addition to the cost of the lenses themselves, contact lens wearers must shoulder the extra expense of cleaning supplies.
5. This inattention creates a danger of infection.
6. In contrast, contact lenses require daily cleaning and weekly enzyming that inconvenience lens wearers.
7. Glasses can be cleaned quickly with water and tissue at the wearer's convenience.

—Heather Martin, student

**EXERCISE 4-7** Working individually or with a peer-response group, determine the arrangements in these paragraphs. Choose from time, location, general to specific, specific to general, least to most important, and problem to solution. For help, consult 4h.

- A. A combination of cries from exotic animals and laughter and gasps from children fills the air along with the aroma of popcorn and peanuts. A hungry lion bellows for dinner, his roar breaking through the confusing chatter of other animals. Birds of all kinds chirp endlessly at curious children. Monkeys swing from limb to limb, performing gymnastics for gawking onlookers. A comedy routine by orangutans employing old shoes and garments incites squeals of amusement. Reptiles sleep peacefully behind glass windows, yet they send shivers down the spines of those who remember the quick death many of these reptiles can induce. The sights and sounds and smells of the zoo inform and entertain children of all ages.

—Deborah Harris, student

- B. No one even agrees anymore on what “old” is. Not long ago, 30 was middle-aged and 60 was old. Now, more and more people are living into their 70s, 80s and beyond—and many of them are living well, without any incapacitating mental or physical decline. Today, old age is defined not simply by chronological years, but by degree of health and well-being.

—Carol Tavis, “Old Age Isn’t What It Used to Be”

- C. Lately, bee researchers have been distracted by a new challenge from abroad. It’s, of course, the so-called “killer bee” that was imported into Brazil from Africa in the mid-1950s and has been heading our way ever since. The Africanized bee looks like the Italian bee but is more defensive and more inclined to attack in force. It consumes much of the honey that it produces, leaving relatively little for anyone who attempts to work with it. It travels fast, competes with local bees and, worse, mates with them. It has ruined the honey industry in Venezuela and now the big question is: Will the same thing happen here?

—Jim Doherty, “The Hobby That Challenges You to Think Like a Bee”

## 4i

## How can rhetorical strategies help me write paragraphs?

**Rhetorical strategies** are techniques for presenting ideas clearly and effectively. Rhetorical strategies reflect patterns of thought long in use in our Western culture. You choose a specific rhetorical strategy according to what you want to accomplish. Box 4-7 lists the common rhetorical strategies at your disposal.

Often, your **TOPIC SENTENCE** will steer you toward a particular pattern. For example, if a topic sentence is “Grilling a great hot dog is easy,” the implied pattern—or rhetorical strategy—is to explain the process of how to grill a hot dog. Or if a topic sentence is “To see many different styles of

## BOX 4-7 SUMMARY



### Common rhetorical strategies (patterns of thought) for paragraphs

- Narrative
- Description
- Process
- Examples
- Definition
- Analysis
- Classification
- Comparison and contrast
- Analogy
- Cause-and-effect analysis

architecture in one US city, visit Chicago,” the implied pattern—or rhetorical strategy—is to give examples.

Sometimes, you need to use a combination of rhetorical strategies. For example, in a paragraph on types of color blindness, you might use a combination of definition and classification. A paragraph explaining why one brand of house paint is superior to another might call for comparison and contrast combined with description—and, perhaps, also definition and examples.

### Writing a narrative

**Narrative** writing is a rhetorical strategy that tells a story. A *narration* relates what is happening or what has happened. Paragraph 23 is an example.

23 Gordon Parks speculates that he might have spent his life as a waiter on the North Coast Limited train if he hadn’t strolled into one particular movie house during a stopover in Chicago. It was shortly before World War II began, and on the screen was a hair-raising newsreel of Japanese planes attacking a gunboat. When it was over the camera operator came out on stage and the audience cheered. From that moment on Parks was determined to become a photographer. During his next stopover, in Seattle, he went into a pawnshop and purchased his first camera for \$7.50. With that small sum, Parks later proclaimed, “I had bought what was to become my weapon against poverty and racism.” Eleven years later, he became the first black photographer at *Life* magazine.

—Susan Howard, “Depth of Field”

### Writing a description

Writing a **description** is a rhetorical strategy that appeals to a reader's senses—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. *Descriptive writing* paints a picture in words. Paragraph 24 is an example.

Walking to the ranch house from the shed, we saw the Northern Lights. They looked like talcum powder fallen from a woman's face. 24 Rouge and blue eye shadow streaked the spires of a white light which exploded, then pulsed, shaking the colors down—like lives—until they faded from sight.

—Gretel Ehrlich, “Other Lives”

### Writing about a process

Writing about a **process** is a rhetorical strategy that reports a sequence of actions by which something is done or made. A process usually proceeds chronologically—first do this, then do that. A process's complexity dictates the level of detail in the writing. For example, paragraph 25 provides an overview of a complicated process. Paragraph 26, on the other hand, gives explicit step-by-step directions.

Making chocolate isn't as simple as grinding a bag of beans. The machinery in a chocolate factory towers over you, rumbling and whirring. A huge cleaner first blows the beans away from their accompanying debris—sticks and stones, coins and even bullets can fall among cocoa beans being bagged. Then they go into another machine for roasting. Next comes separation in a winnower, shells sliding out one side, 25 beans falling from the other. Grinding follows, resulting in chocolate liquor. Fermentation, roasting, and “conching” all influence the flavor of chocolate. Chocolate is “conched”—rolled over and over against itself like pebbles in the sea—in enormous circular machines named conches for the shells they once resembled. Climbing a flight of steps to peer into this huge, slow-moving glacier, I was expecting something like molten mud but found myself forced to conclude it resembled nothing so much as chocolate.

—Ruth Mehrtens Galvin, “Sybaritic to Some, Sinful to Others”

Carrying loads of equal weight like paint cans and toolboxes is easier if you carry one in each hand. Keep your shoulders back and down so 26 that the weight is balanced on each side of your body, not suspended in front. With this method, you'll be able to lift heavier loads and also to walk and stand erect. Your back will not be strained by being pulled to one side.

—John Warde, “Safe Lifting Techniques”

### Writing using examples

A paragraph developed by **examples** presents particular instances of a larger category. For instance, examples of the category “endangered animals” could include the black rhinoceros, South China tiger, Bulmer’s fruit bat, and silver gibbon. Paragraph 27 is an example of this strategy. On the other hand, sometimes one **extended example**, often called an *illustration*, is useful. Paragraph 28 is an example of this technique.

27 The current revolution in zoo design—the landscape revolution—is driven by three kinds of change that have occurred during this century. First are great leaps in animal ecology, veterinary medicine, landscape design, and exhibit technology, making possible unprecedented realism in zoo exhibits. Second is the progressive disappearance of wilderness—the very subject of zoos—from the earth. Third is knowledge derived from market research and from environmental psychology, making possible a sophisticated focus on the zoo-goer.

—Melissa Greene, “No Rms, Jungle Vu”

28 He was one of the greatest scientists the world has ever known, yet if I had to convey the essence of Albert Einstein in a single word, I would choose *simplicity*. Perhaps an anecdote will help. Once, caught in a downpour, he took off his hat and held it under his coat. Asked why, he explained, with admirable logic, that the rain would damage the hat, but his hair would be none the worse for its wetting. This knack of going instinctively to the heart of the matter was the secret of his major scientific discoveries—this and his extraordinary feeling for beauty.

—Banesh Hoffman, “My Friend, Albert Einstein”

### Writing using definition

When you define something, you give its meaning. **Definition** is often used together with other rhetorical strategies. If, for example, you were explaining how to organize a seashell collection, you’d probably want to define the two main types of shells: bivalve and univalve. You can also develop an entire paragraph by definition, called an **extended definition**. An extended definition discusses the meaning of a word or concept in more detail than a dictionary definition. If the topic is very abstract, the writer tries to put the definition in concrete terms. Sometimes a definition tells what something is not, as well as what it is, as in paragraph 29.

29 Chemistry is that branch of science that has the task of investigating the materials out of which the universe is made. It is not concerned with the forms into which they may be fashioned. Such objects as chairs, tables, vases, bottles, or wires are of no significance in chemistry; but

such substances as glass, wool, iron, sulfur, and clay, as the materials out of which they are made, are what it studies. Chemistry is concerned not only with the composition of such substances, but also with their inner structure.

—John Arrend Timm, *General Chemistry*

### *Writing using analysis*

**Analysis**, sometimes called *division*, divides things up into their parts. It usually starts, often in its topic sentence, by identifying one subject and continues by explaining the subject's distinct parts. Paragraph 30 discusses the parts of the wing of a supersonic aircraft.

30 A wing design is a compromise. For example, if a designer wants a wing for an aircraft that will cruise at supersonic speeds, he must also design the wing to fly at subsonic speeds as well as for takeoffs and landings. Thus, the optimum cruise configuration is compromised to gain other necessary characteristics. Granted, devices such as ailerons, flaps, spoilers, and slats can partially compensate for deficiencies, but these still do not give the optimum performance of a wing designed for a particular flight regime.

—Bill Siuru and John D. Busick, *The Next Generation of Aircraft Technology*

### *Writing using classification*

**Classification** groups items according to an underlying, shared characteristic. Paragraph 31 groups—classifies—interior violations of building-safety codes.

31 A public health student, Marian Glaser, did a detailed analysis of 180 cases of building code violation. Each case represented a single building, almost all of which were multiple-unit dwellings. In these 180 buildings, there were an incredible total of 1,244 different recorded violations—about seven per building. What did the violations consist of? First of all, over one-third of the violations were exterior defects: broken doors and stairways, holes in the walls, sagging roofs, broken chimneys, damaged porches, and so on. Another one-third were interior violations that could scarcely be attributed to the most ingeniously destructive rural southern migrant in America. There were, for example, a total of 160 instances of defective wiring or other electrical hazards, a very common cause of the excessive number of fires and needless tragic deaths in the slums. There were 125 instances of inadequate, defective, or inoperable plumbing or heating. There were 34 instances of serious infestation by rats and roaches.

—William Ryan, “Blaming the Victim”

### Writing using comparison and contrast

A paragraph developed by *comparison* deals with similarities; a paragraph developed by *contrast* deals with differences. **Comparison and contrast** writing is usually organized one of two ways: You can use *point-by-point organization*, which moves back and forth between the items being compared; or you can use *block organization*, which discusses one item completely before discussing the other.

Paragraph 32 is structured point by point, going back and forth between the two children (whose names are in boldface) being compared.

32 My husband and I constantly marvel at the fact that our two sons, born of the same parents and only two years apart in age, are such completely different human beings. The most obvious differences became apparent at their births. Our firstborn, **Mark**, was big and bold—his intense, already wise eyes, broad shoulders, huge and heavy hands, and powerful, chunky legs gave us the impression he could have walked out of the delivery room on his own. Our second son, **Wayne**, was delightfully different. Rather than having the football physique that **Mark** was born with, **Wayne** came into the world with a long, slim, wiry body more suited to running, jumping, and contorting. **Wayne's** eyes, rather than being intense like **Mark's**, were impish and innocent. When **Mark** was delivered, he cried only momentarily, and then seemed to settle into a state of intense concentration, as if trying to absorb everything he could about the strange, new environment he found himself in. Conversely, **Wayne** screamed from the moment he first appeared. There was nothing helpless or pathetic about his cry either—he was darn angry!

—Rosanne Labonte, student

Paragraph 33 uses the block pattern for comparison and contrast. The writer first discusses games and then business (each key word is in boldface).

33 **Games** are of limited duration, take place on or in fixed and finite sites, and are governed by openly promulgated rules that are enforced on the spot by neutral professionals. Moreover, they're performed by relatively evenly matched teams that are counseled and led through every move by seasoned hands. Scores are kept, and at the end of the game, a winner is declared. **Business** is usually a little different. In fact, if there is anyone out there who can say that the business is of limited duration, takes place on a fixed site, is governed by openly promulgated rules that are enforced on the spot by neutral professionals, competes only on relatively even terms, and performs in a way that can be measured in runs or points, then that person is either extraordinarily lucky or seriously deluded.

—Warren Bennis, "Time to Hang Up the Old Sports Clichés"

### Writing using analogy

An **analogy** is an extended comparison between objects or ideas from different classes—things not normally associated. Analogy is particularly effective in explaining unfamiliar or abstract concepts because a comparison can be drawn between what is familiar and what is not. An analogy often begins with a SIMILE or METAPHOR (20d), as in paragraph 34.

Casual dress, like casual speech, tends to be loose, relaxed, and colorful. It often contains what might be called “slang words”: blue jeans, sneakers, baseball caps, aprons, flowered cotton housedresses, and the like. These garments could not be worn on a formal occasion without causing disapproval, but in ordinary circumstances, they pass without remark. “Vulgar words” in dress, on the other hand, give emphasis and  
 34 get immediate attention in almost any circumstances, just as they do in speech. Only the skillful can employ them without some loss of face, and even then, they must be used in the right way. A torn, unbuttoned shirt or wildly uncombed hair can signify strong emotions: passion, grief, rage, despair. They’re most effective if people already think of you as being neatly dressed, just as the curses of well-spoken persons count for more than those of the customarily foul-mouthed do.

—Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes*

### Writing using cause-and-effect analysis

**Cause-and-effect analysis** examines outcomes and the reasons for those outcomes. Causes lead to an event or an effect, and effects result from causes. Paragraph 35 discusses how television (the cause) becomes indispensable (the effect) to parents of young children.

Because television is so wonderfully available as child amuser and child defuser, capable of rendering a volatile three-year-old harmless at the flick of a switch, parents grow to depend upon it in the course of their daily lives. And as they continue to utilize television day after day, its importance in their children’s lives increases. From a simple source of entertainment  
 35 provided by parents when they need a break from childcare, television gradually changes into a powerful and disruptive presence in family life. But despite their increasing resentment of television’s intrusions into their family life, and despite their considerable guilt at not being able to control their children’s viewing, parents don’t take steps to extricate themselves from television’s domination. They can no longer cope without it.

—Marie Winn, *The Plug-In Drug*

**EXERCISE 4-8** Working individually or with a peer-response group, decide what rhetorical strategies are used in each paragraph. Choose from any one or combination of narrative, description, process, examples, definition,

analysis, classification, comparison and contrast, analogy, and cause and effect. For help, consult 4i.

- A. Another way to think about metessages is that they frame a conversation, much as a picture frame provides a context for the images in the picture. Metessages let you know how to interpret what someone is saying by identifying the activity that is going on. Is this an argument or a chat? Is it helping, advising, or scolding? At the same time, they let you know what position the speaker is assuming in the activity, and what position you are being assigned.

—Deborah Tannen, *You Just Don't Understand*

- B. I retain only one confused impression from my earliest years: it's all red, and black, and warm. Our apartment was red: the upholstery was of red moquette, the Renaissance dining-room was red, the figured silk hangings over the stained-glass doors were red, and the velvet curtains in Papa's study were red too. The furniture in this awful sanctum was made of black pear wood; I used to creep into the kneehole under the desk and envelop myself in its dusty glooms; it was dark and warm, and the red of the carpet rejoiced my eyes. That is how I seem to have passed the early days of infancy. Safely ensconced, I watched, I touched, I took stock of the world.

—Simone de Beauvoir, *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*

- C. In the case of wool, very hot water can actually cause some structural changes within the fiber, but the resulting shrinkage is minor. The fundamental cause of shrinkage in wool is felting, in which the fibers scrunch together in a tighter bunch, and the yarn, fabric, and garment follow suit. Wool fibers are curly and rough-surfaced, and when squished together under the lubricating influence of water, the fibers wind around each other, like two springs interlocking. Because of their rough surfaces, they stick together and can't be pulled apart.

—James Gorman, "Gadgets"

- D. After our lunch, we drove to the Liverpool public library, where I was scheduled to read. By then, we were forty-five minutes late, and on arrival we saw five middle-aged white women heading away toward an old car across the street. When they recognized me, the women came over and apologized: They were really sorry, they said, but they had to leave or they'd get in trouble on the job. I looked at them. Every one of them was wearing an inexpensive, faded housedress and, over that, a cheap and shapeless cardigan sweater. I felt honored by their open-mindedness in having wanted to come and listen to my poetry. I thought and I said that it was I who should apologize: I was late. It was I who felt, moreover, unprepared: What in my work, to date, deserves the open-minded attention of blue-collar white women terrified by the prospect of overstaying a union-guaranteed hour for lunch?

—June Jordan, "Waiting for a Taxi"

- E. Lacking access to a year-round supermarket, the many species—from ants to wolves—that in the course of evolution have learned the advantages of hoarding must devote a lot of energy and ingenuity to protecting their stashes from marauders. Creatures like beavers and honeybees, for example, hoard food to get them through cold winters. Others, like desert rodents that face
- 40 food scarcities throughout the year, must take advantage of the short-lived harvests that follow occasional rains. For animals like burying beetles that dine on mice hundreds of times their size, a habit of biting off more than they can chew at the moment forces them to store their leftovers. Still others, like the male MacGregor’s bowerbird, stockpile goodies during mating season so they can concentrate on wooing females and defending their arena d’amour.

—Jane Brody, “A Hoarder’s Life: Filling the Cache—and Finding It”

**EXERCISE 4-9** Working individually or with a peer-response group, reread the paragraphs in Exercise 4-7 and determine the rhetorical strategy (or strategies) being used in each.

## 4j What is a transitional paragraph?

**Transitional paragraphs** are found in long essays. These paragraphs form a bridge between one long discussion on a single topic that requires a number of paragraphs and another discussion, usually lengthy, of another topic. Paragraph 41 is an example of a transitional paragraph that allows the writer to move from a long discussion of people’s gestures to a long discussion of people’s eating habits.

- 41 Like gestures, eating habits are personality indicators, and even food preferences and attitudes toward food reveal the inner self. Food plays an important role in the lives of most people beyond its obvious one as a necessity.

—Jean Rosenbaum, M.D., *Is Your Volkswagen a Sex Symbol?*

## 4k What are effective concluding paragraphs?

A **concluding paragraph** ends the discussion smoothly by following logically from the essay’s introductory paragraph (4b) and the essay’s body paragraphs (4c). Always integrate a concluding device into the final paragraph so that the discussion does not end abruptly. A conclusion that is hurriedly tacked on is a missed opportunity to provide a sense of completion and a finishing touch that adds to the whole essay. Box 4-8, which follows, lists strategies for concluding your essay as well as strategies to avoid.

The same writers who wait to write their introductory paragraph until they’ve drafted their body paragraphs often also wait to write their concluding

## BOX 4-8 SUMMARY



## Strategies for concluding paragraphs

### Strategies to Try

- A strategy adapted from those used for introductory paragraphs (4b)—but be careful to choose a different strategy for your introduction and conclusion:
  - Relating a brief concluding interesting story or anecdote
  - Giving one or more pertinent—perhaps surprising—concluding statistics
  - Asking one or more provocative questions for further thought
  - Using an appropriate quotation to sum up the THESIS STATEMENT
  - Redefining a key term for emphasis
- An ANALOGY that summarizes the thesis statement
- A SUMMARY of the main points, but only if the piece of writing is longer than three to four pages
- A statement that urges awareness by the readers
- A statement that looks ahead to the future
- A call to readers

### Strategies to Avoid

- Introducing new ideas or facts that belong in the body of the essay
- Rewording your introduction
- Announcing what you've discussed, as in "In this paper, I have explained why oil prices have dropped."
- Making absolute claims, as in "I have proved that oil prices don't always affect gasoline prices."
- Apologizing, as in "Even though I'm not an expert, I feel my position is correct."

paragraph until they've drafted their introduction. They do this to coordinate the beginning and end so that they can make sure they don't repeat the same strategy in both places.

Paragraph 42 is a concluding paragraph from an essay on the history of pizza and its modern appeal. It summarizes the main points of the essay.

42 For a food that is traced to Neolithic beginnings, like Mexico’s tortillas, Armenia’s lahmejoun, Scottish oatcakes, and even matzos, pizza has remained fresh and vibrant. Whether it’s galettes, the latest thin-crust invasion from France with bacon and onion toppings, or a plain slice of a cheese pie, the varieties of pizza are clearly limited only by one’s imagination.

—Lisa Pratt, “A Slice of History”

**EXERCISE 4-10** Working individually or in a peer-response group, return to Exercise 4-1, in which you wrote introductory paragraphs for three informally outlined essays. Now, write a concluding paragraph for each.

## CHAPTER 5

# Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

The word *critical* here has a neutral meaning. It doesn’t mean taking a negative view or finding fault, as when someone criticizes another person for doing something wrong. Rather, *critical* here applies to a mental stance of examining ideas thoroughly and deeply, refusing to accept ideas merely because they seem sensible at first thought, and tolerating questions that often lack definitive answers.

### 5a What is critical thinking?

Thinking isn’t something you choose to do, any more than a fish chooses to live in water. To be human is to think. But while thinking may come naturally, awareness of how you think doesn’t. Thinking about thinking is the key to critical thinking.

**Critical thinking** means taking control of your conscious thought processes. If you don’t take control of those processes, you risk being controlled by the ideas of others. The essence of critical thinking is thinking beyond the obvious—beyond the flash of visual images on a television screen, the alluring promises of glossy advertisements, the evasive statements by some people in the news, the half-truths of propaganda, the manipulations of SLANTED LANGUAGE, and faulty reasoning.