Five Elements of Good Writing

An elephant paints a picture at an elephant camp in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

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OBJECTIVES To understand purpose, audience, clarity, unity, and coherence
To use clear, descriptive language
To understand clear pronoun reference
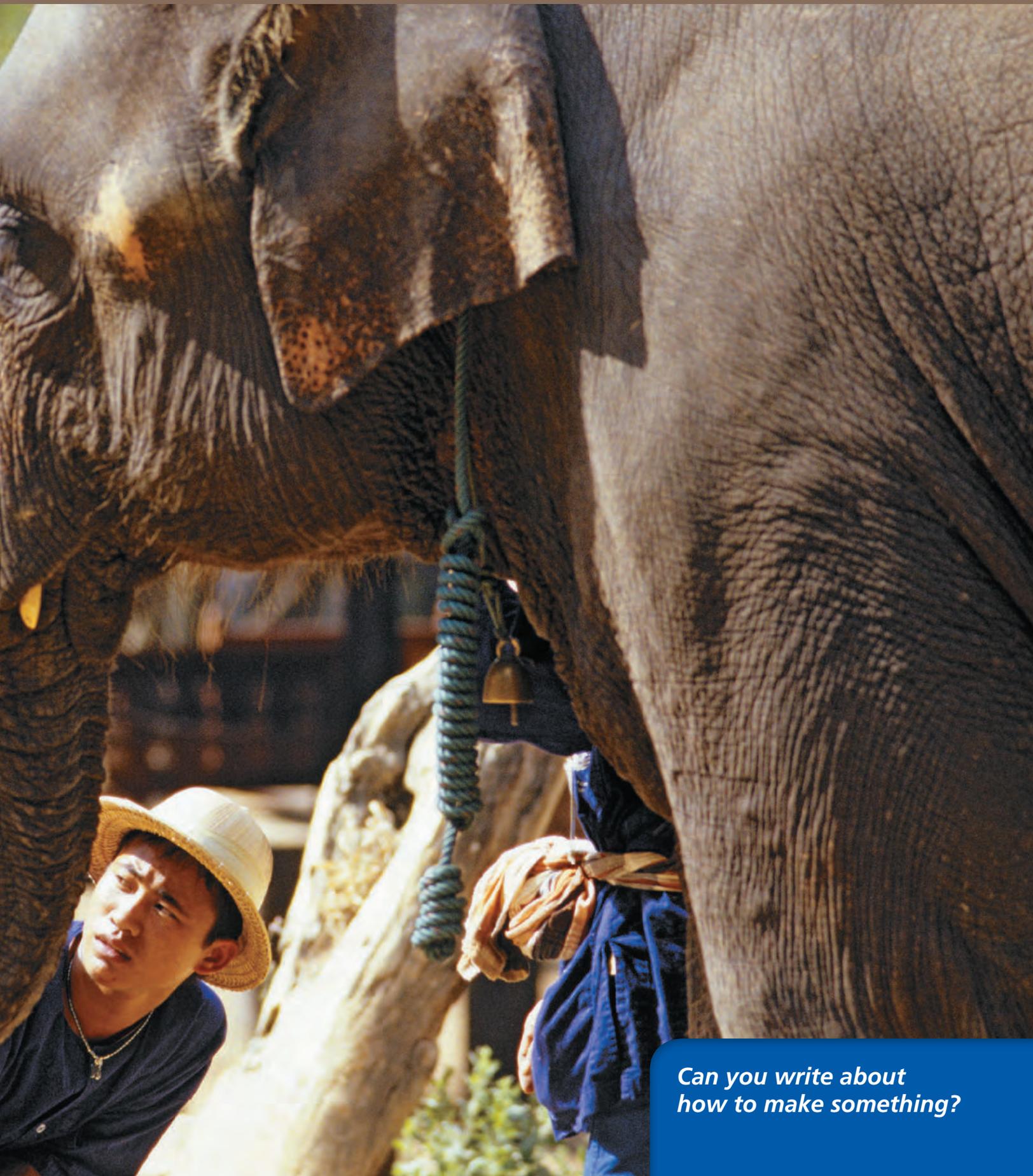
*Can you write about
how to make something?*

What Makes a Good Paragraph?

Now you know the basic parts of a paragraph:

- topic sentence
- controlling idea
- supporting sentences
- concluding sentence

It is extremely important for writers to understand the parts of a paragraph; however, there is more to good writing than just knowing these key components.

The next step to improving your writing is to move beyond words and sentences. You must learn to consider how all of the sentences interact with each other and how your reader will relate to your paragraph. In this unit, you will learn five elements of good writing:

- purpose
- audience
- clarity
- unity
- coherence

Five Elements of Good Writing

Element 1: Purpose

When we talk about the **purpose** of a paragraph, we are talking about the reasons that a writer is writing a particular paragraph. For writers to stay focused on their topic, they must understand the purpose that they are trying to accomplish. The purpose is the goal the writer is trying to achieve.

The three most common goals of academic writing are:

- to inform the readers
- to persuade the readers
- to entertain the readers

Answer the Preview Questions, based on your experience. Then, read the process paragraph and answer the questions that follow.

Preview Questions

1. Have you ever seen a mural? Where? What was the subject?

_____

_____

_____

2. What are some characteristics of a mural?

_____

_____

_____

Preparing to Paint a Mural

Painting a **mural** can be a very rewarding activity, but the artist should do a lot of preparation before getting started. First, he or she needs to choose the best location. Will the mural be indoors or outdoors? This answer will have an **impact** on the size of the mural and the types of paint used. After picking the location, the artist will choose the actual design of the mural. The design **influences** the amount of paint and the types of brushstrokes that will be applied to the wall. Some visuals can be better presented with spray paint while others benefit from a roller or traditional brushes. Finally, the artist needs to choose the size and the proportion of the visual. This can be done by practicing with small-scale representations of the mural. After these things are completed, the process of creating the work of art can begin.

a mural: wall painting

an impact: an effect

to influence: to affect, have an effect on

Post-Reading

1. What is the writer's purpose for writing this paragraph?

_____

_____

2. Does the writer stay focused on one idea or topic? If not, explain where the writer gets off topic.

_____

_____

3. Do you think the writer achieved his or her goal for writing this paragraph? Explain.

_____

_____

Purpose Statement

Writers often create a **purpose statement** <u>before they begin writing</u>. A **purpose statement** is a short sentence that clearly defines the point of the paragraph. Reviewing the purpose statement while you write will help you to stay on topic and maintain the focus of your writing. Some writers attach index cards or "sticky notes" on their computer screens to keep the goal of the writing within easy view.

Purpose statements are simple and to the point. For example, if you are going to write a paragraph about how to clean your room, your purpose statement would read something like this:

The purpose of this paragraph is to **explain how to clean your room.**

Although it might seem obvious that a paragraph should have only one topic, many writers fail to remain "on topic." It is very easy to lose focus and include material that does not fit in the paragraph. This extra information might belong in a new paragraph, or you might not need it at all. If you use a purpose statement, you can check that each sentence in the paragraph actually fulfills the purpose of that paragraph.

Here are some sample topics followed by example purpose statements:

Topic:	How to play dominoes
Purpose statement:	The purpose of this paragraph is to explain to the reader how to play the game called dominoes.
Topic:	The effects of insufficient sleep
Purpose statement:	The purpose of this paragraph is to tell the negative effects or results of not getting enough sleep each night.
Topic:	The messiest room that I have ever seen
Purpose statement:	The purpose of this paragraph is to describe the messiest room that I have ever seen.

ACTIVITY 2 Writing Purpose Statements

Read each of the following topics. Then write a purpose statement for each one.

1. Topic: Your craziest experience in a restaurant

Purpose statement: _The purpose of this paragraph is to tell about the time that my nephew started a food fight in a restaurant._

2. Topic: Alternative sources of energy

Purpose statement: _____

_____

3. Topic: The most important invention of the last 50 years

Purpose statement: _____

_____

4. Topic: My worst family vacation

Purpose statement: _____

_____

5. Topic: The dangers of genetically modified food

Purpose statement: _____

_____

6. Topic: How to learn up to 50 idioms a day

Purpose statement: _____

_____

Element 2: Audience

The second element of good writing is **to keep your audience in mind as you write**. The term *audience* refers to the readers. Good writers know who their audience is before they start writing. Good writers keep their audience in mind as they write every sentence in their paragraph.

Relating to Your Audience

Consider these two main elements in relating to your audience:

- viewpoint or person (first, second, or third)
- formal or informal writing

Person

Writers can choose one of three different **persons**, or points of view, when writing.

The **first person** refers to the person who is speaking. Paragraphs written in the first person use first-person pronouns *(I, we, me, us, mine, ours)* or first-person possessive adjectives *(my, our).* Paragraphs that explain personal experiences often use the first person.

Yesterday **I** went to the beach with **my** cousins.

first-person words

The **second person** refers to the person who is being spoken to. Paragraphs written in the second person use second-person pronouns *(you, yours)* and the second-person possessive adjective *(your).* It is generally used to give directions or instructions. The second person is often used for informal writing.

After filling the sink, **you** must then add detergent.

second-person word

Note that process paragraphs often use the second person (with or without the pronoun *you).* For example, commands are used without the word *you: First, choose the perfect location.*

The **third person** refers to the person or thing that is being spoken about. Paragraphs written in the third person use third-person pronouns *(he, she, it, they, him, her, them, his, hers, theirs)* and third-person possessive adjectives *(his, her, its, their).* Think of the third person as someone telling a story about another person or thing. Most academic paragraphs use third person.

He turned quickly and saw **them** leaving the theater.
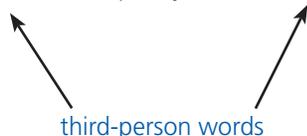
third-person words

Consistent Pronoun Usage

A paragraph should not jump from singular to plural nouns and pronouns consistent with respect to person. Good writers do not shift between first, second, and third person within one piece of writing.

The following sentences change person within the sentence, causing unnecessary shifts. Rewrite the sentences. Change the incorrect pronoun. (Hint: Pay careful attention to the nouns in the sentences.)

1. When a person goes shopping, you should always look for sales.

_____

_____

2. One should carpool if you want to save on gas.

_____

_____

3. Doctors warn people that you should "watch what you eat."

_____

_____

4. Jeff made minestrone soup for dinner. He told his mother that you should wait until it cooled down before eating it.

_____

_____

Choosing Person in Formal or Informal Writing

Most of the writing that you do for school is considered formal writing. In most cases, academic writing uses formal techniques in the third person. If you are unsure about the formality level of an assignment, ask your instructor for more details.

Certain topics work better using a particular person (first, second, or third). Here are some examples of topics, the person you can use for each, and the level of writing.

Type of Writing	Person	Level of Writing
1. A paragraph about the importance of voting	Third	Formal
2. A letter to your best friend	First and/or second	Informal
3. A description of your best vacation	First	Formal or informal, depending on audience

Read each topic and decide whether it requires first, second, or third person. Then decide whether the writing should be formal or informal. There may be more than one correct answer.

Type of Writing	Person	Level of Writing
1. An e-mail to your cousin	First and/or second	Informal
2. A paragraph about the first Olympic Games		
3. A paragraph about your trip to Mexico		
4. A paragraph telling how to bake bread		
5. A paragraph telling why you would make a good class leader		

Element 3: Clarity

Clarity refers to how easy it is for the reader to understand your writing. Good writers explain their points clearly. Clear sentences are not vague or indirect; they get the point across to the reader by using specific, concise language.

Here are two ways that you can improve clarity:

- Use **descriptive (or precise) words**
- Use **clear pronoun references**

Grammar for Writing

Using Clear, Descriptive Language

Using clear, descriptive language improves clarity in a paragraph. It helps the reader see accurately the person or thing the writer is describing. Avoid vague and unclear words, such as *good* and *nice*. Instead choose clear and precise words.

Examples	Explanation
At the 2012 Olympic Games in London, Usain Bolt of Jamaica broke his own Olympic record in the 100-meter dash. He is a **good** runner.	Poor word choice: **good** **Good** is vague. **Good** does not adequately describe an athlete who has won an Olympic medal.
At the 2012 Olympic Games in London, Usain Bolt of Jamaica broke his own Olympic record in the 100-meter dash. He is an **exceptional** runner.	Better word choice: **exceptional** **Exceptional** is more precise. **Exceptional** tells the reader that Usain Bolt is more than a good runner.
At the 2012 Olympic Games in London, Usain Bolt of Jamaica broke his own Olympic record in the 100-meter dash. He is a(an) _____ runner.	Other clear and descriptive words to fit this sentence: **outstanding, phenomenal, premier, unique**

Adding adjectives or prepositional phrases can make your sentences more specific and descriptive to improve the clarity of your writing.

Original: The soldiers slowly crossed the river.

More specific: The soldiers slowly crossed the **dangerous** river.

                     The soldiers slowly crossed the river **in the dark**.

                     The soldiers slowly crossed the **dangerous** river **in the dark**.

                     The **tired** soldiers slowly crossed the **dangerous** river **in the dark**.

ACTIVITY 5   Choosing Clear and Precise Words

Suggest three alternative words that are more descriptive or precise than the adjectives that are given. Use a dictionary or thesaurus to find appropriate adjectives.

1. good   _wonderful_   _incredible_   _delightful_

2. bad   _horrible_   _terrible_   _awful_

3. fun   _____   _____   _____

4. big   _____   _____   _____

5. small   _____   _____   _____

6. old   _____   _____   _____

ACTIVITY 6 Choosing Descriptive Phrases

Replace each vague or simple phrase with a more descriptive or accurate phrase.

1. the old house ___*the dilapidated house in the abandoned town*___

2. the long road _____

3. a nice gift _____

4. in the dark forest _____

5. the big factory _____

6. the good dessert _____

Clarity in Sentences

Just as it is important to maintain clarity at the word level, it is also important at the sentence level. The following nondescriptive sentences are followed by revised versions.

Vague or Unclear	Clear
1. The guy went to the store.	Miguel went to the hardware store to purchase a power drill.
2. Jennifer took her things with her when she went out.	Jennifer took her sunblock, glasses, and a towel when she went to the beach.
3. The house was dark.	The house was dimly lit; the only source of light was a candle in the hallway.

ACTIVITY 7 Rewriting for Clarity and Description

Rewrite each vague sentence and improve its clarity with more descriptive words.

1. That person knows a lot about computers.

   _____

   _____

2. His clothes looked nice.

   _____

   _____

3. The store is big.

   _____

   _____

4. After eating, we went to a house.

   _____

   _____

Discuss the Preview Questions with a classmate. Then, read the paragraph and answer the questions that follow.

Preview Questions

1. Have you ever noticed the workers in a restaurant? What types of jobs do the employees of a restaurant do?

2. What do you think it is like to work in a restaurant's kitchen?

Paragraph 11

Behind the Scenes in a Restaurant

A restaurant kitchen can be a very **hectic** place. While they are busy preparing and cooking the food, chefs shout at the staff. **Servers hustle** in and out of the kitchen at a tremendous **pace** to hurry the food to the hungry customers. When the customers finish eating, **bussers** rush the empty plates back into the kitchen and **carelessly** drop them into the huge sinks. Maintaining this constant **flow** of traffic in the kitchen is a complicated **juggling** act. The action in a restaurant kitchen never stops.

hectic: busy

a server: a waiter or waitress

to hustle: to hurry, move quickly

the pace: the speed

a busser: a helper who cleans tables in a restaurant

carelessly: the opposite of *carefully*

the flow: the movement

to juggle: to balance

Post-Reading

1. Draw a box around the topic sentence. Circle the main subject and underline the controlling idea.

2. What is the main purpose of this paragraph? In other words, what does the writer want to achieve by writing this essay?

_____

_____

3. Underline the concluding sentence.

4. What type of concluding sentence is it?

❑ restatement   ❑ suggestion   ❑ opinion   ❑ prediction

Building Better Sentences: For further practice, go to Practice 4 on page 235 in Appendix 1.

ACTIVITY 9 Clarity in a Paragraph

Refer to Paragraph 11 on page 49 to answer the questions below about clarity.

1. Write four words that name specific people.

_____

2. How do these words add to the clarity of the writer's message?

_____

3. Write one of the words or phrases that means "to do something quickly." _____

4. Skilled writers try to use specific adjectives to help readers understand the setting as much as possible. Write the adjectives that precede the nouns in these six noun phrases.

a. _____ place

b. _____ pace

c. _____ plates

d. _____ sinks

e. _____ flow

f. _____ juggling act

Grammar for Writing

Clear Pronoun Reference

Writers often use **pronouns** to avoid repeating a noun in a sentence or paragraph. Pronouns can make your writing clear and precise as long as every pronoun refers to a specific noun. When a pronoun reference is unclear, you can correct this by using the precise noun.

Explanation	Examples
Pronouns take the place of a person, place, or thing; Monique ➔ she São Paulo ➔ It, its tablet computers ➔ they Replace nouns with pronouns to avoid repetition of nouns.	Monique worked in the library when **she** was a student. One of the largest cities in the world is São Paulo, Brazil. **It** has close to 20 million people in **its** metropolitan area. Many schools are purchasing tablet computers because **they** are portable and easy to use.
Remember to make sure that every pronoun reference refers to a specific noun. If a pronoun reference is unclear, use the precise noun.	Unclear pronoun reference: Children should not be allowed to watch horror movies for many reasons. They say that these movies can disturb children. With the precise noun: Children should not be allowed to watch horror movies for many reasons. **Most psychologists** say that these movies can disturb children.

ACTIVITY 10 Editing for Clear Pronoun References

Read the following sentences. The number in parentheses is the number of pronouns in that group of sentences. Circle every pronoun. If there is a reference, and if the reference is not clear, change the pronoun to make the meaning of the sentence clear. The first one has been done for you.

1. My favorite snacks are blueberries and plain rice cakes. I like them because of the crunchy texture and of course the fact that they are a low calorie, healthy snack. (2)

    Change "them" to "rice cakes."

2. Chili is a kind of thick soup made with ground meat. Some people prepare it with beans. They like the combination of tastes. (2)

3. My uncle cooked chicken, corn, and potatoes for dinner. My cousin Frank liked them, but he did not like the corn. (2)

4. One of the easiest dishes to prepare is hummus. Hummus is a very thick dip made from mashed garbanzo beans. They are mixed with tahini paste. It tastes great. (2)

ACTIVITY 11 Editing for Clear Pronoun References

The following comparison paragraph contains six errors with pronoun reference. Improve the clarity of the sentences by changing the boxed words to words or phrases that are more specific.

Paragraph 12

The Weather in Chicago and Miami

My cousin and I recently had a discussion about whether his hometown, Chicago, or my hometown, Miami, has better weather. Our discussion centered on three differences between the weather in our two hometowns. First, Chicago has all four distinct seasons, but Miami does not. Chicagoans enjoy summer, fall, winter, and spring weather. **1** It, in contrast, has only two seasons: a very mild winter and a very long summer. Another major difference in the weather between our two cities is that **2** its worst weather occurs in the winter. On average, the high temperature reaches only around 32 degrees Fahrenheit, and the low each night goes down to about 20 degrees. Unlike Chicago, the problem in **3** it is not the cold but rather the heat. In the summer, the daytime temperature reaches 95 degrees and drops to only 75 or so at night. Finally, **4** they worry about different weather problems. While a Chicagoan's biggest weather fear is a blizzard, the biggest weather problem for **5** them is a hurricane. In the end, **6** we learned that each of our hometowns has unique weather.
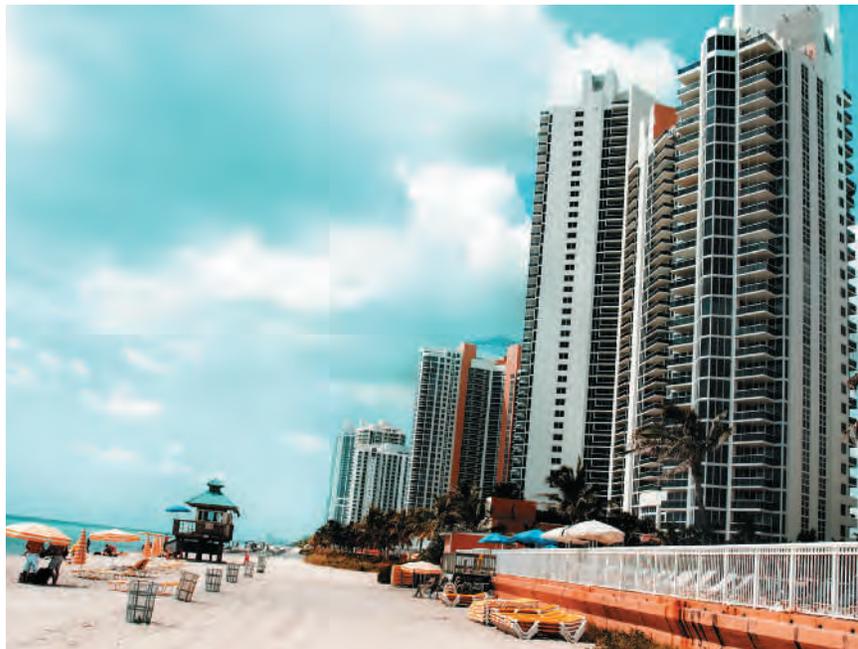
Vague Word	Better Clarity
1. It	_____
2. its	_____
3. it	_____
4. they	_____
5. them	_____
6. we	_____

Element 4: Unity

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

ACTIVITY 12 **Analyzing Unity**

Read the following process paragraph. Underline the sentence that does not belong.

Paragraph 13

Cleaning 101

1 Cleaning your room is not difficult if you follow some simple **guidelines**. **2** First, you must pick up all of your clothes off the floor. **3** Then you need to decide which clothes are dirty and which clothes are clean and put them in their appropriate places. **4** It is important to wash your clothes with good-quality laundry detergent to keep them looking neat and clean. **5** After that, you should put away any items that are out of place. **6** The next step is to **dust** all of your furniture, such as your **nightstand** or **dresser**. **7** The final step is to **mop** or **vacuum** the floor, depending on its surface. **8** Once you have finished these steps, you can relax as you think about your good work.

a guideline: a general rule

to dust: to clean with a dry cloth

a nightstand: a small table next to a bed

a dresser: a piece of furniture used to hold clothing

to mop: to clean a floor with soap and water

to vacuum: to clean a rug or carpet with a vacuum cleaner

You can use a purpose statement to help establish your purpose and to help establish unity. You can also check to see whether each sentence follows the writer's purpose statement: "The purpose of this paragraph is to explain how to clean your room." Study these questions and answers about Paragraph 13.

1. Does the first sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

Yes. Here, the first sentence is the topic sentence. It lets the readers know that the paragraph will give the steps necessary to clean their room.

2. Does the second sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

Yes. It gives the first step to cleaning your room.

3. Does the third sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

Yes. It provides information describing what to do with the clothes. It provides extra information about the second sentence.

4. Does the fourth sentence maintain the unity of the paragraph?

No. It tells the reader about the importance of doing laundry with a specific type of laundry detergent. Because sentence four does not support the purpose of the paragraph, it should not be included.

5. Do sentences five through seven maintain the unity of the paragraph?

Yes. Each one gives a step in how to clean your room.

6. What about Sentence eight? Does it belong?

Yes. This is the concluding sentence for the ideas in this paragraph. It sums up all the steps included in the paragraph.

Building Better Sentences: For further practice, go to Practice 5 on page 235 in Appendix 1.

Read the following classification paragraph. Two of the sentences do not belong. Write the numbers of these two sentences and the reasons that they do not belong.

Paragraph 14

Movie Types

1 There are many ways to classify movies, and perhaps the most basic is by general genre—fiction, nonfiction, and hybrid docudrama. 2 Most feature films fall into the category of fiction because the story line for the film has been invented. 3 The characters and plot are not real, and the story often presents fantasy-type scenarios. 4 One such example is the *Batman* series, for everyone knows that Batman is not a real person. 5 I loved this type of movie when I was a child. 6 Another category is the nonfiction movie. 7 This popular movie style tells the

story of a real person—living or dead—or an event. **8** In fact, it is often adapted from the written account of a person or event. **9** Finally, there is the hybrid film, which is basically a combination of the two. **10** The word *hybrid* is also used to describe a type of car. **11** In this type of film, the writer takes a real event or person and adds fictional information, often to make the film more interesting. **12** Perhaps the most famous example of this type of film is *Titanic*. **13** In it, the director adds the romantic element of the forbidden love between two young people. **14** With these three genres of film readily available to moviegoers, there is always something for everyone at the movie theatre.

1. _____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

Building Better Sentences: For further practice, go to Practice 6 on page 236 in Appendix 1.

Element 5: Coherence

A piece of writing has **coherence** when all of the ideas are organized and flow smoothly and logically from one to the next. When a paragraph or essay has coherence, the reader can follow the main ideas more easily.

Three important features of coherence are:

- logical order
- repetition of key words
- use of transitional words and phrases

Logical Order

It is important to follow a logical order in your writing. The next activity will help you to understand the importance of logical order.

ACTIVITY 14   Sequencing Information

The following sentences form a paragraph, but they are not in the best order. Then read the sentences and then number them from one to five to indicate the best order.

_____ **a.** He starts his day by putting on his black cape and tall black hat.

_____ **b.** When he arrives, he puts on a performance that includes jokes, card tricks, illusions, and magic tricks.

_____ **c.** When his performance ends and the audience is happy, Michael returns home, satisfied that he has done his job as a magician well.

_____ **d.** Michael's typical day at work is far from ordinary.

_____ **e.** He then grabs his magic wand and gets into his car and drives to a different location each day, usually a birthday party or other special event.

Repetition of Key Words

Good writers know that certain key words need to be repeated in a paragraph to keep the reader focused on the topic. Sometimes students worry that using the same word again and again can sound too repetitive. To avoid being repetitive, you can also use pronouns to replace these key nouns. For example, look at the paragraph that you put in order in Activity 14 and answer the following questions:

1. What is the topic of the paragraph?

_____

2. What is the writer's purpose?

_____

3. What key words (nouns or pronouns) does the writer repeat to keep the reader focused on the topic?

_____

Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitional words and phrases are essential to maintain the flow and coherence of a paragraph. They are the links between ideas.

Commonly Used Transitional Words and Phrases			
To give examples	for example	for instance	namely
To add information	and	next	in addition
To compare or contrast	in contrast	by comparison	on the other hand
To show time	finally	after	before
To emphasize	for these reasons	obviously	without a doubt
To show sequence	first (second, third, etc.)	next	at the same time
To summarize	therefore	thus	in conclusion

For more information on transitions and connectors, see the *Brief Writer's Handbook with Activities*, pages 220–222.

Proofreading

Writer's Note

Proofreading Your Work

Good writers know that it takes more than just one session of writing to create a good paragraph. Proofreading is an essential last step in the revision process. Try to proofread your work at least twice before turning it in to your teacher.

Five Proofreading Strategies

Many writers have trouble doing a good job proofreading their work. Follow these suggestions to proofread your final writing assignment.

1. Take a break from the work.

Give yourself time after you have finished writing. The more time you take, the better your proofreading will be. A day or more is ideal, but even a break of 30 minutes helps.

2. Read your writing aloud.

Reading your work aloud, even if you are just mumbling it to yourself, does two things. It helps you to read your work more carefully and slowly, and it helps you to catch more errors.

3. Read your paper backward.

Start proofreading your writing with the last sentence. Then read the second to last sentence, the third to last, and so on. This technique can help you to find more grammatical errors.

4. Cover your work.

With another piece of paper, cover up everything except the line that you are reading. This method may help you to focus more closely on each line.

5. Pretend that you are someone else.

Read your paper as a reader, not as a writer. Reading your work through the eyes of the reader will help you to identify phrases or sentences that might be unclear. One way to do this even more effectively is to read your paper after you have taken a break from it for two or three days (or longer). You will be amazed at how many words, ideas, and sentences you will want to change.

For more tips on editing your writing, see the *Brief Writer's Handbook with Activities*, pages 199–203.

Writer's Note

Titles for Your Work

A paragraph can have a title, but it is not necessary. An essay, on the other hand, always has a title.

The title of a work should be short. It should not be a complete sentence. The title should describe the contents of the whole work. All important words (including the first word) should be capitalized.

Study the titles of the paragraphs in Units 1, 2, and 3 to learn about effective titles.

Building Better Vocabulary

Circle the word or phrase that is most closely related to the word or phrase on the left. If necessary, use a dictionary to check the meaning of words you do not know.

		A	B
1.	up to 50	48 or 49	50 or 51
2.	mural	in a book	on a wall
3.	exceptional	very bad	very good
4.	the pace	the quality	the speed
5.	a blizzard	summer	winter
6.	a genre	an idea	a type
7.	impact*	cause	effect
8.	outstanding	very good	very bad
9.	mild	not extreme	not appropriate
10.	even	crooked	parallel
11.	the flow	the display	the movement
12.	the source*	the customer	the origin
13.	to dust	to clean	to explain
14.	hectic	very busy	very rusty
15.	unique*	different	similar
16.	to hustle	to arrive on time	to move quickly
17.	tremendous	large, a lot	small, a few
18.	to adapt*	to modify	to support
19.	a nightstand	in a bedroom	in a restaurant
20.	guidelines*	improvements	rules

*Indicates words that are part of the Academic Word List. See pages 224–225 for a complete list.

ACTIVITY 16 Using Collocations

Fill in each blank with the word or phrase on the left that most naturally completes the phrase on the right. If necessary, use a dictionary to check the meaning of words you do not know.

1. follow / influence   to _____ certain steps

2. catch / take   the paper will _____ fire

3. an idea / a purpose   to fulfill _____

4. business / impact   to have a/an _____ on something

5. of / in   alternative sources _____ energy

6. grills / traffic   constant flow of _____

7. in / on   the discussion centered _____ (a topic)

8. books / ships   a stack of _____

9. lit / made   a dimly _____ room

10. disturbed / mashed   _____ potatoes

11. ingredient / layer   the top _____ of a cake

12. in / of   the effects _____ watching too much TV

13. car / floor   to mop a _____

14. by / of   a combination _____ several things

15. film / plot   the _____ of a movie

Original Student Writing

ACTIVITY 17 Writing Your Own Paragraph

Choose one of the topic sentences that you wrote in Unit 1, Activity 13, page 23, and develop it into a paragraph. (Do not choose the sentence that you already developed into a paragraph in Unit 1, Activity 16, page 26.)

Your topic: _____

Brainstorm area:

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                         │
│                                                         │
│                                                         │
│                                                         │
│                                                         │
│                                                         │
│                                                         │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Purpose statement: _____

_____

Follow these guidelines:

- Include the four features of a well-written paragraph from page 28 in Unit 1.

- Consider your audience and person (first, second, or third).

- Decide whether to write in a formal or informal style.

- Focus on clarity, unity, and coherence.

- Use transitional words and phrases from page 57.

- Use at least two of the vocabulary words or phrases presented in Activities 15 and 16. Underline these words and phrases in your paragraph.

If you need ideas for words and phrases, see the Useful Vocabulary for Better Writing on pages 226–229.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Exchange books with a partner and look at Activity 17. Read your partner's paragraph. Then use Peer Editing Sheet 2 on NGL.Cengage.com/GW3 to help you comment on your partner's paragraph. Be sure to offer suggestions and comments that will help your partner improve his or her writing. Use your partner's comments as you revise your own paragraph.

Tips for Peer Editing

Follow these tips for effective peer editing.

- Begin by saying something positive about your partner's work.

- Answer the questions completely on the Peer Editing Sheet. Be specific.

- Make suggestions in a direct but constructive way. Do not write general comments such as "This is bad" or "You don't make any sense." Instead, use specific statements such as "This part is confusing because ..." or "What do you mean to say here?"

- Remember, you are commenting on the writing, not the writer. Keep your comments focused on what you have read.

Additional Topics for Writing

Here are some ideas for paragraphs. When you write, follow the guidelines in Activity 17.

PHOTO TOPIC: Look at the photo on pages 38–39. Write a paragraph describing how to build or create something.

TOPIC 2: Write a paragraph describing the types of students in your class.

TOPIC 3: How many types of reality TV shows are there? Write a paragraph classifying the main types of these programs.

TOPIC 4: Write about your academic journey from the time you were ten years old until now. Describe the different parts of this learning experience.

TOPIC 5: What is the best way to make new friends?

Timed Writing

How quickly can you write in English? There are many times when you must write quickly, such as on a test. It is important to feel comfortable during those times. Timed-writing practice can make you feel better about writing quickly in English.

1. Take out a piece of paper.

2. Read the paragraph guidelines and the writing prompt.

3. Brainstorm ideas for five minutes.

4. Write a short paragraph (six to ten sentences).

5. You have 25 minutes to write your paragraph.

Paragraph Guidelines

- Remember to give your paragraph a title.
- Double-space your paragraph.
- Write as legibly as possible (if you are not using a computer).
- Include a topic sentence that consists of the main subject and a controlling idea.
- End your paragraph with a one-sentence conclusion.
- Try to give yourself a few minutes before the end of the activity to review your work. Check for spelling, verb tense, and subject-verb agreement mistakes.

Describe your favorite type of movie.