



University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

Paragraph writing

for the 1st — year students
of Baccalaureate

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PARAGRAPH WRITING

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A paragraph is a series of sentences that develops a single idea, or topic. The following paragraph develops the topic "The art career of Grandma Moses."

(1) Anna Mary Robertson Moses, better known as the artist Grandma Moses, began her career at an age when most people have already completed their life's work. (2) She was in her seventies when she began painting. (3) Born in 1860, Anna spent most of her life working on a farm. (4) Following her retirement, she took up embroidery, but arthritis eventually made close handwork too difficult and she traded her needles for paintbrushes. (5) Although she had never had any professional training, she became one of America's most popular painters. (6) Her use of simple forms and lively colours enabled her to portray country living in an innocent, warm manner. (7) By the time she was one hundred years old, Anna Moses had produced over sixteen hundred fine paintings. (8) Those who claim that life is for the young should give some thought to the accomplishments of Grandma Moses.

Most paragraphs consist of a topic sentence, several supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. A topic sentence states the main idea of a paragraph. In the preceding paragraph, the main idea is that the artist Grandma Moses began her career late in life.

Supporting sentences offer specific facts, examples, or reasons to explain or develop what is stated in the topic sentence. The paragraph on Grandma Moses contains six supporting sentences, each of which has something to say about the artist and her career.

A concluding sentence restates the topic sentence or offers a final comment about the topic. Although a concluding sentence

is not a necessary part of a paragraph, it is usually a very helpful one. In the paragraph on Grandma Moses, the concluding sentence reminds readers of the topic and also gives them something further to think about.

For Analysis On your paper, follow these instructions about the modal paragraph.

1. Write the topic sentence.
2. List the numbers of the sentences that support the topic sentence.
3. Write the number of the sentence that gives the writer's comment about the subject. State in your own words how that sentence is related to the details in the other sentences.

Planning a Paragraph

Selecting and Limiting a Topic

If you are free to choose a topic, consider those subjects that you would most enjoy telling readers about. Topics that interest you are likely to interest your readers. It is generally wise to avoid subjects about which you know little or nothing. However, if you are willing to study an unfamiliar topic, you may want to communicate your newly acquired knowledge to others.

Once you have a topic idea for a paragraph, you may have to limit that idea.

Strategies

1. *Confine yourself to one example of the topic idea.*

TOPIC IDEA Civil rights leaders

LIMITED TOPIC The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

2. *Substitute a limited time period for a long one.*

TOPIC IDEA Post-World War II presidential elections

LIMITED TOPIC The presidential election of 1980

3. *Concentrate on a specific part of a subject instead of on the entire subject.*

TOPIC IDEA Sewing

LIMITED TOPIC How to sew on a button

4. *Limit the topic idea to a condition, place, or use.*

TOPIC IDEA Driving a car

LIMITED TOPIC Driving in the rain [Condition]

TOPIC IDEA Mountain climbing

LIMITED TOPIC Climbing in the Rockies [Place]

TOPIC IDEA Judo

LIMITED TOPIC Judo as a means of exercise [Use]

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Limiting Topics Number your paper from 1 to 10. Write *Limited enough* next to the numbers of the topics that are limited enough for a paragraph. Limit the other topics to make them suitable for a paragraph, and write these limited topics.

SAMPLE Playing a musical instrument

ANSWER Playing the recorder

1. The best way to light charcoal for a barbecue
2. Clothes
3. How to break a bad habit
4. Major events of your life
5. The fastest means of transport in the world
6. Families
7. My favourite pastime
8. What skills are required in sports?
9. Famous women travellers
10. Should high school sophomores have the same privileges as seniors?

Limiting a Topic by Listing Details

If you find it difficult to limit a topic idea, perhaps you need to gather your thoughts and examine them. Begin by writing down the topic idea and listing under it as many related details as you can. The following is an example of such a list.

Topic Idea: The Great Wall of China

1. Erected in the third century B.C., probably during reign of the emperor Shih Hwang-ti (246-210 B.C.).
2. Only structure that can be seen from outer space.
3. Starting from seacoast east of Peking, winds its way over field and mountain for more than 1500 miles.
4. Many guards needed to patrol the structure.
5. Designed to deter the barbarian nomads of Mongolia, including the fierce Huns, from raiding fertile farmlands to the south.
6. Averages twenty feet in width at base and twelve feet at top.
7. Height ranges from fifteen to fifty feet.
8. In payment for work, guards given land near wall so that they could grow own food.
9. Watchtowers forty feet high every two hundred feet.
10. Massive construction job took millions of soldiers and other labourers eighteen years to finish.
11. Many who guarded wall during Middle Ages lived entire lives on the wall: born on wall, married there, and died there.
12. Guarding wall was tedious and usually unrewarding Job.

When you finish writing down what you know about the topic, examine your list for related ideas. In the preceding list, for example, two of the details (1, 5) give historical information about the Great Wall. Four others (4, 8, 11, 12) talk about the soldiers who guarded the wall. The largest group of details (2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10) provides facts related to the wall's size.

By eliminating the details about the Great Wall's history and those about the soldiers who guarded it, you could narrow your

topic idea from "The Great Wall of China" to "The size of the Great Wall of China." The topic would then be limited enough for a paragraph.

Exercise 2 Prewriting: Limiting Topics Study the lettered items under the following topic ideas. Separate the items into groups by listing the letters of the items that are closely related. Each topic idea will have three groups. Write the limited topic of each group.

Topic Idea: The Roman Colosseum.

- a. Structure originally named Flavian Amphitheater; Flavius was family name of emperors of the time.
- b. Its 1800-foot circumference featured eighty entrances, allowed for easy coming and going of crowds.
- c. In Latin, colosseus means "huge."
- d. Fountains of scented water cooled air for spectators.
- e. The Colosseum derived permanent name from Colossus of Nero, a giant statue that was moved near amphitheater.
- f. Statues adorned entire structure, and numerous rows of seats were built of marble.
- g. Arena was occasionally flooded so that famous naval battles could be reproduced.
- h. Floor of arena could be raised and lowered in places, allowing scenery changes for wild animal hunts, gladiator contests, and other spectacles.
- i. Today coliseum denotes any large amphitheater designed for public entertainment or assemblies.
- j. Awnings unrolled from top wall to shade spectators.
- k. Animals and men who were to perform kept in rooms just beneath floor of arena.

Assignment Prewriting Choose five topics that you are familiar with or are prepared to study. Limit each for a paragraph, and write the limited topics.

Continuing Assignment Prewriting Write down two topic ideas. Choose topics that interest you or that you know something about. Beneath each topic, list at least eight details that you could use in writing a paragraph. Study the lists,

grouping those details that are related. Write a limited topic for the largest group of details in each list. Save your paper.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you choose topics in which you have some interest or knowledge?
2. Did you limit each topic for a paragraph?

Check your Continuing Assignment for these additional points:

3. Did you list at least eight details for each topic?
4. Did you group the related details in each list?
5. Did you clearly state the limited topic of each group?

Controlling Idea

A good way of introducing the topic so that it is both interesting and effective is to *make a point about it*. You save time and reduce the risk of confusion if you make clear your idea about or attitude towards your topic.

The point you want to make about your topic in a paragraph is called the **controlling idea**. A topic sentence that clearly reveals your controlling idea accomplished two things: first, it helps the reader understand what your point is and where you're going with it; second, it helps keep you focused as you develop your paragraph by adding supporting details. The controlling idea is your promise to the reader that you will talk about one particular aspect of your topic.

Take a close look at the following topic sentences. Why are the ones on the right so much more clear and interesting than those on the left?

WEAK

Many people around the world enjoy music.

STRONG

There is nothing that bridges gaps between cultures, languages, or even generations, like music.

A large number of popular magazines these days have scented perfume ad inserts.

My recent encounter with a lawyer really annoyed me.

I am literally sick of the stench wafting from the “scratch-and-sniff” ads that infest contemporary fashion magazines.

After my dealings last week with a member of the legal profession, lawyers have now joined insurance adjusters and tax auditors at the top of my hate list.

Writing a Topic Sentence

Once you have limited a topic for your paragraph, your next task is to express that topic in a sentence. The **topic sentence** states the idea that unifies, the details in your paragraph.

To be effective, your topic sentence should be as specific as possible. Try to word it so that it is neither too general nor too narrow for the details that it unites. A topic sentence is too general if it promises a broader discussion than the one that actually follows it. A topic sentence is too narrow if it promises less than what the supporting details actually cover. For example, review the limited topic and list of details that follow.

Limited Topic: The size of the Great Wall of China

1. Only structure that can be seen from space.
2. Starting from seacoast east of Peking, winds its way over field and mountain for more than 1500 miles.
3. Averages twenty feet in width at base and twelve feet at top.
4. Height ranges from fifteen to fifty feet.
5. Watchtowers forty feet high every two hundred feet.
6. Massive construction job took millions of soldiers and other labourers eighteen years to finish.

Now consider which of the following statements would make the most suitable topic sentence for a paragraph using the details in the list.

- a. The Great Wall of China is the largest, most durable structure ever built.
- b. The Great Wall of China is an extremely long structure.
- c. The Great Wall of China is an enormous structure.

As a possible topic sentence for the details, the first statement is too general. It promises more information about the wall than the supporting details offer. For this statement to be a suitable topic sentence, you would have to include details that compare the wall's size and durability with those of other great structures. The second possible topic sentence is too specific. It promises to be about just the Great Wall's length, whereas the supporting details discuss not only the wall's length but also its height and width. Only the third statement accurately expresses what the details of the paragraph will discuss.

Exercise Prewriting: Topic Sentences Three possible topic sentences are given for each set of details. On your paper, write the one that would be suitable for a paragraph written from the details on the list. Explain your choices.

1. *Details*

Wok is Chinese cooking pan with rounded bottom.

Permits concentrated heat required for most Chinese cooking.

Used for stir-frying, a method of Chinese cooking.

Shape makes constant stirring easy so that food cooks quickly and evenly.

Possible Topic Sentences

- a. Every kitchen should be equipped with a wok.
- b. A wok is useful for Chinese cooking.
- c. For a different and unusual cooking experience, try using a wok.

2. *Details*

According to legend, when Achilles was a child his mother immersed him in River Styx.

Contact with water of Styx supposed to make Achilles immortal.

Unfortunately, Achilles' mother held him by heel when she immersed him, so heel remained vulnerable.

Achilles later killed by arrow that struck him in heel.

Possible Topic Sentences

- a. Achilles was a famous warrior of ancient Greece
- b. Achilles, the greatest of all Greek warrior, died of a wound from an arrow.
- c. The expression “Achilles’ heel,” meaning a small but deadly weakness, is based on the fate of the Greek warrior Achilles.

Assignment Writing Write down the six limited topics that you identified for the lists of details given in Exercise 2. Beneath each limited topic, compose a topic sentence that expresses the limited topic.

Continuing Assignment Writing In the Continuing Assignment, you wrote limited topics for two groups of related details. Now write a topic sentence for each limited topic. Save your paper.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following point:

Does each of your topic sentences state precisely what the details will discuss?

Supporting Sentences and Concluding Sentence

Writing Supporting Sentences

A topic sentence needs to be supported with specific statements. **Supporting sentences** provide the detailed information that readers need in order to understand or accept the topic sentence. There are three basic kinds of details that you can use in your supporting sentences: facts, examples, and reasons.

Facts

A **fact** is something that you know with certainty. Its truth is either obvious or provable. Facts can be such things as descriptions of people or objects, unbiased reports of events, confirmed statistics, and pieces of technical information.

The topic sentence of the following paragraph is in italics. The supporting sentences provide facts that illustrate the idea expressed in the topic sentence.

Model

		<i>Berlin was once called the most beautiful city in Europe.</i>
fact	—	Linden, the city's main boulevard, was the longest city street in the world.
fact	—	Berlin was widely acclaimed for its beautiful broad avenues, shaded by huge old trees, that set off its wonderful architecture.
fact	—	The rococo, baroque, Gothic and Renaissance architecture, as well as the ornate masonry of the early twentieth century, all contributed to the beauty and splendor of pre-war Berlin.
fact	—	There were also special marvels: Pergamon, an entire transplanted Turkish town; the magnificent Brandenburg Gate that spanned Unter den Linden; and the exquisite Schloss Charlottenberg.

Examples

An **example** is one case that is representative of a group as a whole. Examples are valuable because they help readers understand the characteristics of a group. You will notice that facts can serve as examples.

The topic sentence of the following paragraph identifies a type of behaviour characteristic of a group. The supporting sentences offer examples that show that behaviour.

Model

Example	Patriotism forces citizens to consider their country's needs ahead of their own comfort. For example, during World War II, civilians in the United States displayed patriotism, willingly or unwillingly, when they limited their consumption of goods so that the government could obtain extra food and clothing for soldiers fighting abroad. More recently, many people have bicycled, walked, or roller-skated to and from work, saving themselves and the country thousands of gallons of oil and gasoline. These people imposed hardships on themselves in order to save the goods the country needed to continue to exist.
Example	

Reasons

A **reason** is a statement that explains or justifies another statement. You use reasons as supporting details when you want to show readers why: why a statement is true, why an event occurs, or why readers should behave in a certain way. Reasons may also be facts.

Some paragraphs offer several reasons in support of the topic sentence. Others give just one reason and use the remaining supporting sentences to enlarge on that reason. In the following paragraph, the writer gives three distinct reasons that support the topic sentence.

Model

Reason		<i>With traffic problems in big cities, people should consider the advantages of using the underground to get to a place.</i>
Reason		Rangewide system of the underground has made it practical and efficient. Due to a strict schedule you'll never waste your
Reason		time waiting for a train. An important advantage of the underground is that it has the biggest passenger-capacity amid other means of transport. Furthermore,
Reason		you'll never be stuck in a traffic jam or get into an accident. These advantages of the underground made it likely means of transport.

Many paragraphs combine all three kinds of details—facts, examples, and reasons—to support the topic sentence. The writer of the following paragraph uses facts, an example, and reasons in the supporting sentences.

Model

Reason		<i>Many people do not realize that potato chips are junk food.</i> It is not recognized as a kind of junk food because it is made of a vegetable. Existence of potato diets is associated with healthy way of nourishing. For example, in order to loose weight you should eat 1 lb of
Reason		boiled unsalty potatoes a day.
Example		However, the chips are deep-fried in a big amount of sizzling oil, which is resulted in consumption of carcinogenic substances.
fact		Thus, the food we eat seems to have profound effects on our health. They are known as substances which cause cancer.
fact		

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Supporting Sentences On your paper, write the two topic sentences that follow. Under each one, write the letters of the details that support it. Tell whether each detail is a fact, an example, or a reason.

Topic Sentences

1. Although we associate parachutes with airplanes, the parachute existed long before the airplane.
2. The parachute is put to many uses these days.

Possible Supporting Details

- a. World-record speed cars use parachutes for braking.
- b. Parachute invented in 1783, many years before Wright brothers made their famous flight.
- c. Armed forces use parachutes to drop soldiers and weapons behind enemy lines.
- d. Sport of skydiving developed around parachutes.
- e. Creator of parachute was Louis Lenormand (1757-1839) of France.
- f. Lenormand intended his invention to be means of saving people forced to leap from burning buildings.
- g. Not until 1912 was parachute used on jump from an aircraft.
- h. Makes possible soft landing of delicate spacecraft.
- i. Inventor tested effectiveness by jumping from tower with it.
- j. Parachutes also valuable for dropping food and medical supplies to people in remote places.

Exercise 2 Writing: Supporting Sentences On your paper, write the following limited topics as topic sentences. Then convert into supporting sentences the facts, examples, and reasons listed under each and use them to write a paragraph.

Limited Topic: Difficult tasks that computers can do

Examples:

Keep inventories of stock for stores

Control machinery in factories

Maintain records and do calculations for banks

Track course of spacecraft and monitor its equipment

Control movement of subway cars and trains

Placement of the Topic Sentence

Usually when you write a paragraph, you will begin with the topic sentence and follow it with the supporting sentences. This arrangement allows readers to learn at the beginning of a paragraph what the main idea is. To achieve certain effects, however, you may sometimes change this order. You may place the topic sentence among the supporting sentences or after those sentences. Note the position of the topic sentence (in italics) in the following paragraph.

Model

When my alarm clock rings in the morning, I always turn it off and go back to sleep. Just as I am getting over the rude experience of the alarm, my father raps loudly on my door and says something intended to be funny like, "Up and at 'em!" or, "Eileen, are you trying to get into the *Guinness Book of World Records* for consecutive hours slept?" Then Dad stands outside my door chuckling to himself until I come out and head for the shower. Fortunately, he cannot hear my mumbling once I am in the shower. *Every day my father and I follow the same ritual.* One of these mornings we will shock each other. I'll already be in the shower when he knocks. Better yet, maybe he'll say something truly funny for a change!

Exercise 3 Prewriting: Topic Sentences On your paper, write the topic sentence of each of the following paragraphs. The topic sentences are not at the beginning of the paragraphs.

1. A cockroach always seems to know from which direction it is about to be hit, and it runs the other way. The legs and underside of the cockroach are lined with rows of tiny hairs, which enable it to feel the wind from an approaching swat. Once it detects the direction of the coming swat, the cockroach runs away on its strong legs that make it one of the fastest running insects. The cockroach is thin and slip-

perly so that it can vanish into tiny cracks. Even if the cockroach is unable to run into a safe crack in time, it has a hard, leathery body that helps it to survive all but the hardest hits. These features have aided the survival of the cockroach and have assured its reputation as a common pest around the world.

2. If you look at the tablet of a secretary who is taking notes at a meeting, you may see what looks like a page of scribbling. That scribbling is known as shorthand. Shorthand is a method of writing in which letters or symbols stand for entire words or phrases so that words can be written almost as quickly as they are spoken. The page that may look like scribbling to you makes sense to the secretary who knows all of the symbols. Once a meeting is over, the secretary types the notes into words that everybody can read.

Writing a Concluding Sentence

Some paragraphs seem complete once you have stated the last supporting detail. Other paragraphs, particularly those that are not part of a larger composition, need a **concluding sentence** to bring them to a close.

There are two types of concluding sentences that you can use in a paragraph. The first type restates the topic sentence in a different way. By restating your topic sentence in a concluding sentence, you ensure that readers understand the point of the paragraph. The sentence in italics in the following paragraph is an example of a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence.

Model

Why do swimmers exercise and swim once or twice a day, six days a week, twelve months a year? They do it because they have a tremendous desire to compete against other swimmers all across the country. Many excellent swimmers want to enter national meets, but only the very best can compete. While they are in training, swimmers

enter local races against others their own age, and the best from those competitions advance to state, regional, and even national competitions. *Unless they train faithfully, swimmers will never fulfil their to be among the best.*

The second type of concluding sentence offers a final comment about the topic. You may, for example, state a logical conclusion, give a personal impression, pose a question, or recommend a course of action. Of course, your final remark must flow naturally from what you have already said in the paragraph. The writer of the following paragraph on Babe Ruth uses the concluding sentence to present his attitude toward the subject.

Model

Ruth's prowess with the bat was apparent early, but he was thought of primarily as a pitcher—and with good reason. With the Red Sox in 1915, he won eighteen games, seventeen of them after June 1. In 1916 he won twenty-three, including nine shutouts (an American League record for lefthanders that stood alone for sixty-two years until the Yankees' Ron Guidry tied it in 1978) and had a 1.75 earned-run average, the best in the league. He also went all the way in a fourteen-inning game. In the 1916 World Series, which is still the longest World Series game ever played and which Ruth won, 2-1. *He was not just good; he was a great pitcher.*

Exercise 4 Prewriting: Concluding Sentences On your paper, tell which type of concluding sentence—one that restates the topic sentence or one that offers a final comment—is used in each of the following paragraphs. Then write an alternate concluding sentence of the type that is not used.

An editorial cartoon is a special kind of cartoon that usually appears on the editorial page of a newspaper. An editorial cartoon presents an opinion on some issue in the news. The issue may be one that is discussed in an editorial, or it may be one that is treated in the cartoon alone. Most cartoonists use common

symbols to present their opinions clearly. For example, the donkey is used to represent the Democratic Party and the elephant is used to represent the Republican party. When you see an editorial cartoon, you should analyse the opinion that it is presenting and decide whether you agree with it.

Exercise 5 Writing: Paragraphs

Use the topic sentences and supporting details given in Exercise 1 to write two paragraphs. Be sure to arrange the details in a suitable order and write them in complete sentences. At the end of each paragraph, write a concluding sentence. For one of the paragraphs, write a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence. For the other paragraph, write a concluding sentence that offers a final comment on the topic.

Assignment 1 Prewriting

For the following topic sentence list four or more possible supporting details. Compose your lists with facts, examples, reasons, or any suitable combination of the three.

It is not safe to keep money at home.

Assignment 2 Writing

Convert the topic sentence and list of supporting details that you wrote for Assignment 1 into paragraph. In the paragraph place the topic sentence somewhere other than at the beginning. At the end of the paragraph, write a suitable concluding sentence.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you support your topic sentences with facts, examples and reasons?
2. In at least one paragraph, did you place the topic sentence somewhere other than at the beginning?
3. Did you write a suitable concluding sentence for each paragraph?

Assignments

Assignment 1 Use supporting sentences that state facts to write a paragraph about your neighbourhood or a place that you have visited. End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that offers a final comment.

Assignment 2 Write a paragraph about something that you collect or would enjoy collecting: stamps, butterflies, coins, posters, antique dolls, or record albums, for example. Give examples of items that might appear in your collection. End the paragraph with a concluding sentence that asks a question.

Assignment 3 Write a paragraph explaining why one of the following games is popular: backgammon, tennis, ice hockey, horse-shoes. Use supporting sentences that give reasons. Place your topic sentence somewhere other than at the beginning of the paragraph.

Assignment 4 Write a paragraph about a person whom you admire. Give facts about the person's life. Include examples of the person's accomplishments. Give reasons to tell why you admire the person.

Assignment 5 Write a paragraph about one group of people that visited a foreign country. Give facts about dates and the place from which the group set off. Include reasons why the people prefer having package holiday. If possible, give examples of specific persons who were in the group.

Tests

Test 1

A. Number your paper from 1 to 5. Next to each number, write *True* if the sentence is true or *False* if it is false.

1. Supporting sentences state the main idea of a paragraph.
2. One step in limiting a topic idea is to eliminate unrelated details from a list of ideas about your topic.
3. One way to limit your topic idea for a paragraph is to substitute a limited time period for a long one.
4. Facts, examples, and reasons are types of supporting details that help a reader understand or accept the topic sentence of a paragraph.
5. The topic sentence is always the first sentence in a paragraph.

B. Number your paper from 6 to 10. Next to each number, write the letter of the term that correctly completes the sentence. You will use all but one of the items.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| a. reasons | d. examples |
| b. topic sentence | e. facts |
| c. paragraph | f. concluding sentence |

6. One kind of ? offers a final comment about the topic of a paragraph.
7. One way to develop a paragraph is to use ? , which are supporting details that explain or justify another statement.
8. A series of sentences that develops a single idea, or topic, is called a ? .
9. The ? states the main idea of a paragraph.
10. One way to develop a paragraph is to use ? , which are supporting details that present something that you know with certainty.

C. Number your paper from 11 to 15. Read the following paragraph. Next to each number, write the letter of the item that correctly answers the question.

(1) Often, a harmless snake and a poisonous one look alike, a moth resembles tree bark, or a fish is spotted like a dead leaf. (2) These are examples of mimicry, nature's way of protecting some organisms by making them physically resemble other organisms. (3) For instance, the viceroy butterfly is prey for birds, yet it escapes because it looks like the monarch butterfly, which birds do not like. (4) Certain flies, when caught, buzz and pretend to sting like the wasps that they imitate. (5) By mimicking another animal or a part of its surroundings, a creature has a unique method of survival.

11. Which one of the following phrases describes the limited topic of the paragraph?
- a. Mimicry in nature
 - b. The viceroy and monarch butterflies
 - c. Mimicry for protection
 - d. Methods of survival
12. Which one of the following is the topic sentence of the paragraph?
- a. Sentence 1
 - b. Sentence 2
 - c. Sentence 3
 - d. Sentence 4
13. Which one of the following is *not* an *example* in the paragraph?
- a. Sentence 1
 - b. Sentence 2
 - c. Sentence 3
 - d. Sentence 4
14. Which one of the following is *not* a supporting sentence that you might include in the paragraph?
- a. Another form of mimicry is protective coloration.
 - b. The walking stick is an insect that looks like a twig.
 - c. Some animals resemble others in size or shape.

15. Which one of the following restates the topic sentence in a different way?
- a. Sentence 2
 - b. Sentence 3
 - c. Sentence 4
 - d. Sentence 5

Test 2

Choose one of the Assignments or a topic that your teacher suggests. Write the paragraph as directed and hand it in to your teacher.

Organizing Paragraph

A good paragraph has **coherence**, the clear and orderly presentation of details. You make a paragraph coherent by arranging the supporting details logically and by making clear the connections between the ideas. Notice how the details are arranged and connected in the following paragraph.

Topic sentence	Many of history's greatest thinkers and artists were child prodigies. <i>For instance</i> , by the age of twelve, Blaise Pascal, the famous French mathematician and scientist, had taught himself geometry. John Stuart Mill, the British philosopher and economist, was <i>similarly</i> precocious. By the time he was eight, he had learned ancient Greek. Before he was ten, he had studied, in the original language, every Greek and Latin text customarily read in the universities. <i>Like</i> Mill, Elizabeth Browning, the famous Victorian poet, had mastered Greek, Latin, and several modern languages before she reached her teens. Her first poem was published when she was thirteen. It is small wonder that these brilliant children became so famous in their later years.
Supporting sentences	
Concluding sentence	

The paragraph is coherent for the following reasons:

It begins with a topic sentence, is developed with relevant supporting sentences, and has a concluding sentence that ties together the supporting details.

The examples in the supporting sentences are introduced and connected by transitional words, which are in italics in the model paragraph.

The paragraph contains topic reminders, which are synonyms for the key words in the topic sentence. For example, the word *famous* in the second sentence reminds the reader of the word *greatest* in the topic sentence. The topic reminders are in boldface in the model paragraph.

For Analysis On your paper, follow these instructions about the model paragraph.

1. List the words used in the supporting sentences to remind readers of the following key words: *thinkers, artists, child, prodigies*.
2. Write the two transitional words that are used to show the similarities among the examples.

This unit will give you practice in the most common ways of organizing coherent paragraphs: chronological order, spatial order, and order of importance. You will also organize paragraphs to show comparison and contrast.

Chronological Order

Chronological order is a way of arranging events according to the time in which they happen. You can use chronological order to relate a historical event, to tell a story, or to explain a process. Chronologically arranged paragraphs usually contain dates or other time-related transitional words that show the sequence of events. You'll find transitional words and phrases such as the following useful for showing chronological order:

after that	in the beginning	since then
afterward	in the end	soon
as soon as	in the meantime	subsequently
at first	later	then
at the same time	meanwhile	until
before	next	when
earlier	now	while

The writer of the following paragraph uses time-related transitional words to show chronological order. These words are in italics.

Model

Months before that moment, we had been offered the chance to tour Europe with a group from our city. Being fourth-year French students, we *immediately* rushed home to convince our parents that this would be a chance of a lifetime. My parents agreed, as did Julia's. *From then on*, I was with her *constantly*. I shopped with her, talked with her, and practically lived with her for *the next four months*. *During this period*, I felt a bond grow between us that I'd never experienced before. It was as if we were the same person with the same personality. I was sure we'd get on perfectly during the trip. But *when* the plane carried us away, I was headed for an unexpected insight into our friendship that would affect my outlook on others.

Exercise 1 Writing: Chronological Order On your paper, list the numbers of the following supporting details in chronological order. Then write a chronologically arranged paragraph, using the topic sentence and at least seven of the details. Include dates and at least three transitional words or phrases. Underline the dates and transitional words and phrases that you use. You may change the wording of the supporting details.

Topic sentence

Allan Pinkerton, the celebrated nineteenth-century American detective, led an exciting life.

Supporting details

1. On a way to Canada, was shipwrecked; he and wife reached United States, finally settling in Chicago.
2. Born in Scotland in 1819.
3. Became Chicago's first officially appointed detective in 1853.

4. In 1842 left Scotland with wife on ship bound for Canada.
5. In 1850 started what was to become country's most famous detective agency.
6. Returned to detective agency after Civil War.
7. Wrote detective stories in 1870s and 1880s until his death in 1884.
8. In 1855 his agency agreed to protect railroads from robberies.
9. Headed Army of Potomac's secret service during early years of Civil War—1861 and 1862.
10. Did detective work as private citizen in Chicago; named deputy sheriff following his capture of famous counterfeiter.

Assignment 1 Prewriting/Writing On your paper, write a topic sentence that would be suitable for a paragraph developed in chronological order. Under it list at least five events that have a definite order in time.

Assignment 2 Writing Use the topic sentence and the list of supporting details that you wrote for Assignment 1 to write a paragraph organized in chronological order. Underline the transitional words and phrases that you use.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you choose a topic that can be developed in chronological order?
2. Did you arrange the events in the order of their occurrence?
3. Did you use transitional words to show the chronological order?
4. Did you check your paragraph for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Spatial Order

Spatial order is a way of organizing details according to location in space. You use this order for presenting descriptive details of objects and scenes. Because the details of an object or a scene can be arranged in many ways, you must choose a specific spatial order. Common spatial arrangements of details are bottom to top, side to side, and foreground to background. You may emphasize spatial order with transitional words that indicate position. The following transitional words are especially useful for showing spatial order:

above	below	in the middle of	to
across	beneath	inside	to the side of
against	beside	into	toward
along	between	next to	under
among	beyond	on	underneath
around	by	opposite	up
at	down	outside	upon
before	facing	over	within
behind	in front of	throughout	without

The details in the following paragraph are arranged in spatial order. Transitional words are in italics.

Model

In a forgotten cul-de-sac, four cars were parked outside a run-down, ocher house. There was a luxury car, elegant, navy blue with shining, silvery trim, panther-sleek. *Next to* it rested another automobile painted a neat, dark, serviceable gray. This car exuded an aura of businesslike competence. *Adjacent*, resplendent on the grass, a glaring red sports car sat on display. Someone had parked a dirty green station wagon *behind* the other three. It spoke of wrestling children, large shaggy dogs, and bags of groceries.

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Spatial Order On your paper, write the numbers of the following topics that could be developed in spatial order.

1. The need for buses from Sahaydachny Street to L.Ukrainka Square
2. Degas's placement of people in his painting *The Dancing Class*
3. The most unusual-looking building that you have seen
4. The most interesting speech that you have heard
5. Historic sites seen north to south on Myhailivska Square
6. Structural improvements in this year's automobiles

Assignment 1 Prewriting/Writing On your paper, write a topic sentence that would be suitable for a paragraph developed in spatial order. You may base it on one of the suitable topics in Exercise 1. Under it list at least five details that have a definite order in space.

Assignment 2 Writing Use the topic sentence and list of supporting details that you wrote for Assignment 1 to write a paragraph organized in spatial order. Underline the transitional words that you use.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you choose a topic that can be developed in spatial order?
2. Did you organize the supporting sentences in a specific order, such as side to side or bottom to top?
3. Did you use transitional words to show spatial order?
4. Did you check your paragraph for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Order of Importance

Order of importance is a way of organizing a series of items, such as reasons, causes, effects, or accomplishments. You may start with the most important item and end with the least important, presenting your strongest support first. The more common practice, however, is to proceed from the least important item to the most important, thus building to a strong conclusion.

Paragraphs organized in order of importance often contain adjectives in the comparative or superlative degree, such as *greater* or *greatest* and *finer* or *finest*. You can also use the following transitional words to indicate order of importance:

above all	moreover
best of all	most important
finally	of greater importance
first	of less importance
furthermore	of major concern
in the first place	of minor concern
least important	to begin with
more important	worst of all

The writer of the following paragraph proceeds from the least important item to the most important. The adjectives and transitional words that emphasize this arrangement are in italics.

Model

Many technological spin-offs have developed from the space program. Nowhere have they had greater impact than in the field of medicine. *First*, equipment originally devised for space flights now helps doctors to diagnose and treat certain illnesses. In some hospitals, for example, modified versions of space helmets and pressure suits are used to detect hearing defects and measure oxygen consumption. *Even more impressive* are space-related devices that have been adapted for use by the handicapped. Two examples are an externally powered skin implant

that can move a paralyzed person's muscles and a wheelchair that can be manoeuvred by eye movement. Most important, however, is the contribution of the space program to the care of the critically ill. Thanks to equipment made possible by space technology, paramedics can administer essential tests to patients en route to the hospital, doctors can continuously monitor the vital signs of intensive-care patients, and surgeons can control certain heart problems that would otherwise be life-threatening.

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Order of Importance On your paper, write the numbers of the following topics that could be developed in order of importance.

1. The steps in cleaning the room.
2. The variety of shops on Sahaydachny Street.
3. The value of each of many antique plates in a shop.
4. Options to consider when shopping for a bicycle.
5. A description of the Carpathians.
6. The advantages of a part-time job for mothers.
7. The influence on you of books that you have read.

Exercise 2 Writing: Order of Importance On your paper, rank the following supporting details according to their importance. Then use the topic sentence and details to write a paragraph organized from the least important detail to the most important. Include at least three transitional words or phrases in the paragraph, and underline them. You may change the wording of the supporting details.

Topic sentence

In their statement to Fire Inspector Riley, the Murphys explained that they could not have been responsible for the fire in their kitchen.

Supporting details

1. Mr. Murphy always checks for dish towels or other flammable objects left near stove.
2. Murphys' neighbours say family very careful; would not have

- done anything to cause fire.
3. Elaine Murphy last person to leave house in morning; checked all rooms before leaving.
 4. None of Murphys used stove or other appliances in kitchen on day of fire.
 5. Installed smoke detector in kitchen six months ago.

Assignment 1 Prewriting/Writing On your paper, write a topic sentence that requires reasons or accomplishments to support it. For example, the topic sentence "The teacher emphasized four major accomplishments of the first term evaluation" requires the four accomplishments as supporting details. Under your topic sentence, list the reasons or accomplishments in order of importance.

Assignment 2 Writing Use the topic sentence and list of supporting details written for Assignment 1 to write a paragraph developed in order of importance. You may organize the details from most-to-least important or from least-to-most important. Underline the transitional words used in the paragraph.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you choose a topic that requires reasons or accomplishments to develop it?
2. Did you arrange the supporting details from either most-to-least important or least-to-most important?
3. Did you use transitional words to indicate the order of importance?
4. Did you check your paragraph for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Comparison and Contrast

Comparison and contrast are methods of organizing paragraphs in which you describe or explain things by pointing

out their similarities and differences. **Comparison** shows how two or more items are alike; **contrast** shows how they differ. You can develop a paragraph by comparison, by contrast, or by a combination of the two.

You can acquaint readers with an unfamiliar subject by comparing or contrasting it to a familiar subject. You can also use comparison and contrast to provide information about two equally unfamiliar subjects, as in the following model paragraph. Words that emphasize the comparison and contrast are in boldface.

Model

The first two published women writers in America were Anne Bradstreet and Phillis Wheatley. The backgrounds of the two women could not have been more dissimilar. Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672) was the wife of the Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony; Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784) at the age of eight was sold as a slave to the Wheatley family in Boston. Both women wrote poetry, mostly with religious themes, but Bradstreet also protested women's plight, and Wheatley, slavery. Anne Bradstreet's book of poetry, *The Tenth Muse*, was published in 1650, while Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects* was published in 1773.

The preceding paragraph illustrates two important features of comparison-and-contrast organization:

1. *Balance*. Each point about Anne Bradstreet is matched by a similar point about Phillis Wheatley.
2. *Arrangement*. The points are arranged in alternating, or AB AB, order; a point about subject A (Bradstreet) is immediately followed by the matching point about subject B (Wheatley). Another way to arrange a comparison or contrast is to present all the details about subject A and then all those about subject B. The pattern of this kind of paragraph is AAA BBB. Whichever approach you choose, you should present the details about subject B in the same order that you use for subject A.

The following words are used to indicate points of

comparison and contrast:

COMPARISON	and, both, in the same way, just as, like, likewise, neither, similar, similarly, the same
CONTRAST	but, by contrast, different, dissimilar, however, on the other hand, unlike, whereas, while

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Comparison The following topic sentence identifies two items to be compared and is followed by supporting details about one of the items. On your paper, copy the topic sentence and the list of details. Then provide matching points of comparison about the second item.

Topic sentence

In many ways growing up is like riding a roller coaster.

Supporting details about roller coaster

1. Has great many ups and downs
2. Goes uphill slowly but downhill fast
3. Has many unexpected bumps and turns
4. Is both exciting and frightening

Exercise 2 Prewriting: Contrast The following topic sentence identifies two items to be contrasted. It is followed by supporting details about one of the items. On your paper, copy the topic sentence and the list of details. Then provide matching points of contrast about the second item.

Topic sentence

Although they are identical twins, Lola and Kim are very different in personality and behaviour.

Supporting details about Lola

1. Has quick temper but forgets and forgives easily

2. Wears conservative, tailored clothes
3. Is extremely active and excels in variety of sports
4. Loves to go to movies and to dance
5. Is above-average student but does not enjoy studying

Exercise 3 Writing: Comparison Write a paragraph using the topic sentence and the list of matching details written for Exercise 1. Develop the paragraph by comparison, presenting all the details about riding a roller coaster first, then all the details about growing up (AAA BBB order). Include at least three words or phrases that indicate comparison.

Exercise 4 Writing: Contrast Write a paragraph using the topic sentence and the list of matching details written for Exercise 2. Develop the paragraph by contrast, arranging the details about Lola and Kim in alternating (AB AB) order. Include at least three words or phrases that indicate contrast.

Assignment Prewriting /Writing Choose one of the following items. Make a list of supporting details, and use it to write a paragraph. Include transitional words to guide the reader through your paragraph.

1. Compare a new friend and an old friend. Include at least three similarities.
2. Contrast a town or country in the early evening with the same place in the early morning. Include at least three differences.
3. Compare and contrast yourself as you are now and yourself as you would like to be in three years. Include two similarities and two differences.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignment for the following points:

1. Did you balance each point of comparison or contrast for one item with a corresponding point for the other item?

2. Did you arrange the points of comparison or contrast for items in either AB BA or AAA BBB order?
3. Did you use transitional words to indicate the comparison or contrast?
4. Did you check your paragraph for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Assignment 1 Use spatial order to develop a paragraph in which you describe the location of a building in your community: a store, a school, city hall, or any other building that is important to you. Use transitional words to help your reader visualize the setting of the building.

Assignment 2 Write a paragraph about the points of consideration when choosing one of the following: a new flat, a friend. Arrange the supporting details from the least to the most important, and use transitional words to show the order of importance.

Assignment 3 Write a paragraph in which you compare or contrast one of the following pairs: living in the city and in the country; or an arranged marriage and marriage with love. Arrange the details in alternating (AB AB) order and use transitional words that make clear the comparison or contrast.

Assignment 4 Remember a time when you were away from home. Write a paragraph in which you compose a "postcard" of something that you saw. Choose a specific spatial order to describe the scene, and use that order to organize your paragraph. Use appropriate transitional words and phrases.

Descriptive Writing

Point a camera in the direction of an object, a scene, or a person. Press the shutter button, and you capture all the details that the eye would see. If you wrote a description of the subject, you would begin by using words that describe what the camera records. However, writing has an advantage over the camera. Words can go beyond visual details to re-create the subject in the reader's imagination. Words can describe sounds, smells, textures, tastes. When you write a description, you should choose words that describe those sensory details as vividly as possible.

For your description you can choose which details to include and which details to omit. A good description includes only the details that help to create a certain impression. If you want to emphasize how bleak an abandoned house looks, you will not describe the nest of baby birds on the roof of the porch. The detail about the birds would be better in a description that emphasizes the peaceful appearance of the front yard.

The following paragraph contains well-chosen sensory details.

Summer had passed, he knew. It was now nearing October, but still the beach was warm as midday overtook the morning chill. The sun shone directly in his eyes. Its golden yellowness reached out to him with reassurance. He walked slowly, feeling the little grains of hard, dry sand crunching under his feet. Close to the water, he looked at the shore, which was laced with dark-green tinsellike seaweed.

For Analysis On your paper, answer the following questions about the description.

1. List four specific sensory details that the writer presents in this

paragraph.

2. What does the paragraph describe that a camera could not record?
3. List three descriptive words that are especially vivid.
4. Does the writer create a certain impression in the passage? If so, how might you describe the impression?
5. Would details about the beach in the spring be appropriate in this paragraph? Why or why not?

In this unit you will learn how to observe details and how to select the details that are best for your description. You also will learn how to choose vivid and precise words to present those details. As you practice describing objects, places, and persons, you will follow the three steps of the writing process: prewriting, writing, and revising.

Using Descriptive Techniques

The purpose of description is to communicate to the reader a specific impression of a person, a place, or a thing. You can create effective impressions by combining careful observation with descriptive techniques that enable you to get the most power from your words.

Choosing Sensory Details

Sensory details are the characteristics that are perceived by an observer's five senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. As you describe a subject, do not rely on visual details alone. Sensory details associated with a forest include not only details about the appearance of the trees but also the sound of the wind in the branches and perhaps the smell of pines. Be aware of all the specific sensory details associated with a subject. In your prewriting for a description, you may want to list as many details as possible. Then you must select the most important details to create a unified, sharp impression for your reader.

Notice how the following visual description of the Haitian countryside is strengthened by occasional details of the textures, sounds, and smells that the writer experienced.

Model

As we drove out of Port-au-Prince, the side of the road was dotted with vendors' carts leaning against palm trees. To our left, richly crevassed mountains rose majestically four thousand feet above jungles of banana plants, coconut and date palms, mangoes, papayas, and bushes overloaded with fragrant orange blossoms.

To our right were dozens of one-room huts, with walls woven of saplings and roofs made of weathered thatch, and flocks of angrily pecking chickens at the doorways, being chased by scrawny black pigs and awkward goats. Twenty yards beyond these was the ocean, a serene turquoise in colour, supporting a myriad of decrepit fifteen-foot sailboats with tattered yellow sails and emitting the strong odor of drying fish.

The writer has chosen precise sensory details that create a striking picture. The beauty of "richly crevassed mountains," "bushes overloaded with fragrant orange blossoms," and the "serene turquoise" of the ocean contrasts dramatically with the "weathered thatch" of the one-room huts, "angrily pecking chickens," "scrawny black pigs," and "decrepit . . . sailboats."

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Sensory Details On your paper, copy the following list of items. For each item write at least three precise sensory details. Use all five senses—sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste—to help you think of the details.

SAMPLE A purse

ANSWER Rich brown colour marked with pale scratches
Texture of leather bumpy like the skin of an orange
Smells of leather and saddle soap

1. A waterfall
2. A room you live in
3. A present for your best friend
4. The inside of a closet

Using Effective Nouns and Verbs

Use specific nouns and strong verbs in your descriptions. By using specific nouns, you can help your reader to create a vivid mental picture. For example, in the sentence "The children jumped into the water," *water* is not a specific noun. It does not indicate whether the reader should picture calm, shallow water or crashing waves. Either *wading pool* or *ocean* would be a more specific noun for the sentence.

Verbs describe actions; by using strong verbs, you can describe an action precisely. For example, in the sentence "The students talked to one other," *talked* is not a strong verb. It does not indicate whether the students talked loudly or softly. Either *shouted* or *whispered* would be a stronger verb in the sentence. When possible, use the active voice instead of the passive voice. Avoid linking verbs when you can; they are even weaker than Passive verbs.

Nouns and verbs have two kinds of meanings: **denotations**, the exact dictionary definitions, and **connotations**, the ideas and feelings associated with the words. For example, the verbs *surprise* and *amaze* have the same denotation, but *amaze* has a stronger connotation than *surprise* does. *Amaze* often indicates bewilderment as well as astonishment. The most effective noun or verb for a descriptive sentence is the one with connotations that convey the exact impression you want to create.

In the following paragraph, the writer uses specific nouns and strong verbs.

Model

Alan slumped into his chair, sighing quietly but still loudly enough to disturb his classmates. Arriving late for class, he was not used to his new surroundings, and he gazed about, acclimating himself. The blackboard had algebraic symbols scrawled upon it. The rigid wood and steel tables and desks reflected the light from above. He heard the rhythmic taps and scratches of pencils moving rapidly across paper. He smiled, noticing the students hunched over their lessons, studiously at work.

The writer uses specific nouns that bring the scene to life for the reader. The expression *algebraic symbols* is better than the noun *writing* would have been because it helps the reader to visualize exactly what was on the board. The nouns *taps* and *scratches* are better than the noun *noise* because they tell the reader exactly what sounds were made.

The writer also uses strong verbs that help the reader to form a mental picture of the scene. The verb *slumped* is better than *sat* would have been because it is more precise. Similarly, *gazed* is better than *looked* because it reveals that Alan looked about intently for a long period of time.

Exercise 2 Revising: Nouns and Verbs On your paper, rewrite each of the following sentences, using specific nouns and strong verbs.

SAMPLE The animal moved across the land.

ANSWER The squirrel scampered across the sidewalk.

1. The appliance made a loud noise.
2. The piece of furniture held many dishes.
3. The person ate the food.
4. The building was destroyed in the disaster.
5. People went into the room.

Using Modifiers

Almost always you will use modifiers—adjectives, adverbs, and participles—in your descriptions. Select modifiers that convey details exactly. A single modifier is sometimes more effective than several used together. If you find yourself describing a subject with worn-out, overused modifiers, find interesting synonyms in your dictionary or a dictionary of synonyms.

Modifiers, like nouns and verbs, have denotations and connotations. For example, although the adjectives *thin* and *skinny* have the same denotation, *thin* has a more flattering connotation than *skinny* does. A modifier is effective when its connotations convey the exact impression that you want to create in your description.

Notice how fresh, precise modifiers (printed in italic type) make the following paragraph a vivid description of a scene in Afghanistan.

Model

From the hilltop hotel we looked out over the city, spread among the *tawny* fields and circled by *barren, rock-scarred* mountains, ... the farthest, highest ranges so little more substantial than sky that it took field glasses to verify their presence. Miles away on the far side of the valley, where a *reddish* haze was in the air, an occasional plume of dust indicated the airport and arriving or departing planes. Nearer, on our side, the *mud-brick* blocks of the old city clung to the side of a steep hill, like nests of mud wasps, their *light-and-shadow* scenery being shifted all afternoon by the sun.

The modifiers in the passage are not restricted to single words. Remember that you can use prepositional phrases and participial phrases as modifiers.

NO MODIFIERS

The bell rang.

ADJECTIVE

The *dinner* bell rang.

PARTICIPLE

The *warning* bell rang.

ADVERB

The bell rang *loudly*.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

The bell *in the tower* rang.

PARTICIPIAL PHRASE

Echoing throughout the town, the bell rang at five.

Exercise 3 Revising: Modifiers

Number your

paper from 1 to 6. Beside each number copy the weak modifier (in italic type) from the following paragraph. Beside each modifier, write a more vivid word or phrase.

The pile of wood from the old barn in my grandmother's back yard had always seemed uninteresting. When I saw the pile at dawn one day, however, it seemed transformed. The morning light made the (1) *old* boards look a pale silver instead of a (2) *plain* gray. (3) *Showing* the

sunlight, the dew on the grass around the pile sparkled. Soon a woodchuck emerged from the pile to sniff the (4) nice air. As it sat up, I could see the downy yellow fur on its stomach. That fur contrasted (5) a great deal with the coarse gray fur on the woodchuck's back. I was so enchanted by the scene that I stood (6) looking at the pile as long as I could.

Using Comparisons

The writer of the description that you read on page 42 used apt comparisons as well as appropriate modifiers. She compared hillside dwellings to "nests of mud wasps," and she also compared the effect of the play of sunlight on the dwellings to "scenery being shifted."

If you want to describe a subject in a striking way, compare it to something that the reader knows but does not ordinarily associate with the subject. Without having to think about it, the reader will instantly identify the characteristics that the two subjects have in common. For example, comparing a person to a grizzly bear immediately communicates such characteristics as ferocity and irritability.

There are two kinds of comparisons; similes and metaphors. A **simile** is a direct comparison using *like* or *as*. A **metaphor** is an implied comparison that does not include *like* or *as*.

SIMILE He has been *like* a grizzly bear all week long.

METAPHOR He has been a grizzly bear all week long.

Exercice 4 Prewriting: Comparisons On your paper, list the comparisons in the following passage. Identify each as a simile or a metaphor. Then explain which two things the writer is comparing.

By the time I reached the stream, the sun was so warm and soothing on my back and the clearing grass so soft and new that I just had to lie down and stretch out luxuriously in the grass and stare up at the blue bowl of a sky. The ground was like a soft pillow under my head, and

the sun was a great blanket wrapped around me. I closed my eyes to feel the warmth soaking through my skin, relaxing me completely.

Exercise 5 Writing: Similes and Metaphors On your paper, write a sentence with an appropriate simile or metaphor for each of the following subjects.

SAMPLE A flower

ANSWER The petals of the flower were as smooth and soft as a pair of worn blue jeans.

1. A cellar
2. A friend's eyes
3. A desk
4. Freshly baked bread

Assignment Writing On your paper, write ten sentences that describe a delicious dish your mom cooks. The sentences need not form a paragraph. Use effective nouns and verbs, and use at least one modifier in each sentence. Use comparison in some sentences.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignment for the following points:

1. Did you choose sharp, interesting sensory details?
2. Did you use specific nouns and strong verbs?
3. Did you use precise, vivid modifiers?
4. Did you use words with connotations that convey the impression that you wish to create?
5. Did you use fresh, original comparisons?
6. Did you proofread your sentences for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Writing Descriptions

When you write a description, your purpose is always to capture the individuality of the object, place, or person. You should choose details that work together to create a unified impression.

Describing Objects

When you write a descriptive paragraph about an object, present the object as clearly and precisely as possible. In your topic sentence, introduce the object and give a general impression of it. In the sentences that follow, present descriptive details to support the general impression. The important details of the shape, size, colour, texture, and weight of the object are provided by the senses of sight and touch. You can include details provided by the senses of hearing, taste, and smell when they are applicable. Finally, conclude the paragraph with a sentence that reinforces the general impression.

The following paragraph illustrates how a writer uses details to create a vivid impression of a beautiful object.

Model

Topic sentence	So this was it - the perfect Stradivarius. As the instrument first came into view, I felt a cold shiver of excitement travel down my spine; I was immediately overwhelmed by this violin's
Descriptive details	stunning beauty. My eyes glanced quickly up the fingerboard until my gaze became fixed upon the light and delicate head. The finely carved scroll arched back like the graceful neck of a swan. Its curves, highlighted at the edges with darker varnish, were as delicate as those of a lightly curled ribbon. The slender waist of the violin, separating its upper and lower bouts, gave it the
Concluding sentence	lithe grace of a young woman. I marveled at the flaming, golden amber varnish and the fine grain of the belly, made from the Lombardy pines that, Stradivari immortalized in his work.

In the second sentence—the topic sentence—the writer introduces the violin and presents the general impression of its beauty. In the sentences that follow, she supports the general impression with the visual details of the scrolls, curves, and wood of the violin. Notice the writer's careful choice of words, such as the verb *arched* and the modifiers *flaming* and *golden*. She also uses comparisons to help the reader to visualize the violin. The scroll is like "the graceful neck of a swan," and the curves of the scroll are like "those of a lightly curled ribbon."

Exercise 1 Writing: Description of an Object On your paper, copy the following list of six objects. After each object, write one sentence containing a sensory detail associated with the object. If possible, include an appropriate metaphor or simile in one of the sentences.

SAMPLE An elephant

ANSWER An elephant's thin ears curl at the edges like an old piece of paper.

1. An article of clothing

4. A staircase

2. A chair

5. A car

3. A vegetable

6. A sign

Exercise 2 Writing: Description of an Object Choose one of the objects from Exercise 1. On your paper, copy the sentence that you wrote about it. Then write at least five more sentences, each containing an additional sensory detail that is associated with the object.

Describing Places

When you describe a place, it is not enough simply to write sentences about the important sensory details of the scene. First, you must choose details to support the impression that you wish to create. Then you must arrange the details in a logical order. You will use chronological order, spatial order, or order of importance.

Chronological order

In the following paragraph, the writer uses chronological order (time order) in a description of an ocean shore as the tide changes. The transitional words, which appear in italic type, indicate the passage of time.

Model: Chronological Order

When the tide is rising, the shore is a place of unrest, with the surge leaping high over jutting rocks and running in lacy cascades of foam over the landward side of massive boulders. But on the ebb, it is more peaceful, for *then* the waves do not have behind them the push of the inward pressing tides. There is no particular drama about the turn of the tide, but *presently* a zone of wetness shows on the gray rock slopes, and offshore the incoming swells begin to swirl and break over hidden ledges. *Soon* the rocks that the high tide had concealed rise into view and glisten with the wetness left on them by the receding water.

In the first sentence, the writer describes the shore when the tide is coming in. In the next two sentences, she describes the waves and shore after the tide has turned. In the last sentence, she describes the shore at a lower stage of the tide. Notice the writer's use of such vivid words and phrases as *surge*, *leaping*, *lacy cascades*, *zone of wetness*, *swirl and break*, and *glisten*.

Spatial Order

Spatial order is the most common kind of order to use in describing a place. This is the kind of order that the writer of the next passage uses.

Model: Spatial Order

Plunging into the old, radiator-heated, turn-of-the-century house, I first noticed the smell. It was a mixture of herbs and homemade soup simmering on the stove and old furniture

and moth balls in drawers of outgrown clothes. Sunlight beamed obligingly on the kitchen table, which bore a bowl of perfectly ripened grapes and peaches. *Against the far wall, a white sink, now slightly yellowed with age, reposed sedately between a new, white refrigerator, whirring steadily in its corner, and an equally gleaming washing machine. On the left wall, above the stove, hung my aunt's collection of potholders, lovingly made and presented to her by well-meaning nieces. Opposite the stove was an open mahogany door, varnished so that it was like glass to my fingertips, with a 1990 calendar hanging from a rusty nail. Visible through the doorway was the pantry, barely wide enough to walk through and stuffed with flour, cookies, bread, and spices. From the pantry issued the all-pervading smells of cinnamon and old dust and more musty wood.*

Notice the phrases (printed in italic type) that the writer uses to make clear the spatial order of her descriptive details. The beginning and concluding descriptions of the aromas in the house give unity to the paragraph.

Order of Importance

Sometimes you may want to develop your impression of a place by organizing descriptive details in the order of importance. You may start with the least important detail, continue with stronger details, and end with the most powerful detail, reinforcing the overall impression. With each detail your reader will be drawn further into the feeling of your description. On the other hand, you may wish to start out with the strongest detail and follow it with less striking details that reinforce the first detail.

The writer of the following passage describes a corridor for storage in the basement of an old building. She arranges the details in the order of increasing importance. She places last the most important details, those that describe the disassembled computers.

Model: Order of Importance

The gray floor stretched before me until it became lost in the general darkness at the indefinite end of the passage. The same drab concrete that composed the floor also formed the walls and ceiling; the evening's rain had seeped through to soak the floor. Three fluorescent tubes cast a dim haze over the hundred and fifty feet of windowless corridor. The only objects of note in the passage, and the ones that created its sense of foreboding, were the rows of disassembled computers on either side. As I inched down the corridor, hearing only the click-clack of my shoes on the concrete and the occasional drip of water, I passed these remains of the Bureau's abandoned computers: mainframes spouting multicoloured wires, tape drives with protruding control panels, memory stacks with jumbled boards. The scent of corrosion and insulation lingered as I closed the doors behind me.

Although order of importance is the main order, the writer also uses chronological order to describe the narrator's walk in and out of the corridor. Notice that the topic sentence and concluding sentence form an effective frame for the description. They emphasize the forlorn, ominous feeling created by the details in the other sentences.

Exercise 3 Prewriting: Sensory Details *Step 1:*

Select one of the following scenes, or choose one of your own, as a topic for a description. Imagine the scene in detail, based on your own experience, if possible. *Step 2:* On your paper, list as many sensory details as you can. If they are appropriate, choose details from the senses of hearing, touch, smell, and taste as well as from the sense of sight. *Step 3:* Review your list and put an X beside details that will not contribute to the overall impression that you wish to create. *Step 4:* Number the other details in the order in which you will use them in your description. Write Chronological, Spatial, or Order of importance to show the order that you will use in presenting the details.

1. A living room in a home
2. A back or front yard
3. A busy restaurant

Exercise 4 Writing: Description of a Place

Using the details that you listed for Exercise 3, write a description of the scene. Be sure to present the details in a logical order.

Describing People

When you describe a person, you must decide on the overall impression that you want to create. Think of what you particularly notice when you look at a person. You may be struck by the frail appearance of the individual, for example, or by his or her air of calmness. Remember that individuals have both physical characteristics and personality traits. You should decide in advance whether you will describe one or both types of characteristics.

Often a writer presents physical details first so that the reader will be able to visualize the person's age, size, and facial features before learning about the personality. The physical characteristics usually include more than body structure, age, and hair and eye colours. They may include the texture of the skin and hair and the shape of the eyes, nose, and mouth.

Details about facial expressions, voice, gestures, and way of walking can reveal an individual's personality. For example, someone who talks quietly and does not finish sentences may be shy. A person's choice of clothing, too, may suggest personality.

Select the most obvious features of an individual for your description. Then arrange in a logical order the details that you chose. You may arrange the details in spatial order—for example, from head to toe—or in order of importance, as did the writer of the following description.

Model

The man I saw was close to seventy, I guessed. He had snowy hair and a thin, bent body, and there was a crooked scar concealed in the wrinkles around his mouth. His eyes, almost hidden under the Einsteinian brows, sparkled, but I cannot remember their colour; it was not

important. Their lively expression was what counted. They seemed to be the lights of a transcendent spirit locked in a body badly used by time.

The writer begins with an impression of the man's age. Her second sentence includes other significant details of the man's appearance. She concludes with the man's most important feature: his eyes. The eyes reveal the character of the man: his strength and spirit that seem to have survived difficult times.

Exercise 5 Prewriting: Description of a Person

The details of the following passage describe the physical characteristics of a boy and suggest some of his personality traits. On your paper, copy the numbered list of characteristics that follows the passage. Leave two lines blank between the items. After each characteristic write the words from the passage that describe it.

He was a stranger in town. At least, no one could recall ever having seen him before. . . . He claimed that Appleseed was the only name he had and that he was twelve years old. . . . His hair was straight and dark yellow. He had a tight, weather-tanned little face with anxious green eyes that had a very wise and knowing look. He was small and puny and high-strung, and he wore always the same outfit: a red sweater, blue denim britches, and a pair of man-sized boots that went *clop-clop* with every step.

It was raining that first time he came into the drugstore; his hair was plastered round his head like a cap, and his boots were caked with red mud from the country roads.

- | | | |
|---------|---------|----------------|
| 1. Hair | 3. Eyes | 5. Clothing |
| 2. Face | 4. Size | 6. Personality |

Assignment 1 Prewriting /Writing /Revising Step 1:

On your paper, write the name of an object that appeals to you.

Step 2: List at least five sensory details of the object. *Step 3:*

Using the details that you listed, write a paragraph about the object. Begin with a topic sentence, and be sure to use specific

nouns, strong verbs, precise modifiers, and appropriate comparisons. *Step 4:* Using the Assignment Checklist that follows, revise your description.

Assignment 2 Prewriting /Writing /Revising Write a description of an outdoor place. It may be anything from the exterior of a building to a view of a mountain. Use spatial order, and include such expressions as "behind" or "to the left" that make this order clear. Revise your description.

Assignment 3 Prewriting /Writing /Revising Write a description of a real or imaginary place that is indoors. Using the techniques that you have learned, describe the place in such a way that you create a strong, unified impression. Revise your description.

Assignment 4 Prewriting/Writing/Revising Using the techniques that you have learned, write a unified description of a real or imaginary person. Your description should give your reader a clear impression of the person. Revise your work before making a final copy of it.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you include carefully selected sensory details that capture the uniqueness of the object, place, or person?
2. Did you use precise, vivid words and effective comparisons?
3. Did you introduce your subject in a topic sentence?
4. Did you arrange your sentences in a logical order, using transitional words to emphasize that order?
5. Did you conclude with a sentence that leaves a clear impression of the subject?
6. Did you create a unified impression in your description?
7. Did you proofread your paragraph for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Assignments

Assignment 1 Suppose that as you walk through a shop, an object catches your interest. The object may be an antique pincushion, for example, or it may be the newest tool for fixing a motorcycle. In one paragraph describe the object to a friend who might also be interested in it.

Assignment 2 Observe a person walking down a street in your community, and write a description of the individual. Include such details as clothing, way of walking, and facial expression. Present one or two details that seem to offer clues to personality.

Assignment 3 In a paragraph or two, describe an object that you have owned for a long time. Begin with a topic sentence that presents a general impression, and then focus on the details that make the object important to you.

Assignment 4 Observe or remember a crowded place, such as an amusement park, a city street, or a state fair, and write a description of it. Concentrate on the details that show how busy the place is.

Assignment 5 Observe someone whom you know well, and write a description of that person. Write the description for a reader who does not know the person. Include details that reveal the personality as well as the physical characteristics.

Tests

Test 1

Number your paper from 1 to 5. Read the following passage.

Next to each number, write the letter of the item that correctly answers the question.

(1) It was Indian summer, and everything, the earth and the trees, touched by the airy sunshine, was the lazy golden-brown of that sad and lovely time; there was a faint presence of smoke everywhere, and the smell of leaves burning, and the sounds and their echoes carried a long, long way. ... (2) Wherever you looked, there would be a truckload of raw cotton coming in for ginning; along the roads and even the paved avenues of town you could see the dirty white cotton bolls that had fallen to the ground.

(3) Leaves of a dozen different colours drifted down out of the trees and whirled and rustled along the lonesome sidewalks and streets.

(4) The weeds and Johnson grass in the gullies and ditches on the delta side were already beginning to turn brown and seared, yet so rich was the land that they still grew, half-dead and half-alive.

1. Which sentence contains details that appeal to the senses of sight, hearing, and smell?
a. Sentence 1 b. Sentence 2
c. Sentence 3 d. Sentence 4
2. Which colour is not specifically mentioned in the passage?
a. Golden-brown b. Brown c. White d. Red
3. Which word describes the avenues in Sentence 2?
a. Dirty b. Paved c. Burning d. Ginning
4. Which modifier does not describe the cotton in Sentence 2?

a. Raw b. Dirty c. White d. Paved

5. Which of the following is not described in the passage?

a. Earth b. Trees c. Fields d. Ditches

Test2

Choose one of the Assignments. Write the description as directed and hand it in to your teacher.

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing answers the question "What happened?" It tells a story. Some narratives are fiction; they come from the writer's imagination. Autobiographical and biographical narratives, on the other hand, are nonfiction; they are reports of actual events. A narrative about a brief incident may be only one paragraph long. A narrative about complex events or a long series of actions may occupy two to five pages—or even an entire book.

When you write a narrative, you present a series of related actions in chronological order. You include a high point that creates suspense or excitement, as well as a definite beginning and a definite end. The following narrative contains all of these features.

Beginning	There was once a king who loved the graceful appearance of the rooster. He asked the court artist to paint a picture of a rooster for him. For one year he waited, and still this order was not fulfilled.
First action	In a rage he stamped into the artist's studio and demanded to see the artist.
Second action	Quickly the artist brought out paper, paint, and brush. In five minutes a perfect picture of a rooster emerged from his skillful brush. The king turned purple with anger, saying, "If you can paint a perfect picture of a rooster in five minutes, why did you keep me waiting for over a year?"
Third action	"Come with me," begged the artist. He led the king to his storage room. Paper was piled from the floor to the ceiling. On every sheet was a painting of a rooster.
Fourth action	"Your Majesty," explained the artist, "it took me more than one year to learn how to paint a perfect rooster in five minutes."
Fifth action	
High point	
End	

Notice that the writer makes clear who the characters are and reveals details about their personalities. She also presents the setting—the time and location of the actions.

For Analysis On your paper, answer the following questions about the preceding narrative.

1. What is the setting of most of the narrative?
2. What is the personality of the king? Which details does the writer use to show the king's personality traits?
3. What is the personality of the artist? Through which details does the writer show the artist's personality traits?
4. Would an explanation of how the king treated the court musician belong in this narrative? Why or why not?

In analyzing the narrative about the artist and the king, you have considered some important features of a narrative. In this unit you will learn how to write a brief narrative. You will also learn how to maintain a consistent point of view, how to write dialogue, and how to write a longer narrative. As you write narratives, you will follow the three steps of the writing process: prewriting, writing, and revising.

Narrating an Incident

Choosing a Topic

Choosing a suitable topic is the first step in writing a narrative about an **incident**—a series of connected actions that occur within a few hours or on a single day. Choose an incident that is simple enough to be told in one to three paragraphs.

You may choose either a nonfictional or a fictional incident. When you write fiction, you will invent the actions and the people, but they do not have to come solely from your imagination. They may be based on an experience of your own or on the actions of other people. As you plan your narrative, change the details as you wish.

Planning the Narrative

After you have chosen your topic, plan the narrative carefully by listing the actions that you wish to narrate. An incident must have (1) a beginning, (2) a high point, and (3) an end.

1. The beginning introduces the situation. In it you present both the **characters**—the people who perform the actions; —and the **setting**—the time and location of the actions.
2. The **high point** is the action that creates the most excitement or suspense. All actions in the narrative should build up to the high point.
3. The end contains the final actions of the incident. At the end, your readers should no longer be in suspense. They should know exactly what happened.

Your list should include the actions of all three parts of the narrative. Make sure that you have listed the actions in chronological order—that is, in the order in which they happen.

Writing the Narrative

You will find it helpful to refer to the following list of strategic when you write your narrative.

Strategies

1. *Present the subject in a topic sentence*, usually the sentence.
2. *Include information about the people and the setting early the narrative*. With such information readers can clearly understand the incident. However, do not present more information than the reader needs.
3. *Tell the actions in chronological order*, according to your list. Be sure to include the high point.
4. *If your list contains many actions, divide them into two or more groups of closely related actions*. Place each group of actions in its own paragraph.
5. *Use transitional words*. Such words as first, soon, then, and finally are like signposts, giving the paragraph coherence.

6. Write a concluding sentence to bring the incident to a close. For example, you may comment on the incident.

In the following narrative, the writer recalls a true incident.

Topic sentence	When we were in Yellowstone National Park, my friend Jamie and I decided to hike from the main road into a wilderness area to see wildlife.
Actions in chronological order	After we had picked our way through marshes and deep mud for forty-five minutes, we heard a rustling sound behind a ridge on our left. We cautiously climbed the hill and peered over. There we saw a large moose with a full rack of antlers, We felt rewarded for our difficult hike and decided to follow the moose. Soon we realized that he was heading back toward the road. In fact, he strolled in that direction until he crossed the road directly in front of tourists who were sitting in cars parked along the side. We were disappointed as we watched him disappear into the woods on the other side of the road.
High point	After all of our hard work, we had seen no more than had the people who made no extra effort.
Concluding sentence	

The writer of this narrative created strong beginning and ending sentences. The characters are the writer—the "I"—and the writer's friend Jamie. The wilderness in Yellowstone National Park is the setting. The high point of the narrative occurs when the moose crosses the road in front of the tourists in their cars. The transitional words *After* and *Soon* emphasize the chronological order.

Exercise 1 Prewriting: Chronological Order In the following autobiographical incident, the sentences are not in chronological order. On your paper, write the sentences (with their original numbers) in the correct order.

(1) Not suspecting that the prediction was wrong, we went to bed feeling safe. (2) As we left our house and walked to high ground with our neighbours, we realized that we would not return home that day. (3) It had been raining for two weeks in our town in Pennsylvania, and the river by our house was near the top of its banks. (4) We got up and earned many of our belongings to the second floor. (5) The announcer said that the river was not expected to overflow on our side. (6) Before my parents and I went to bed on Friday night, we listened to the flood warnings on the radio. (7) While we were working, a siren went off, indicating that water was spilling over the top of the dike one block away. (8) At five the next morning, we were awakened by police using megaphones to call out flood warnings and to urge residents to prepare to leave their homes.

Exercise 2 Writing: Narration The following chronological list contains the actions in an incident. Write a narrative paragraph based on these details. Use transitional words as needed.

1. One Saturday three friends in Rochester, New York, bought round-trip tickets to Niagara Falls, New York.
2. Rode bus to Niagara Falls
3. Paid toll to cross Rainbow Bridge into Niagara Falls, Canada
4. Visited falls until dinnertime
5. Combined their money and calculated how much they could spend on dinner
6. At restaurant ordered as much to eat as they could afford
7. Check arrived after dinner
8. Realized they had forgotten to put aside money for meal tax
9. Paid for dinner but could not leave tip
10. At bridge realized they could not pay toll for crossing into United States
11. Guard lent money to each of them
12. Were relieved to get on bus for Rochester

Assignment 1 Prewriting/Writing *Step 1:* Think of an experience—your own or someone else's—that you can narrate in a single paragraph. For example, you might narrate a memorable childhood experience or an experience in which people worked together to solve a problem. *Step 2:* Plan your paragraph. Begin by selecting the actions, including a high point. Then list the actions in chronological order. *Step 3:* Create a topic sentence and a concluding sentence for the paragraph. Save your paper.

Assignment 2 Writing / Revising Using the list and the sentences that you prepared in Assignment 1, write a paragraph in which you narrate the incident. Be sure that your narrative makes clear who the characters are and what the setting is. Then, using the Assignment Checklist that follows, revise your paragraph.

Assignments Prewriting/Writing/Revising Think of an imaginary incident or a real incident that you can use as the basis of a fictional narrative. For example, you might narrate an incident that concerns taking on a new responsibility or exploring a new place. Plan and write a narrative of that incident. It may be one to three paragraphs long. Make sure that the narrative has a definite beginning and a definite end and that it clearly presents the characters and the setting. Then revise your narration.

Assignment Checklist

Check your writing assignments for the following points:

1. Did you introduce the subject in a topic sentence?
2. Did you make clear who the characters are and what the setting is?
3. Did you present the actions of the incident in chronological order, using transitional words as needed?
4. If your narrative includes many actions, did you place them in two or more paragraphs?
5. Did you include a high point?
6. Did you conclude with a sentence that brings the narrative to a definite end?

7. Did you proofread your narrative for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Point of View

You can write a narrative from one of two points of view: from the viewpoint of a participant or from the viewpoint of an outsider.

When you narrate an incident in which you have participated, you are the "I" who presents the actions. This kind of storytelling is called **first-person narration**. You always use the first person when you write autobiographical narratives, and you can also use the first person when you write fictional narratives.

The other type of storytelling is **third-person narration**. As you tell a true incident or a fictional story in the third person, you use the pronouns *he*, *she*, and *they* to refer to the main characters when you do not use their names. You use the third person when you write biographical narratives.

The following examples illustrate the difference between first-person and third-person narration.

FIRST-PERSON NARRATION

On *my* way home from work last Thursday, *I* passed a small shop whose windows had been dark for years. On that day, however, *I* noticed lights inside and people moving around and looking out at *me*.

THIRD-PERSON NARRATION

On *his* way home from work last Thursday, *he* passed a small shop whose windows had been dark for years. On that day, however, *he* noticed lights inside and people moving around and looking out at *him*.

Maintain a consistent point of view throughout a narrative. If you begin a narrative in the first person, use that form throughout. Similarly, if you begin a narrative in the third person, you should use the pronoun *I* only in direct quotations.

The following narrative is from the autobiography of Helen Keller, an American woman who achieved distinction despite the

fact, that she was blind and deaf from infancy. The narrative is written in the first person and tells how Helen's teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, taught six-year-old Helen that objects have names.

Model

One day ... we walked down the path to the well house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water, and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand, she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought—and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

Notice that the writer uses the singular first-person pronouns, *I* and *me*, the possessive form, *my*, and the plural first-person pronoun *we* to refer to herself and Anne Sullivan.

The following passage is an excerpt from a biography of the physicist Marie Curie and, therefore, is written in the third person. The passage illustrates the excitement felt by Marie Curie and her husband, Pierre, when they visit their laboratory in a shed to see the pure radium that they had discovered.

Model

Pierre put the key in the lock. The door squeaked, as it had squeaked thousands of times, and admitted them to their realm, to their dream [their laboratory].

"Don't light the lamps!" Marie said in the darkness. Then she added with a little laugh: "Do you remember the day when you said to me, 'I should like radium to have a beautiful colour?'"

The reality was more entrancing than the

simple wish of long ago. Radium had something better than "a beautiful colour": it was spontaneously luminous. And in the somber shed where, in the absence of cupboards, the precious particles in their tiny glass receivers were placed on tables or on shelves nailed to the wall, their phosphorescent bluish outlines gleamed, suspended in the night.

"Look Look!" the young woman murmured.

She went forward cautiously, looked for and found a straw-bottomed chair. She sat down in the darkness and silence. Their two faces turned toward the pale glimmering, the mysterious sources of radiation, toward radium—their radium.

* * *

She was to remember forever this evening of glowworms, this magic.

Notice that the writer uses the third-person pronouns *them* and *she* and the possessive forms *their* and *her* in the narrative to refer to the main characters. The first-person pronouns *I* and *me* appear only in direct quotations.

Exercise 1 Prewriting: First-Person Narration The following passage is written in the third person. On your paper, rewrite the passage, changing the point of view to the first person.

The first time that he drove a car was not in driver-education class. On the contrary, he was all of five years old when it happened. Standing in the driver's seat of his parents' car, he pretended to take a drive across town. Just as his mother would have done, he shook his fist at other drivers, sang along with the radio, and shifted gears when the time seemed appropriate. That was his first and last mistake. The car, which until that moment had been standing perfectly still, silently began to roll backward down the incline of the driveway, picking up speed with every foot. The ~~car~~ bumped out of the driveway, sped across ~~fact~~ tree, jumped the neighbours' curb, and flattened a recently planted sapling on the neighbours' lawn. His heart beat faster as the vehicle settled to a

halt in the soft sod of the lawn. He realized that he had had a narrow escape.

Exercise 2 Prewriting: Third-Person Narration The following passage is written in the first person. On your paper, rewrite the passage, changing the point of view to the third person. As you rewrite the passage, you may use the name *Annie* as well third-person pronouns.

When I was six or seven years old, growing up in Pittsburgh, I used to take a precious penny of my own and hide it for someone to find. . . . For some reason, I always "hid" the penny along the same stretch of sidewalk up the street. I would cradle it at the roots of a sycamore, say, or in a hole left by a chipped-off piece of sidewalk. Then I would take a piece of chalk, and, starting at either end of the block, draw huge arrows leading up to the penny from both directions. After I learned to write, I labeled the arrows: SURPRISE AHEAD or MONEY THIS WAY. I was greatly excited, during all this arrow-drawing, at the thought of the first lucky passer-by who would receive in this way, regardless of merit, a free gift from the universe. But I never lurked about. I would go straight home and not give the matter another thought, until, some months later, I would be gripped again by the impulse to hide another penny.

Exercise 3 Writing: First-Person Narration Write a first-person narrative based on the following notes about a family trip to a cousin's wedding. Add details as you wish. Your narrative may be longer than one paragraph.

1. Wedding to take place in Bend, Oregon, late one afternoon last July
2. Our home—Eureka, California
3. Left Eureka early in morning
4. Forgot wedding present
5. Went home to get it
6. Added one hour to trip

7. Trip was taking longer than planned
8. Older sister had planned trip on map
9. Discovered sister had figured scale of map incorrectly
10. Had to drive two hours longer
11. Arrived half an hour after wedding
12. Everyone forgave us.

Assignment 1 Prewriting /Writing /Revising Write a first-person narrative about a bus, train, or plane trip to visit a friend or a relative. The narrative may be autobiographical or fictional. It should be one to three paragraphs long. After you have finished writing, revise your work, using the Assignment Checklist as a guide.

Assignment 2 Prewriting/Writing/Revising Select a notable person who interests you – perhaps a sports figure, a world leader, an artist, or an entertainer. Recall an interesting incident in that person's life. If necessary, do research in library to find additional information. Recount the incident in a third-person narrative of one to three paragraphs. Then revise your work.

Assignment Checklist

Check your assignments for the following points:

1. Did you keep your point of view consistent?
2. Did you present the actions in chronological order?
3. Did you present the characters and the setting in the beginning of your narrative?
4. If your narrative includes many actions, did you place them in two or more paragraphs?
5. Did you write a topic sentence and a concluding sentence that give the narrative a definite beginning and end?
6. Did you proofread your narrative for correct grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Characters

The people, or characters, in a narrative are especially important because they perform most of the actions of the narrative. If you provide vivid description and interesting dialogue in a narrative, you will make the characters and, consequently, all of your narrative come to life for your readers.

Creating Characters

Description. Your reader will be able to visualize your characters if you describe them precisely. You should describe how they look: how tall they are, how heavy they are, the colour of their eyes and hair, and the clothing that they are wearing. Also, you should describe their characteristic expressions, movements, and attitudes.

Motivation. You should make clear what motivates your characters—what feelings and events cause them to act as they do. For example, if a girl who was disappointed because she failed to make the basketball team suddenly becomes cheerful, you should explain why. Did she find another activity to participate in? Did she become a substitute player on the team? Similarly, if a boy spends all of his spare time practicing the clarinet, you should explain why. Does he want to become good enough to join an orchestra? Is he playing because he has nothing else that is interesting to do?

Assignments

Assignment 1 Recall an interesting incident of the past few years that included you and another person. Write a narrative that relates the incident. Construct the narrative so that it has a beginning, a high point, and a conclusion. After you have finished your first draft, revise your work.

Assignment 2 Select an event from a biographical work—a book or a magazine article—about a famous person. Then narrate the story in the first person, as if you were the one who participated in the event. Give the source of your information at the end of your paper.

Tests

Test 1

A. Number your paper from 1 to 3. Next to each number, write *True* if the sentence is true or *False* if it is false.

1. Transitional words emphasize the chronological order of a narrative.
2. In a third-person narrative, you use the pronoun *I* to refer to the main character.
3. You introduce the main characters and indicate the setting in the beginning of a narrative.

B. Number your paper from 4 to 7. Next to each number, the letter of the item that correctly answers the question.

4. Which of the following works contains autobiographical writing?
 - a. A student's narrative about the childhood of her grandfather
 - b. A student's narrative about his stormy airplane ride
 - c. An article about Julius Caesar by a historian
5. Which of the following sentences is written in the first person?
 - a. Even though Fred saw no summer jobs listed in the newspaper, he did not lose hope.
 - b. I was astonished by the brilliant colours in the hot springs.
 - c. When you see the hardware store on the corner, turn left.
 - d. Marsha exclaimed, "I passed!" as she emerged from the car after her driver's test.
6. Which of the following sentences presents not only action but

also the ' character's motivation for the action?

- a. Ira ran along the grassy banks of the river every morning at six o'clock.
- b. Joan left the gym immediately after basketball practice, and she did not talk to anyone.
- c. The mathematician worked all night because he wanted to be the first to solve the problem.
- d. Mayor Hostler delivered a two-hour speech on the budget.

Test 2

Choose one of the Assignments. Write the assignment as directed and hand it in to your teacher.

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