Workshop 2

Cohesion and readability

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session, you should be able to

- Structure an effective paragraph
- Understand the main principles of readability and cohesion
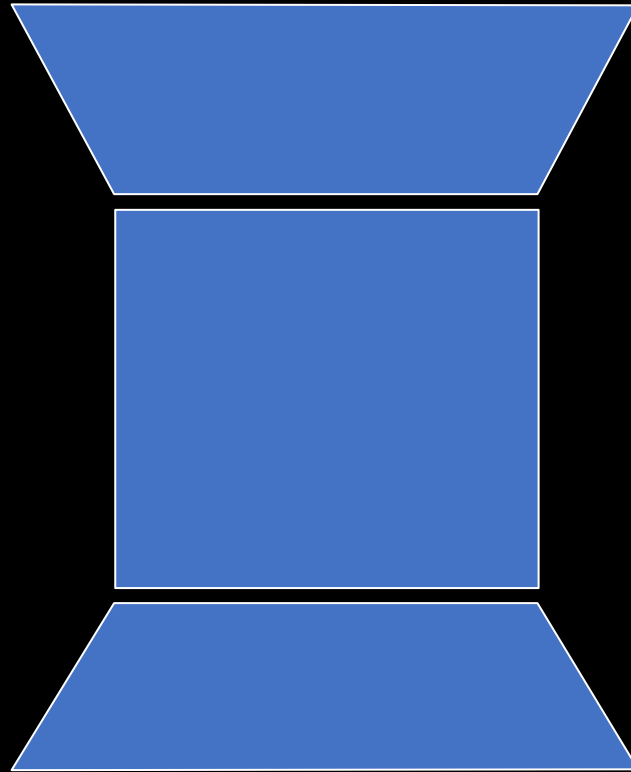- Apply those principles to your own text to improve flow and intelligibility

Key concepts: what do the following refer to?

Discuss with a partner:

- Topic sentence

- Peel structure

- Familiar-before-new principle

- Light-before-heavy principle

- Logical connectors

Effective paragraphs

Visualising the structure of a paragraph

The structure of a paragraph

Each paragraph should have a unified purpose (focus on one main theme/idea).

Introduction

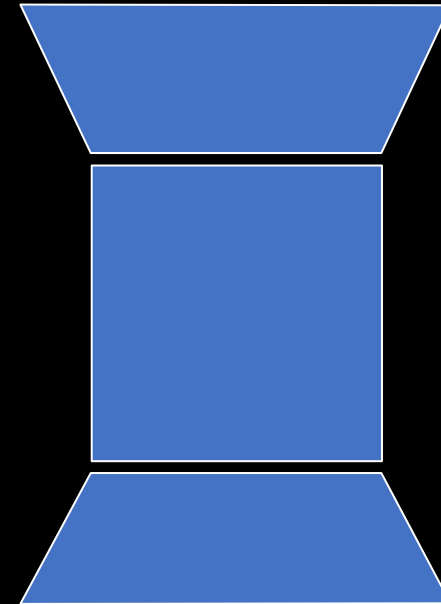➢ **Topic sentence**: usually the first sentence, introduces the focus of the paragraph

Body

➢ **Supporting sentences**: explanation, evidence, examples, argument

Conclusion

➢ **Concluding sentence:** may summarize or underscore the main thought of the paragraph / transition to the next

New idea = new paragraph + new topic sentence

A good topic sentence contains

- The topic of the paragraph
- The controlling idea to be developed

Topic sentences

Nietzsche was a German philosopher.

Topic sentences

Nietzsche was a German philosopher.

topic

Controlling idea ????

Topic sentences

Nietzsche's remark that 'God is dead' encapsulates one of the central tenets of his philosophy
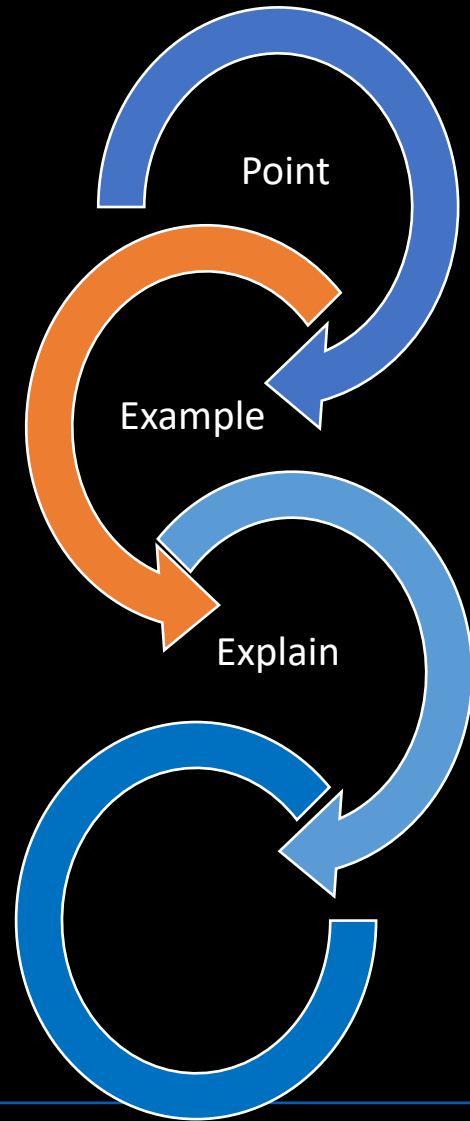
topic

Nietzsche's remark that 'God is dead' encapsulates one of the central tenets of his philosophy.

Controlling idea

The PEEL Formula

Paragraph structure: The PEEL formula

POINT

Introduce and make the point (topic sentence)

EXAMPLE

Support the point with evidence, examples, quotes,

- backed with research references

EXPLAIN

Comment and analyse the reference/example

Explain/evaluate why it works within the given context and the current argument you are making (n.b. it is possible to swap the positions of example and explain)
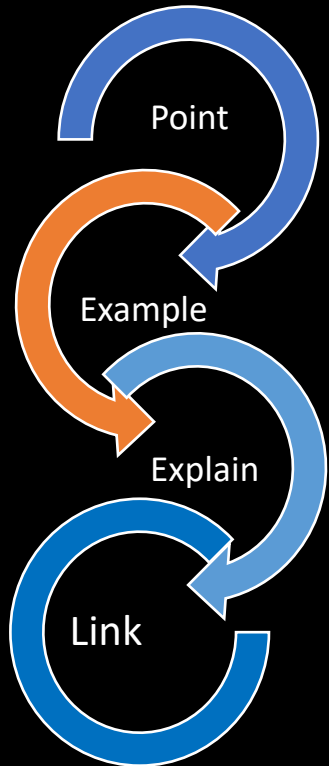
LINK

Reinforce your original point or link to the next point (in the next paragraph) and, where appropriate, to the overall question addressed in your research (main topic/idea)

Point

Example

Explain

See, e.g. https://www.goodshepherd.catholic.edu.au/students/guide-to-writing-successfully/

Try it! (1/2) – 15 min group activity

Topic: Color psychology

POINT: Write down three reasons why *your chosen colour* is the best (or worst) to use in (*name the specific context*).

Put the name of *your chosen colour* and *specific context* into the following sentence:

There are three reasons why _____ is the best/worst color to use in _____ .

Examples: red …. in clothing for competitive sports.
green … in an office space.

This is the main point (topic sentence) for your paragraph.

Point

Example

Explain

Link

"

MyCourses > 3 Building paragraphs > PEEL

EXAMPLE - Next, add the supporting details

The reasons why it is effective or ineffective for this context/usage.

You could start with

Firstly ... and so on,
until you have given all your reasons.

EXPLAIN

Explain/evaluate each examples (e.g. provide details) - why it is the best (or worst) for the given context and the current argument you are making

LINK - Finally, you'll need a closing sentence. You could try something like

All these reasons add up to [one very effective (or disruptive) experience] for [the target audience].

Point

Example

Explain

Link
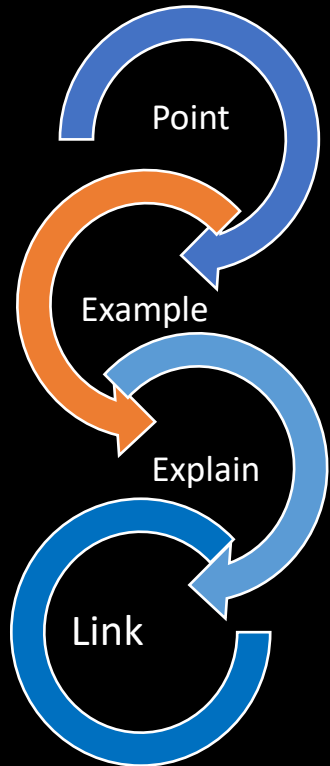
Pairwork

Read through your partner's text

- Do the topic sentences contain a clear controlling idea?

- Does the paragraph elaborate on that controlling idea?

- Does the paragraph remain on topic (the controlling idea)?

- Can you find examples of the PEEL structure?

- Could the structure of some paragraphs be improved?

Creating flow and cohesion

Which text is easier to read and why?

Historically, art was taught in Europe via the atelier system, which, similar to the practice of guilds, involved artists teaching their trade to apprentices. These students received formal training in art workshops or, more often, in homes during their spare time. The relationship between the apprentice and the master was controlled by formal guild statutes. For example, Florentine contracts dating from the late 13th century decreed that the master should clothe and feed the apprentice, who was called upon to be a faithful servant in return. Moreover, the apprentice often paid the master during the early years of his education, although he would be compensated later in his training, assuming the apprenticeship was productive.

In much the same way as guilds were used to train stonemasons or goldsmiths, artists in Europe educated their apprentices using ateliers. Workshops and homes served as modes of formal training for these students. Statutes were utilized to specify the relationship between the master and his student that would allow the learning of a craft in these arteliers. Clothing and food were provided to the apprentice on the basis of Florentine contracts dating from the late 13th century, for example. The role of a faithful servant was expected of the apprentice in return. While the master would often compensate the apprentice if he was productive, a payment was required for his early years of education.

Which text is easier to read and why?

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Familiar-before-new

Familiar-before-new

- Place familiar information at the beginning of the sentence.
- Place new information at the end

Familiar-before-new: three patterns

- Constant topic
- Stepwise topic
- Hyper topic

Familiar-new: constant topic

Aldous Huxley is regarded as one of the most prominent explorers of visual communication and sight-related theories. He became one of the most intellectual people to have ever explored visual communication partly due to his becoming near-blind in his teen years as the result of an illness. His work includes important novels on the dehumanizing aspects of scientific progress, most famously *Brave New World* and *The Art of Seeing*. He described "seeing" as being the sum of sensing, selecting, and perceiving. One of his most famous quotes is "The more you see, the more you know."

Constant topic

FAMILIAR

NEW

Aldous Huxley is regarded…

as one of the most prominent explorers of visual communication and sight-related theories.

He became…

one of the most intellectual people to have ever explored visual communication partly due to his becoming near-blind in his teen years as the result of an illness.

His work includes…

important novels on the dehumanizing aspects of scientific progress, most famously *Brave New World* and *The Art of Seeing*. He described… "seeing" as being the sum of sensing, selecting, and perceiving.

Stepwise topic

When I entered, there was a group of five people standing in front of the art piece. The piece was extraordinary in its shape and size. The shape, on one hand, reminded me of a dinosaur but the size, on the other hand, of a small fish. These creatures brought whole new associations to mind. These impressions made me ponder the deeper meaning of this piece.

Stepwise topic

…in front of the art piece.

The piece was extraordinary in its shape and size.

The shape…a dinosaur but…the size…a small fish.

These creatures …. whole new associations…

These impressions made…

Hyper topic

Artists considered to be working within the field of ecological art subscribe to one or more of the following shared principles: the web of interrelationships in our environment, the employment of natural materials and the restoration of damaged environments. The web of interrelationships concerns the interaction between the physical, biological, cultural, political, and historical aspects of ecological systems. The utilization of natural materials involves the rejection of man-made substances, such as acrylic paints. The restoration of damaged environments refers to the reclamation, repair or remediation of natural habitats through various artistic activities and projects

Hyper topic

Umbrella topic   . . . shared principles

The web of interrelationships concerns . . .

The utilization of natural materials involves . . .

The restoration of damaged environments

Light-before-heavy

Balancing Information Elements

Light-before-heavy

Two members of a team of researchers from the Department of Fashion Design at the University of Florence developed the revolutionary fabric.

The revolutionary fabric was developed by two members of a team of researchers from the Department of Fashion Design at the University of Florence

Strategies to reorder information

1. **Passive-Active/Active-passive**

2. **Introductory *"It"***

3. **Existential *"There"***

4. ***Reordering of direct and indirect object***

5. ***Using relative clauses***

Pairwork

- Read through your partner's text.
- Highlight instances where the familiar-new or light-before-heavy pattern could be improved

Reparing flow with logical connectors

Video games, according to some art critics, will never represent a form of art. The video games Flower and Halo 2600 are included in the Smithsonian art museum's permanent collection.

Video games, according to some art critics, will never represent a form of art. The video games Flower and Halo 2600 are included in the Smithsonian art museum's permanent collection.

Video games, according to some art critics, will never represent a form of art. Nevertheless, the video games Flower and Halo 2600 are included in the Smithsonian art museum's permanent collection.

Connectors

- **Contrastive**

    However, nonetheless, nevertheless, by contrast, conversely, on the other hand, instead, alternatively

- **Cause and effect**:

    Thus, therefore, as a result, consequently, as a consequence, for that reason, hence, accordingly

- **Additive**

    In addition, moreover, furthermore, further

- **Illustrative**

    For example, for instance

- **Comparative**

    Similarly, likewise, in the same way, equally

- **Sequencing**

    Previously, prior to that, simultaneously, at the same time, subsequently, then, after that, next, eventually, ultimately, finally, initially, meanwhile

Connectors

Open the handout in MyCourses and add the appropriate logical connector to the beginning of the second sentence in each example.

Individual feedback sessions

Go to the scheduler and make an appointment for an individual feedback session on your text with me