



# Functional English

SS150

2+1

**COURSE IN CHARGE:**

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# WEEK # 9

## Writing Process: The Body Paragraph (BP)

# BODY PARAGRAPHS

- ▶ They are the most important type of paragraphs as they contain all the information that the writer intends to convey.
- ▶ A body paragraph has 4 components:

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- ▶ **Topic Sentence (TS):** Informs about the topic of the paragraph. (the single controlling idea)
  - ▶ **Main Points (MP):** Inform, explain, or elaborate the TS.
  - ▶ **Supporting Details (SD):** Support MPs. They can be examples, facts, statistics, evidence, etc.
  - ▶ **Conclusion:** Summarizes the ideas discussed in the paragraph. To write a conclusion, restate TS in different words and then make suggestions, link upcoming paragraph, etc.

## NOTE:


Body paragraphs with this structure are used in formal, scientific, business, and academic writing. Also, this type of body paragraphs are constructed in

- ▶ Informative/Expository writing
- ▶ Argumentative and persuasive writing
- ▶ Evaluative and critical analysis writing
- ▶ Other technical reports and research projects

However, in descriptive and narrative writing, such body paragraphs are not used.



**EXAMPLE BODY PARAGRAPH:**



It is the incredible speed of computers, along with their memory capacity, which makes them so useful and valuable. Computers can solve problems in a fraction of the time it takes man. For this reason, businesses use them to keep their accounts, and airline, railway, and bus companies use them to control ticket sales. As for memory, modern computers can store information with high accuracy and reliability. A computer can put data into its memory and retrieve it again in a few millionths of a second. It also has a storage capacity for as many as a million items. In short, unbeatable speed and unimaginable memory capacity have turned computers into the most efficient and smartest machines in the world.

**TS, MPs, SDs, Concl.**


► What is the controlling idea of the above paragraph?



## Read this BP and answer the Qs:

My younger brothers, who are twins, were born only fifteen minutes apart from each other, but they are very different in character. The older one is responsible, neat and a caring person. For example, whenever I ask him to help me in home chores or other works, he readily offers his help. However, the younger one is irresponsible, unfriendly, and rude. As proof, his room is always disorderly, and he is never willing to give me a hand in household works. In short, though my brothers are twins and have an identical face, but they are as different as one can imagine if the character is considered.




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- ▶ What is the controlling idea of the paragraph?
  - ▶ Which is more specific (narrower in meaning): the TS or the MPs?
  - ▶ Which is the most specific part of a body paragraph? TS, MP, or SD?
  - ▶ Write the MPs only.
  - ▶ Are the SDs convincing? Give reasons for your answer.

# Essentials of a BP

**UNITY:** oneness of topic

- ▶ All the ideas must focus on the main idea.
- ▶ The supporting ideas must develop a single main idea only.

If any sentence in a paragraph does not relate to the main idea, the paragraph will lose unity.



**COHERENCE:** “cohere” means that the elements in the paragraph should “stick together.” There are five elements that you should consider:

- Logical order of events
- Transitional expressions
- Key concept repetition
- Substituting pronouns for nouns
- Parallelism



## ► Logical Order of Events

It helps the reader understand what you are trying to explain about the subject.

There are three types of information ordering that you need to consider:

- Time order (“chronologically” means “time order”)
- Space order
- Order of ideas

- ▶ **Time Order:** order the ideas in your paragraphs with a sense of time.

*Phil had an important dinner meeting with a client at 7 P.M. At 8 A.M., he took his car into the dealer for repairs. After an hour's wait, the service technician explained the repairs necessary to fix the damage. By 10 A.M., he had talked to the service manager to get an estimate on the costs. Phil called his insurance agent at 10:30 A.M. to see if the bill was covered under his policy. He returned to the dealer's at 6 P.M. and picked up his car. He made it to the restaurant on time for his dinner with the client.*

- ▶ This paragraph demonstrates good chronological order. It helps establish the “importance” of the time sequence of the events in Phil's life.

- ▶ **Space Order:** you can move from top to bottom, left to right, inside to outside, or any appropriate “direction.”

Describing a field from a distance to close-up:

*The tall fir trees surrounded the open field. At the base of the trees, small shrubs ringed the green expanse like a floating fence. The field was dotted with blue “heal-all” flowers. On many of the flower petals, small beads of dew glistened in the morning sun. Tiny insects swam in the dew drops as if lounging in their own backyard pool.*

- ▶ Notice how the writer keeps you moving from the outside to the inside of the setting: from the trees to the bushes to the flowers, and even more closely to the petals, to the dew drops, and almost microscopically, to the little insects in the dew drops.





## ► Order of Ideas

If you were to explain to a friend how to save computer information on a disk

*First, place the disk into the port on the CPU. Second, click on the “File” icon on the top tool bar to display options. Third, hit the “Save as” icon on the left menu. Then, Click on the “Save in” tool bar for the drop-down menu to display. Next, click on “3½ Floppy (A:).” Afterwards, in the “File Name” box, type in the name of your document. Lastly, move to the lower tool bar and click on “Save.”*

- This order of ideas is logical. As a writer, it is your responsibility to order the ideas in your paragraphs for the maximum clarity.





## ► Transitional Expressions:

As you move from one idea to the other, link these ideas and events with transitional expressions (adverbial conjunctions, introductory words, coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions). (p.25-26)

## Without transitional expressions:

*The pilot took off from the airport in bright sunshine. The storm clouds on the horizon were thick and black. The small plane began to dip and shake. The winds from the approaching storm buffeted the small craft. The pilot struggled to keep the plane aloft. She called the airport tower for advice. She increased her speed. She headed the plane into the wind. The plane responded to the controls. She landed the plane safely at her destination. She called the tower personnel and thanked them for their help.*

All the ideas sound separate and distinct from one another. Also, it has an abrupt “stop and start . . . stop and start” quality, and they are all simple sentences.

## With transitional expressions:

*The pilot took off from the airport in bright sunshine; however, the storm clouds on the horizon were thick and black. Soon, the small plane began to dip and shake because the winds from the approaching storm buffeted the small craft, and the pilot struggled to keep the plane aloft. First, she called the airport tower for advice. Next, she increased her speed. Then, she headed the plane into the wind. As a result, the plane responded to the controls. Afterwards, she landed the plane safely at her destination. Finally, she called the tower personnel and thanked them for their help.*

- Each idea is connected to the next one by a transitional expression that helps the reader understand the information more clearly. Notice the sentence variety in the paragraph.



## ▶ **Key Concept Repetition**

- ▶ In longer works, to keep the reader focused on the topic, repeat key concepts and words.
- ▶ However, sometimes repetition can be cumbersome and unnecessary, which can be overcome by replacing the key nouns with pronouns.

## ▶ **Substituting Pronouns for Key Nouns**

- ▶ Another method for achieving coherence is substituting pronouns for key nouns. (EX)

# Let's Practice (Unity)

- ▶ It means that all the sentences refer to the main idea, or the topic of the paragraph.

*I live in a flat with my family. We have two bedrooms and a living room. We have a garden and we have some flowers there. In weekdays I arrive home at five o'clock and I have lunch. Then I do my homework and go to bed. I had a computer but now it doesn't work. I have a brother and a sister and I think I am very lucky to live with them. Sometimes our relatives visit us. Our flat becomes very crowded sometimes but I like it.*



## What are the words in **bold** called? What role do they play?

The transportation industry serves us in many ways. **First**, it is the means through which we travel from one place to another. Modern means of transportation have minimized the distance between places to such a degree that we can easily reach our workplaces too far away from our house in a very short time. **Plus**, it is the means through which energy, raw materials, and finished products are channeled where they are needed. **For instance**, rail roads and trucks carry the food, lumber, automobiles, furniture, clothing and thousands of other goods that fill our stores. **In addition**, ships and air planes carry goods between cities throughout the world. **Likewise**, the food we eat may come from farms hundreds or even thousands of miles away. **As a result**, we are totally dependent on the transportation industry in today's modern world.



## EXERCISE:


**Read the body paragraphs and  
complete the tables that follow them.**





# Activity

**B1 and B2**



**B3: Pair work**  
**B4 and B5: Assignment**

Thank you 😊

