Paragraph Analysis:
UNITY AND COHERENCE

An effective paragraph should contain each of the following:
1. **A Topic Sentence**
2. **Unity**
3. **Coherence**
4. **Adequate Development**

A topic sentence

A topic sentence indicates in a general way what idea or thesis the paragraph is going to deal with. An easy way to make sure your reader understands the topic of the paragraph is to put your topic sentence near the beginning of the paragraph.

Unity

All sentences in the paragraph should have a single focus (should support the topic sentence).

Coherence

Coherence makes the paragraph easily understandable to a reader. You can help create coherence in your paragraphs by connecting one sentence to another using:

1. Parallel constructions
2. Pronouns
3. Synonyms
4. Repetition of key words
5. Transitional words
6. Systematic sentence organization (see adequate development): from general to specific, from specific to general, order of importance, chronological order, space order, steps, cause – effect, comparison and contrasts.

Adequate development

The topic (which is introduced by the topic sentence) should be discussed fully and adequately. Some methods can be used to make sure your paragraph is well-developed:

- Examples and illustrations
- Data (facts, statistics, evidence, details, and others)
- Definition terms in the paragraph
- Comparison and contrast
- Causes and reasons
- Effects and consequences
- Descriptions or details

- Chronology of an event (time segments)
- Steps
- Logical divisions

Paragraph Analysis

<u>For example: **Paragraph 1**</u>

[1]My hometown is famous for several amazing natural features. [2]**First**, it is noted for the Wheaton River, which is very wide and beautiful. [3]**On either side** of **this river**, which is 175 feet wide, are many shady willow trees which have long branches that can move gracefully in the wind. [4]In autumn the leaves of **these** trees fall and cover the riverbanks like golden snow. [5]**Second**, on the other side of the town is Wheaton Hill, which is unusual **because** it is very steep. [6]**Even though** it is steep, climbing **this** hill is not dangerous, **because** there are some firm rocks along the sides that can be used as stairs. [7]There are no trees around **this** hill, **so** it stands clearly against the sky **and** can be seen from many miles away. [8]If you visit Wheaton Hill you should try the nice restaurant at Wheaton Hill hotel. [9]**The third amazing feature** is the Big Old Tree. [10]**This** tree stands two hundred feet tall and is probably about six hundred years old. [11]**These three landmarks** are truly amazing and make my hometown a famous place.

1. The topic sentence is: Sentence 1
2. Irrelevant sentence: Sentence 8 (should be removed from the paragraph)
3. The paragraph also shows coherence by the use of
   - Parallel constructions: Present tense
   - Pronouns: this, these
   - Synonyms: natural features = landmarks
   - Paraphrasing of phrase/sentence: sentence 1 is paraphrased in sentence 11
   - Repetition of key words: river, hill, rocks
   - Transitional words: on the other side, even though, so, because

4. Methods of development/sentence organization used:
   - Examples/illustrations: -
   - Comparison and contrast: sentences 3 (comparison – on either side) and 6 (even though)
   - Causes and reasons: sentences 5, 6 and 7 (so, because)
   - Descriptions or details of each landmark
   - Logical divisions: First, Second, The third amazing feature

Now try analyzing the paragraphs below:

Paragraph 2

[1]Each of the U.S. manned space exploration projects had specific major goals. [2]For example, the Mercury project was designed to test whether or not human beings could survive and function in outer space. [3]In addition, the Mercury project tested rockets with the new Mercury space capsule, which could hold one person. [4]As another example, the Gemini project was intended to find out whether two people could work in the weightless environment of space. [5]One way of doing this was by having Gemini astronauts take "spacewalks." [6]That is, they floated outside their spacecraft in a spacesuit, connected to it by a tether. [7]This type of walk was developed into the famous dancing move called 'moonwalk' by Michael Jackson. [8]Finally, the Apollo project, with three astronauts, had the goal of testing spacecraft and skills so that people could actually fly to the Moon and land on it. [9]Other goals included performing scientific experiments on the lunar surface and collecting rocks for study on Earth. [10]These three space projects have different goals with different lessons for human beings. (Adapted from source: http://lrs.ed.uiuc.edu/students/fwalters/cohere.html#unity)

1. The topic sentence:

2. Irrelevant sentence:

3. The paragraph also shows coherence by the use of
   - Parallel constructions:
   - Pronouns:
   - Synonyms:
   - Paraphrasing of phrase/sentence:
   - Repetition of key words:
   - Transitional words:

4. Methods of development/sentence organization used:
   - Examples and illustrations:
   - Comparison and contrast:
   - Causes and reasons:
   - Descriptions or details:
   - Logical divisions:
   - Chronology of events:

Paragraph 3

[1]Dogs have an extreme antagonism toward cats. [2]The enmity between these two species can be traced back to the time of the early Egyptian dynasties. [3]Archaeologists in recent years have discovered Egyptian texts in which there are detailed accounts of dogs brutally attacking cats. [4]Today this type of cruelty between these two domestic pets can be witnessed in regions as close as your own neighborhood. [5]For example, when dogs are walked by their masters, and they happen to catch sight of a stray cat, they will pull with all their strength on their leash until the master is forced to yield; the typical result is that a cat is chased up a tree. [6]The two types of animals are the most popular pets in modern homes. [7]The hatred between dogs and cats has lasted for so many centuries; it is unlikely that this conflict will ever end.

(Adapted from Source: http://www.wheaton.edu/learnres/writectr/Resources/coherence.htm)

1. The topic sentence:

2. Irrelevant sentence:

3. The paragraph also shows coherence by the use of

   - Parallel constructions:
   - Pronouns:
   - Synonyms:
   - Paraphrasing of phrase/sentence:
   - Repetition of key words:
   - Transitional words:

4. Methods of development/sentence organization used:

   - Examples and illustrations:
   - Comparison and contrast:
   - Causes and reasons:
   - Descriptions or details:
   - Logical divisions:
   - Chronology of events: