***Identifying* *Paragraph Organization Patterns***

**Paragraph organization patterns** show how the ideas of a **paragraph** are organized and how the ideas are thematically related to each other. Every writer has a purpose for writing. This plan of action is the order, or **pattern of organization**, in which the ideas are presented in the text. There are several patterns a writer can use to organize his ideas. The choice of a specific **pattern** (or combination of patterns) depends upon the topic and the objectives of the writer. There are various ways of organizing the same information. There are **eight** types of **paragraph organization pattern**:

1. ***Chronological order****:* Chronological order (time order or time sequence) is the order in which the events occurred in time. A chronological pattern of organization arranges information according to a progression of time, either forward or backward.

***Example*:** It seemed like an ordinary day when she got up that morning, but Linda was about to embark on the worst day of her life. First, she fell in the bathtub because her mother forgot to rinse out the bath oil. Then, she spilled orange juice on the outfit she had spent hours putting together for school pictures. When she changed, she messed up the French braid her mother had put in her hair. As she walked out the door, she dropped all of her school books and her math homework flew away. Once she made it to the car, she thought everything would be all right. She was wrong; her father didn’t look before he backed out of the driveway and ran into the neighbor’s truck. Linda’s side of the car was damaged the most, and she ended up with a broken arm. That night, she cried to sleep.

1. ***Spatial order***: A spatial pattern of organization arranges information according to how things fit together in physical space; i.e. where one thing exists in relation to another.

***Example***:I couldn’t believe my eyes when we finally emerged from the storm shelter. Where the barn once stood, there was now only a few tufts of hay. The path that led to the house was scattered with branches and debris. The entire roof was gone. The north wall was caved in, and we could see right into the house or what was left of it. Most of our belongings had been sucked up into the great vacuum and scattered across the countryside. We heard a loud cracking as the west wall gave way and collapsed, sending up a wave of dust. Seeing it made me realize how lucky we were to be alive.

1. ***Cause and effect***: Cause and effect development is used to show the different causes and effects of various conditions. An event (effect) is said to have happened because of some situation or circumstance (cause). The cause (the action) stimulates the event, or effect (the outcome). It is effective in a persuasive text in which the writer advocates some actions to solve a problem.

***Example*:** What circumstances lead a person to follow a life of crime? There is no easy answer to this question; however, psychologists have suggested that clues may be found in the childhood of the criminal. If a child is reared in a negative environment, he may be more likely to turn to crime than a child who had had more positive influences. For example, a child of very strict parents or from an extremely poor home may run a greater risk of being involved in crimes as he reaches adolescence.

1. ***Compare and contrast***: A compare and contrast development arranges information according to how two or more things are similar to or different from one another (or both).

***Example*:** Although they are sisters, Jennifer and Jessica are complete opposites. Jennifer enjoys playing sports, while Jessica would rather watch. Jennifer has no interest in playing a musical instrument, while Jessica is the first chair violinist. Jennifer listens to new age music, while Jessica prefers country. Jennifer’s favorite subject is English, and Jessica’s favorite is math. Jennifer likes to curl up in a chair on a rainy day and read a good book, but Jessica would rather sleep all day. No one would ever guess that they are actually twins.

1. ***Classification (listing****)*: Writers sometimes develop their main ideas by breaking them down into smaller areas or classes; each is then discussed separately.

***Example****:*Roughly speaking, there are three kinds of people in the world. The first kind of people is simply called People; they are the largest and probably the most valuable class. We owe to this class the chairs we sit on, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in; and indeed, we probably belong to this class ourselves. The second class may be called for convenience the Poets; they are often a nuisance to their families, but generally speaking, a blessing to mankind. The third class is that of the Professors or Intellectuals, sometimes described as the thoughtful people; and these are a blight and a desolation both to their families and to mankind. Of course, the classification sometimes overlaps, like all classifications. Some good people are almost poets and some bad poets are almost professors.

1. ***Illustration (Exemplification):*** Giving a specific example is one of the simplest ways of supporting an idea. To identify such pattern, you need to read a few sentences before or after the illustration.

***Example:*** There is something magnetic about San Francisco. Whether attracted by the beauty of its setting or the vitality of its atmosphere, almost three million tourists flock to the city each year. Surrounded on three sides by water, the city is built on forty-three steep hills. Visitors needn’t go far before encountering a mesmeric view. From the top of Telegraph Hill, for example, pastel buildings and green parklands cascade below.

1. ***Definition****:* While reading a text, you may come across a sentence or an entire paragraph devoted to defining a complex term or idea. The concept is often initially defined, and then, it is further expanded by using examples and restatements.

***Example****:*The water drum is a unique instrument. It is a closed cylinder that is usually made of metal. Inside the drum is a certain amount of water that affects the drum’s tone. By tilting the drum, the player shifts the water during each beat or between any two beats. The movement of the water raises or lowers the pitch of the drum beat and produces some very unusual sounds.

1. ***Process Analysis or sequence****:* In this type of order, a sequence of actions is described. It instructs the reader on how to do something. It is basically a set of directions.

***Example:*** To prevent your mind from wandering while reading, first, look over the length of the reading material. Second, read the title and the first paragraph, looking for the main idea of the article. Next, read the headings, if there are any, and the first sentence of each paragraph. And finally, read the last paragraph, which will probably contain a summary of the material. By doing this, you condition your mind to accept the material to be read, and thus reduce mind wandering.

***Application***

1. ***Read these extracts and choose the correct pattern of organization:***

**1.** The building up of greenhouse gases is constantly rising and is consequently triggering detrimental impacts that are ravaging humans’ life.

a. comparison contrast b. illustration c. definition d. cause effect

**2.** Semiconductors are sample devices that use materials that are halfway between the conductors’ characteristic of few outermost shell electrons and the table, inert materials with eight valence electrons.

a. comparison contrast b. process analysis c. definition d. classification/ listing

**3.** Global dimming is contradicting global warming in a way that it is cooling the earth.

a. comparison contrast b. cause effect c. time order d. spatial order

**4.** To make a pasta face, cut a large circle (1 foot in diameter) from cardboard. Next, cut 2 large holes (1.5 inches apart) in the center of the circle. Then, cut 2 squares from the plastic packaging to fit over the eye holes and tape onto the back of the mask. Next, paint the front of the mask white, and leave to dry.

a. classification b. time order c. spatial order d. process analysis

**5.** To slowly reverse the damaging effects, humans take a series of actions, including cutting down on greenhouse gas emission, decreasing deforestation rates and restricting population growth.

a. spatial order b. time order c. classification/ listing d. illustration

**6.** Gold was first found in California in about 1840. The next ten years in American history are called the California Gold Rush. Many people moved to the West during those years to look for gold. By 1850, there were many “Gold Rush” to towns in California.

a. cause effect b. time order c. spatial order d. process analysis

**7.** Many people still do not like to use computers for writing. They prefer to use typewriters or print. They know computers are faster and more accurate, but they are more comfortable with typewriters.

a. comparison contrast b. classification c. cause effect d. definition

**8.** The first step in redesigning your closet is to take everything out and sort through it. Anything you haven’t worn in over a year should be given to charity. Check garments for wear and tear. Take care of anything that needs mending. If it is beyond repair, get rid of it. The second step, is to install a closet organizer. Choose one that will hold the different types of garments in your wardrobe. The third step, is to put items in the closet so that those you wear most often are easy to access. The final step, is to stay organized. Put garments back in their appropriate places so that you will be able to find them.

a. time order b. process analysis c. classification/ listing d. spatial order

1. ***Identify the type of paragraph organization pattern in each of the paragraphs below:***
2. In the simplest outline, how is a president chosen? First, a candidate campaigns within his party for nomination at a national convention. After the convention, comes a period of competition with the nominee of the other major and minor parties. The show down arrives an Election Day. The candidate must win more votes than any other nominee in enough states. If he does all these things, he has won the right to the office of President of the United States?

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1. All life is a game of power. The object of the game is simple enough: to know what you want and get it. The moves of the game, by contrast, are infinite and complex, although they usually involve the manipulation or people and situations to your advantage. As for the rules, these are only discovered by playing the game to the end.

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1. If animals could talk, what wonderful stories they would tell. The eagle already knew the earth was round when men were still afraid of falling off its edge. The whale could have warned Columbus about a barrier between Europe and India and saved that explorer a lot of anxiety. Justice would be more properly served if animals could give testimony. All of us would have to change behavior in some way or another, for our environment would be considerably changed.

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1. This process of selecting details favorable or unfavorable to the subject being described may be termed slanting. Slanting gives no explicit judgments, but it differs from reporting in that it deliberately makes certain judgments inescapable. Let us assume for a moment the truth of the statement “When Clyde was in New York last November, he was seen having dinner with a show girl.” The inferences that can be drawn from this statement are changed considerably when the following words are added… and her husband and their two children. “Yet, if Clyde is a married man, his enemies could conceivably do him a great deal of harm by talking about his dinner with a New York show girl.” One-sided or biased slanting of this kind can be described as a technique of lying without actually telling any lies.

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1. Many children of this generation have never witnessed the birth of a baby or experienced the death of a family member. Nowadays, children are born in the hospital, a sterile environment detached from the family. And when a family becomes seriously ill, or approaches death, he is transferred to a hospital where children are forbidden to visit terminally ill patients. As a result, children are deprived of feelings and situations related to birth and death.

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1. So Grant and Lee were in complete contrast, representing two diametrically opposed elements in American life. Grant was the modern man emerging beyond him, ready to come on the stage, was the great age of steel and machinery, of crowded cities and a restless, burgeoning vitality. Lee might have ridden down from the old age of chivalry, lance in hand, silken banner fluttering over his head. Each man was the perfect champion of his cause, drawing both his strengths and his weaknesses from the people he led.

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1. Studies of different cultures have shown that there are many people in the world who as a group are friendly and kind. Ahe Arapesh, a primitive tribe living in the mountains, were peaceful people who thought that all human beings were naturally cooperative, unaggressive, self-denying, and primarily concerned with growing food to feed growing children. Curiously enough, a neighboring tribe, the Mungudumor, were highly aggressive, warlike, and cruel. Early studies of American Indians also indicate the peaceful nature of some tribes, such as the Hopi, Zuni, and Pueblo; while others, such as the Apaches and Comanches, were aggressive and warlike.

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1. Various kinds of degrees of determinism have been argued since ancient times. The great dramatic tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles, for example, are pervaded by the ancient Greek belief that men and women are the pawns of fate. This fatalism is clearly illustrated in the well-known legend of Oedipus. In trying to avoid fulfilling the oracle’s prophecy that he would kill his father and marry his mother, Oedipus turned headlong into fate’s trap and unwittingly did as prophesied. A later example is the Calvinist doctrine of predestination that at birth, every individual has already been elected to salvation or condemned to damnation.

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1. Family therapy is a method of helping troubled families work out their problems. Therapy involves discussion sessions depicted by trained therapist. All members of the family are encouraged to come to the sessions. The goal of each session is to work out possible solutions to a particular problem.

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1. It was market-day, and over all the roads, the peasants and their wives were coming towards the town. The men walked easily, lurching the whole body forward at every painful labor of the country. Their left shoulders are too high and their figures crooked; and as they walk, they spread their knees too wide. Their starched blue blouses, shining as though varnished, and blown up big around their bony bodies, seemed exactly like balloons about to soar, but putting forth a head, two arms, and two feet.

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1. People adjust to change in a variety of ways. As earthquake victim who has lost all his possessions or family members, for example, may have to move to a new location, ask for aid, or simply collapse and end up in a hospital. All of these reactions are ways of “adjusting.”

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1. In the past century, government has expanded and become more involved in many new fields and aspects of life. One reason for this change is that government has more to do because the population has increased by 600% over the past 100 years and their needs of living and working together peacefully should be considered. Another reason for government expansion is the growth of cities. The government has been forced to accept responsibility for the water supply, transportation, fire and police protection, and waste disposal in urban areas.

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1. Most people do not realize that they have more than one vocabulary level. In fact, everyone has four different vocabularies: a reading vocabulary, a listening vocabulary, a writing vocabulary and a speaking vocabulary. There are words that you understand when you hear them, but you may not use them in your daily speech, and there are words that you recognize when you read that you may not normally use in your own writing. Similarly, there are words and expressions that you use in your speech but not in writing.

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1. On April 23rd, 1564, William Shakespeare was born in Stratford in England. He attended a local grammar school in the town. At the age of eighteen, he married Ann Hathaway. Several years later, he traveled to London. By the time he was twenty-eight, he had established his reputation by acting and writing plays. Other than these facts, little is known of Shakespeare’s early life.

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1. Many people rationalize the difficulties in a fashion that protects their view of themselves. They rationalize their mistakes and weaknesses by inventing excuses for them. example, if a student failed an exam, he might say the exam was unfair or that the instructor did not teach what was on the test.

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1. Most beginning college students quickly realize that college is very different from high school. They can build their own time schedules, choose their own instructors, and decide whether to attend classes. In high school, however, freedom is more restricted: teachers and schedules are assigned, not selected by the student, and class attendance is required.

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1. Both red raspberries and black raspberries grow wild in the United States. Both grow on canes five feet tall and have compound leaves. Both berries are much more plentiful, and they are easier to find than red raspberries. Black raspberries grow easier to find than red raspberries. Black raspberries grow easily in forests and wooden areas, whereas red raspberries require more light and space.

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1. Cloning in biology is the process of producing similar populations of genetically identical individuals that occurs in nature when organisms such as: bacteria, insects or plants reproduce asexually. Cloning in biotechnology refers to processes used to create copies of DNA fragments, cells, or organisms. The term also refers to the production of multiple copies of a product such as digital media or software.

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1. Most of the world’s population consumes non organic food. Non organic food uses conventional farming methods. However, organic foods are preferred by people who are more conscious about their health. They are produced using organic farming principles. Organic farming uses preventive measures rather than cures as in the case of non-organic. Opposite to non- organic food production, organic farming is based on principles of health, ecology, care and fairness.

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1. Is organic food really as good as we think? According to public perception, organic food is the healthy option. Sales of organic produce have rocketed over the past few years with the organics industry sending out messages of safer, healthier food created by farming practices which are better for the environment. However, critics argue that organic farming leads to the risk of contamination with potentially dangerous bacteria and mould toxins, and increased levels of natural pesticide found in organic produce could even be as dangerous as synthetic chemicals.

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1. A subject that has been disputed more ever since medical technology has dramatically improved is Euthanasia. Euthanasia is assisted suicide, or it could be ending a patient’s suffering by letting him die. Medical technology is advancing so fast euthanasia is not needed to be a practice in today’s society. Moreover, it is inhuman and against the law.

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1. Imagine if people had cars, but no longer needed gasoline. The invention of a car that runs without the aid of fossil fuels or gasoline would be very beneficial to people. This vehicle could perhaps run -on magnetism, electricity, solar power, alternative forms of fuel, or perhaps wind force. It would have positive effects on people and the world economically and environmentally.

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1. Researchers in London have developed a new system that converts video into virtual, touchable maps for the blind. The three-dimensional maps use force fields to represent walls and roads, so people with impaired vision can better understand the layout of buildings and cities.

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1. “My parents are heartbroken; they are divorced,” he told the Guardian. Teresa, who lived with her elderly parents, sister, brother-in-law and their two children, suffered from epilepsy but was otherwise in good health. A week before she died, she came down with the flu. “My parents called her doctor but they refused to come to the house despite knowing she had a disability,” said Franzese. “She went into a coma on 7th March, we tried to call the emergency hotline, and they arrived after 40 minutes. In the meantime, I tried to give her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

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***Choose the correct pattern of organization:***

**1.** The development of an assignment essay, follows a number of sequenced steps. Firstly, you must analyze the question very carefully, so that your essay answers the set question. Next, you should brainstorm the topic of the essay and seek out some relevant sources of information. Once you have a good grasp of the scope of the question, you should construct an essay plan that details your approach to answering the question. This plan is then followed by the development of a draft answer. Lastly, and most importantly, your written work must be refined by careful editing and proofreading.

**a.** chronological order **b.** description **c.** explanation **d.** compare & contrast **e.** argument & persuasion

**2.** The topic sentence is a feature of paragraph structure. It is the first and most general sentence in the paragraph. This sentence states the subject and the controlling idea for the paragraph. The sentences that follow the topic sentence provide relevant evidence to support the point that is made in the topic sentence.

**a.** chronological order **b.** description **c.** explanation **d.** compare & contrast **e.** argument & persuasion

**3.** Academic reports and essays are similar in some ways and are different in others. They are similar because both use a formal academic style incorporating references and are written in paragraphs. Also, the writing of each type requires a high level of analytical thought with a correct and neat final presentation. The report is different from the essay because it usually presents information whereas the essay focuses more on argument. They are stylistic different in that the report uses numbered headings and dot points. These features are not usually encouraged in essays. Reports usually conclude with set of recommendations which is different from an essay conclusion.

**a.** chronological order **b.** description **c.** explanation **d.** compare & contrast **e.** argument & persuasion

**4.** For students to understand writing, it is essential that they have an explicit understanding of topic sentence. If a topic sentence is well written, then it helps the writer to write clear and acceptable paragraphs. Additionally, a reader can use topic sentences to scan paragraphs for an overview of the meaning of whole articles and chapters of writing. Therefore, a precise understanding of the function of topic sentences opens up the world of academic writing and reading for the learner.

**a.** chronological order **b.** description **c.** explanation **d.** compare & contrast **e.** argument & persuasion