

Writing: Unity

Writing has unity when the supporting sentences all work together to support the topic sentences. Paragraphs that lack unity are confusing to the reader because some ideas do not seem to belong.

Compare the examples below. The first paragraph has poor unity because there are sentences that do not support the topic sentence.

Example: Body Paragraph (Poor Unity)

Chopin was a musical prodigy. While many people are aware of the great pieces he wrote, not as many people are aware of how young he was when he began his musical career. Chopin published one of his first pieces at the age of seven and one year later performed in a public concert (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018). At an astonishingly young age, he truly showed great musical talent in both of these things. While it may be hard to imagine, his interest in music may have begun even earlier. "In infancy Chopin was always strangely moved when listening to his mother or eldest sister playing the piano" (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018, "Life," para. 1). Many children show some response to music in their infancy. This early sensitivity may have helped his early desire to create and perform. It is clear that he was musically gifted very early in life.

Example: Body Paragraph (Revised for Unity)

Chopin was a musical prodigy. While many people are aware of the great pieces he wrote, not as many people are aware of how young he was when he began his musical career. Chopin published one of his first pieces at the age of seven and one year later performed in a public concert (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018). At an astonishingly young age, he truly showed great musical talent in both of these things. While it may be hard to imagine, his interest in music may have begun even earlier. "In infancy Chopin was always strangely moved when listening to his mother or eldest sister playing the piano" (Plantinga & Hendley, 2018, "Life," para. 1). ~~Many children show some response to music in their infancy.~~ This early sensitivity may have helped his early desire to create and perform. It is clear that he was musically gifted very early in life.

Exercise: Revise for unity

Read the paragraphs. Cross out sentences that are not connected to the topic sentence.

1. The aftermath of an earthquake is more dangerous than the earthquake itself. When an earthquake occurs, the shaking causes problems with existing buildings and construction (United States Geologic Survey, n.d.). For example, gas lines may break because the ground around them shifts, and broken gas lines are extremely dangerous to people. Gas lines smell terrible when they are broken. Other dangers after an earthquake include landslides and tsunamis. The sudden energy of the earthquake sends either land or water moving, and anything in the path can be destroyed (USGS, n.d.). Earthquakes can have more energy than hurricanes. Tidal waves from tsunamis can swallow entire countries in the Pacific. When compared to the dangers directly associated with the earthquake, we can see that the aftermath is also important to be prepared for.
2. One cause of pollution is huge factories. In the factories we produce thousands and thousands of different things for humanity. The biggest factories are in the food, petroleum, forest, auto, and pharmacy industries. Factories burn coal, petroleum, and wood. Having many factories would not be a problem if they used different energy. The problem is that no matter what kind of combustible material we are talking about, all of them pollute our air. They also are difficult forms of energy to replace so we will have less fuel in the future. Pollution has been a part of earth even millions of years ago but not the amount of contamination that we now observe. The Earth's ozone layer has started to thin because of the monumental measure of harmful substances in the air. The factories emit into the air harmful chemicals, and every single one of these substances is poisoning the air. Huge factories are in some ways useful for humans but also harmful to the environment and pollute the air.

Now that your planning stage is complete, you can begin writing your draft. Remember to think about the characteristics of good writing. Your writing should be organized, developed, accurate, and original.

1 Exercise: Write a body paragraph

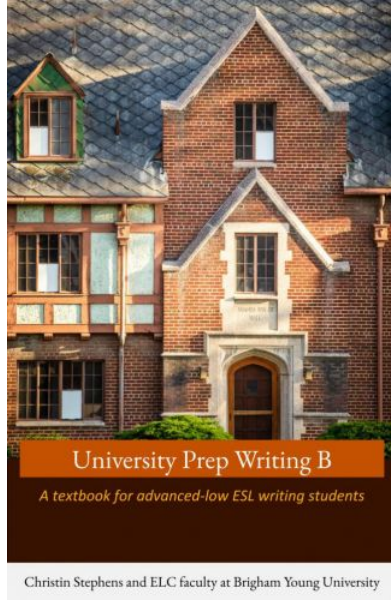
Use the topic sentence and quotes to write a developed body paragraph.

- TS: Deep breathing is an excellent autoregulation tool to help immediately reverse the effects of the body's stress response.
- Quote: "When the stress response is activated, breathing becomes faster to deliver more oxygen to your muscles" (Scholastic, 2017).
- Quote: "Slow breathing in a regular pattern can relax your body" (Harvard School of Medicine, 2011).

2 Exercise: Write a body paragraph

The following quotes are about the importance of time management in reducing stress. Use the quotations to create a body paragraph that could have been used in the example essay at the beginning of this chapter.

- "Effective time management can have a great buffering effect on stress and may be related to overall life satisfaction for college students" (Misra & McKean, 2000, p. 41).
- "A number of studies now indicate unequivocally that procrastination is related to higher levels of stress across both student and community adult samples" (Sirois, p. 69).



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