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**LESSON FIVE : PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT**

**6. Types of paragraph development**

In order to write coherent essays, you need to learn about the basic functions of various paragraphs. Analysis shows that good paragraphs may be developed by many methods (ways).No one method, or even combination of methods is better than another except as it happens to fit the needs of a given paragraph. The following list includes the different methods of paragraph development:

**6.1. Paragraph developed by specific details**

Effective writers choose details with care. They omit irrelevant ones no matter how fascinating they might be. Generally, students have trouble with specifics in the body paragraphs of their essays and reports. They tend to forget that they have *to prove their assertions* to the reader.

**Example 01:** Yoga is very beneficial method of connecting mind, body, and spirit. People who practice yoga claim that they feel stronger. They also claim that their minds are clearer. In addition, they feel that they are more connected to the earth and to other human beings .It seems, then, that yoga can help people in many ways.

* This paragraph does not prove its assertions because nearly every sentence has the same level of specificity. When we finish reading this paragraph, we have not learnt very much about yoga’s benefits (no more examples or details ) .The following is a paragraph with more *focus* and *specificity*

**Example 02:** Yoga influences people who practice it in many ways: mind, body, and spirit, but most of them are interested in yoga’s effect on the body (*topic sentence*) .When I began yoga three years ago, I was a jogger and a swimmer. I liked very much an aerobic workout, one that got my heart beating fast, so I was suspicious of the seeming slowness of yoga (*specific detail level* ) .In fact, I was amazed how sore I was after a one and half hour class .After I learnt a few poses, I realized how much energy and concentration it took to hold a pose and to breathe appropriately (*even more specific detail level*).Now, I no longer have to concentrate so much on pose correctness or breathing in and out slowly through my nose, I find that I can really get a workout as I go through a twenty-minute flow series without stopping (*very specific detail level*).In addition, I have more upper body strength than I have ever had (*more specific detail level)* .Certain central asanas ( poses) require a kind of slow push-up , not to mention handstands(*very specific detail level* ).I have become a yoga believer and I no longer jog, so probably my knees are going to last a bit longer than they might have. Also, I look forward to going to yoga; sometimes jogging was a chore (*specific detail*)

**6.2. Paragraph developed by exemplification (an example or examples)**

Exemplification simply means giving examples. This paragraph is also termed *an example paragraph* or *an illustration paragraph*. An exemplification paragraph develops a general statement -the topic sentence- with one or more specific examples. Not only do these examples illustrate and explain the topic sentence, but they also make your writing more interesting and more convincing.

**Example 01:** Sometimes fear can be a great motivator. Once when I was in high school, I tried out a part in the school play. I was surprised and thrilled when I was given one of the leads. Never for a moment, however, I did consider how long my part was, or how hard I would have to work to memorize it .All I could think of was how much attention I was getting from my friends .I even ignored the warnings of the play’s director who told me I would be in trouble if I did not begin to memorize the lines. The reality of my situation finally sank in during our first dress rehearsal when I stumbled all over my lines, and the rest of the cast laughed at me. That night, and for the two weeks leading up to the play, I spent hours going over my lines. Miraculously, I got through the first night of the play without missing many of my lines. As a result of that experience, I learnt two things : First, I could do almost anything if I was frightened enough ,and second, I would never try out for another play.

* Notice that a single example is particularly *vivid* and *compelling*, thus it can sometimes be enough to support a topic sentence.

**6.3. Paragraph developed by definition**

A paragraph developed by definition answers the question “*what is it?*”. It usually expository or informational .the definition may be a sentence, a paragraph, a theme, or even a book. The definition is often combined with other methods of development as comparison and examples. It is intended to clarify meaning, thus it should identify essential qualities and should limit the meaning of terms.

A formal definition may have two parts: The thing being defined is put into *a class* of similar things, and then it is *differentiated* from all other things in that class.

**Example 01**: Intellectuals are those *men* (class, i.e. mankind) who create, distribute, and apply culture (difference from other kinds of men)

**Example 02:** The definition of human intelligence is a common topic in collegiate psychology coursework. Princeton University defines intelligence as*”the ability to comprehend, to understand, and to profit from experience”.* But intelligence is also a general term referring to *abilities involved in adaptive behavior.* Intelligence is more than your ability to learn new information, but also your *ability to apply this new knowledge to life.*

**6.4. Paragraph developed by classification**

A classification paragraph is usually *expository*. It is a process of gathering terms or ides that are related in some specific way. Although we may not think much about it, we are constantly classifying things by breaking them into *types groups, or categories*. By classifying, we better understand the distinct qualities of *two subjects* in the same general group. So as stated above, classification is like definition in that it develops an idea by putting things into classes .But it does *not differentiate* one member of a class from another; instead it simply gives a complete or a representative listing of members of the class

**Example 01:** Types of *parenting styles* could include *strict, liberal*, and *permissive*; types of *dogs* could include *family pets, show dogs*, and *working dogs*. However, if you break down your topic you should identify the basis for the classification. That is, what are the qualities that differentiate each of your categories?

**Example 02:** If you classify *drivers*, you might group them into *reckless, sensible*, and *overly cautious.* You basis for classification then would be *how they drive.* You might point to some *specific examples* to illustrate some of their *driving behaviours*, and you might make the link between *their driving styles* and *personality*.

**6.5. Paragraph developed by comparison and contrast**

A comparison and contrast composition is a formal way of organizing our thoughts .It explains the differences and the similarities between two subjects and helps us to evaluate them to understand their advantages and disadvantages, or their strengths and weaknesses. Comparison shows similarities while contrast illustrates differences.

**Example 01: Right Brain / Left Brain**

The left and right sides of your brain process information in different ways.The left side is logical, rational, linear, and verbal. The right side, on the other hand, processes information intuitively, emotionally, creatively, and visually.Left brains think in words, whereas right brains think in pictures. People who depend more on the left side of their brain are list makers and analysts. They are detailed, careful, and organized. In contrast, right-brained people are visual, intuitive, and sensual. When a left-brained person has to make an important decision, he or she makes a mental list of all the factors involved and arrives at a decision only after careful analysis. When a right-brained person has to make the same decision, on the other hand, he or she is more likely to base it on intuition and feelings. For example, a left-brained automobile shopper will consider a car’s cost, fuel efficiency, and resale value, whereas a right-brained shopper bases a decision on how shiny the chrome is, how soft the seats are, and how smoothly the car drives. Of course, no one is 100 percent left-brained or 100 percent right-brained. Athough one side may be stronger, both sides normally work together.

**6.6.Paragrpah developed by cause and effect**

A paragraph developed by cause and effect method helps to show causes so as to account for results. Simply said, it explains the reasons why something (an event, an action, or a condition) happened, and describes its effects. It is usually in an analysis mood (a descriptive method) , as it can be used in the narrative mood of chronological order when one sequence follows another. This process breaks the topic into parts to establish a cause /effect relationship among them. It carefully scrutinizes this relationship.

**Example 01:**

Many situations can cause a friendship to end. One of those situations occurs when a friend moves away and makes new friends; as a result, his or her old friends are often forgotten. In addition, sometimes friendships end because of a lack of communication. If one friend never calls, visits, or e-mails, the friendship ultimately fades and dies. Furthermore, busy schedules can cause friendships to end. It is hard to spend time with a friend if one is busy with school, work, and other responsibilities. Eventually, in these situations, the friends drift apart. Another reason is that the two friends no longer have anything in common, or they do not like the choices one of them has made. Unfortunately, some friendships end as a result of death. Perhaps the main cause is a fight. If two friends fight and do not make up or cannot forgive each other, there is no reason to be friends anymore. Friends may come and go in everyone’s life, but no matter how long they are in it, friends leave a lasting impression.

**6.7. Paragraph developed by combination of methods**

As stated at the very first, you may write a paragraph using two or three methods at once. Some good paragraphs almost defy analysis. The important consideration is not the specific method used, but the adequacy of the development

**Example 01**: I wonder why American towns look so much alike that I sometimes mix them up in my memory. The reference to the standard influence of mass production whose agents are travelling salesmen, the mail-order houses, the five-and ten cent stores, the chain stores, the movies, is not sufficient .If you stay two days in Bologna, in Ferrara, or in Arles, you will never mix them up in all your life. But, it may well happen that after you spend two days in St.Louis and in Kansas City, the images of these towns soon emerge into one. I think the real reason for this is that these towns have not yet had time enough to individualize and crystallize visible local traditions of their own. Physiognomically speaking, children are much differentiated from other than grown people.

**Important to remember**

* Each sort of the listed methods has its own link words and transitions
* The above categorization is just one of the several classifications afforded in this respect. Some writers may use / add : *Narration ,Description, Evaluation, Analysis( Process analysis) ,Problem /Solution, Facts and figures ,Division, Explanation, Exposition, Choice Sequence, Analogy ,and Persuasion*
* To master the different methods, you need to know why and when to use them. The nature and the purpose of each paragraph dictate the suitable way
* Paragraph writing requires *practice*

\*\* *Better late than never \*\**