

1. Paragraph Coherence, unity and development

In each paragraph, one particular idea or topic is developed and explained. In order to successfully do so, however, it is essential that the paragraph be written in a unified and coherent manner.

A unified paragraph must follow the idea mentioned in the topic sentence and must not deviate from it. For a further explanation on topic sentences,

A coherent paragraph has sentences that all logically follow each other; they are not isolated thoughts. Coherence can be achieved in several ways. First, using transition helps connect ideas from one sentence to the next. Second, ordering thoughts in numerical sequence helps to direct the reader from one point to the next. Third, structuring each paragraph according to one of the following patterns helps to organize sentences: general to particular; particular to general; whole to parts; question to answer; or effect to cause.

Remember that a paragraph should have enough sentences so that the main idea of the topic sentence is completely developed. Generalizations should be supported with examples or illustrations. Also, details and descriptions help the reader to understand what you mean. Don't ever assume that the reader can read your mind: be specific enough to develop your ideas thoroughly, but avoid repetition

An effective paragraph might look like this:

It is commonly recognized that dogs have an extreme antagonism toward cats. This enmity between these two species can be traced back to the time of the early Egyptian dynasties. Archaeologists in recent years have discovered Egyptian texts in which there are detailed accounts of canines brutally mauling felines. Today this type of cruelty between these two domestic pets can be witnessed in regions as close as your own neighborhood. 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 feline is chased up a tree. The hatred between dogs and cats has lasted for many centuries, so it is unlikely that this conflict will ever end.

This paragraph is effective for the following reasons:

1. The paragraph shows unity. All the sentences effectively relate back to the topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph.
2. The paragraph shows coherence. There is a flow of thoughts and ideas among the sentences in this paragraph. There are good transitions employed in the paragraph. The writer also presents her sub-topics in an orderly fashion that the reader can follow easily.

3. The paragraph is developed. The writer gives herself enough space to develop the topic. She gives us at least two reasons to accept her argument and incorporates some examples in order to give those reasons more validity