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Unit 3: Writing—Create a Research Report

Overview

In this unit you will learn how to plan and write a research report. Some of us stop dead in our tracks when we hear the words *research* report. Some of us may think of an assignment to write a research report in the same way as being sentenced to tens of hours of drudgery in the library—a kind of prison sentence, except the windows don't have bars. If these are the associations you bring to the research report, then you most likely have been approaching this kind of assignment with the wrong goal. When we go about writing a research report, our aim is not to find every fact we can on a particular subject. Neither is our aim to list these facts in a report to show the teacher that we have "been there and done that." This kind of approach to the research report offers you an incomplete picture of what the research report is all about.

Yes, it is true that the research project is about learning how to find information and ideas. The *purpose* of finding information and ideas, however, is to *answer questions*. That's right, the research project and report is all about taking a topic and asking questions of it. The researcher—in this case, you—then strikes out to discover evidence to answer these questions. When you think of the research project as a quest to find answers, you transform the project from a tiresome exercise to an exciting mission. After gathering evidence upon which to base answers, the researcher then shares the evidence and answers with readers through a report or article.

This unit will take you through the steps in writing a research paper: (1) selecting a topic, (2) developing questions on your topic, (3) researching answers to your questions, and then (4) drafting your report. An important part of drafting your report includes telling your readers which information and ideas you borrowed from other texts. You will also tell readers the source from which you borrowed any information or ideas.

Vocabulary

Study the vocabulary words and definitions below.

almanac ..... a yearly publication that contains a variety of information about a particular year

atlas ..... a collection of maps bound together

bibliography ..... a list or collection of all articles, books, and other sources checked for information or ideas while researching topics or subjects

criteria ..... rules or tests used to make a judgment; standards used to evaluate something

direct quotation ..... the use of the exact words someone has written or spoken

encyclopedia ..... works that provide general articles on a wide variety of subjects; *specialized encyclopedias* contain a wide variety of articles on a particular subject or field of study

in-text citations ..... a way of showing any material in your report which you have borrowed from a source; the citation allows readers to locate the fuller description of the source on the *Works Cited page*

paraphrase ..... the use of your own words to retell detail information or ideas from a *text*

plagiarism ..... to use someone else's information, ideas, or work without giving credit to the writer

source ..... a book, chapter in a book, article in a magazine or journal, video, television program, interview, Internet web site, or any written work or person from which you get information or ideas

summary ..... the use of your own words to capture concisely the main ideas of a *text*

text ..... an article, essay, book, or any other written work

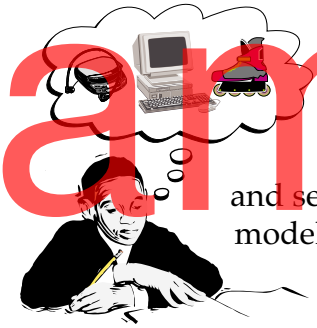
thesis statement ..... a statement that tells your readers what you believe about a topic; a statement that makes a claim about your topic; a statement that tells readers what a report or other text will discuss and support

topic sentence ..... a statement that tells readers the main point or claim of a paragraph; the rest of the paragraph discusses and supports this main point or claim

transitions ..... words or phrases that bridge or link one sentence to another sentence or one paragraph to another paragraph

Works Cited page ..... a page at the end of an essay, article, pamphlet, or book that lists in alphabetical order all the sources cited within the *text*

The Research Report: Telling Readers What You've Found



If you have never written a research paper, you may think you will be using skills you have never used before. However, most likely you have been doing research for much of your life. For instance, think about a time you wanted to buy an expensive item and set out to investigate and compare different brands or models. The topic of your research was the item you wanted to buy, whether it was a CD player, a computer, or a pair of roller-blades.

You began asking questions about this item, beginning with the most general question: Which of these CD players (or computers or whatever) is the best buy? You then broke this general question down into more specific questions, such as the following:

What is the price of each CD player?

How high is the sound quality of each player?

How durable is each player?

How convenient to use is each player?

You may have asked many more questions about your choices. If you are a smart consumer, you went about getting answers to your specific questions. You may have asked (or interviewed) friends and experts. You may have studied the brochures and information provided by the manufacturers. You may have used books, magazines, and the Internet to find answers to your questions.

Once you answered all of your specific questions, you were then able to answer your general question—"Which CD player is the best buy?"

Your search for the best buy was a research project! If you had taken all of your answers and written them into a report, you would have produced a research paper.

You see, a research paper, like a search for the best CD player to buy, is an investigation into a topic or subject. The researcher seeks out answers to questions. As the word *research* suggests, the researcher *searches* for

information and ideas. Synonyms for *research*, or words that are similar in meaning to *research*, are *investigate*, *examine*, *explore*, and *study*.

Simply put, the writer of a research paper poses questions about a topic and then strikes out to look for answers. The writer goes about the search in the same way a detective goes about solving a crime. The writer and detective use the answers they find to make a claim. After answering all of your specific questions about CD players, you were ready to make a claim about the best buy. Similarly, after gathering enough evidence, the detective will make a claim about who committed the crime.

As you can see, the success of the writer and the detective depends upon how good their questions are and how accurate or true their answers are about their search.

Prewriting for the Research Report: Find Your Topic, Ask Questions, Search for Answers

Some of the reports or essays you write will be on assigned topics. For example, your biology teacher may ask you to write a report on how some of Florida's wetlands are being lost and damaged by people. Your history teacher may ask you to explain the causes of the Civil War. You may even find yourself writing on an assigned topic as part of your job. If, for example, you become a manager for a company, your supervisor may ask you to write a paper or memo on whether the company should open a store in a particular city or try to sell its products to a particular chain of stores. In each of these cases, you were given a question to answer. You were, in a sense, a detective who had been given a case to solve. You then struck out to find true or valid solutions or answers.

In some cases, you are only given a very general subject. It is then your task to find a specific topic or a useful topic to write on for your research. For example, your biology teacher may ask you to write an essay on the health of any region of Florida. You would then have to find a reason to write on the Florida Everglades, or the Atlantic coast, or the Gulf coast, etc. You may decide to write about the Gulf coast because you love to eat shrimp and wonder whether pollution or overfishing are endangering this shellfish. Your history teacher may ask you to choose any aspect of the Civil War to research and write about for a topic. You might choose to

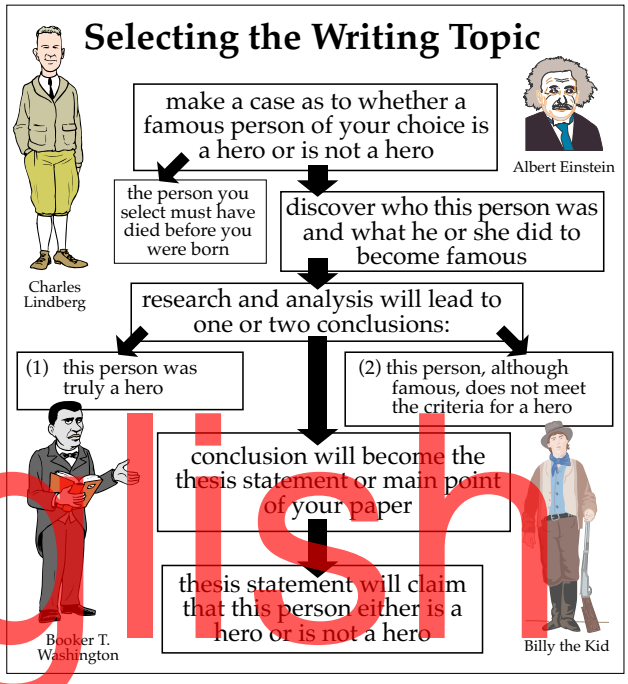
write on those people who went against the majority in the South and fought for the Union army, or those people who went against the majority in the North and fought for the Confederacy, or any one of a hundred other interesting topics.

As you can imagine, choosing your own useful topic takes more effort than being assigned one. However, the extra effort does have its benefits: You get to spend time learning and writing about something that excites your interest.

In this unit you will write a research report on the general topic of American heroes. You, however, will choose the particular American you research and write about for your research report.

Select the Writing Topic: Finding the Famous Person That Excites Your Interest

The first step in the writing process is to decide what you are going to write about. This step is called *selecting the writing topic*.



In this unit you will write a research paper that makes a case as to whether a famous person of your choice is a hero or is not a hero. The person you select to study must have died before you were born. (This will ensure that you will find enough material for a research paper on him or her.)

Your research on the person will discover who this person was and what he or she did to become famous. Your research and analysis will lead you to one of two conclusions: Either (1) this person was truly a hero, or (2) this person, although famous, does not meet the **criteria** for a hero.

Your conclusion will become the **thesis statement**, or main point, of your paper. In your thesis statement you will claim that this person either is a hero or is *not* a hero.

History has given us many varieties of heroes. Some were incredibly strong; some were very smart. Some were courageous in the face of adversity. Some, like Martin Luther King, Jr. who championed civil rights and Susan B. Anthony who worked for women's right to vote, were tireless in their efforts to further a cause in which they believed. There are thousands of heroes to choose from for your report.

Rachel Carson is a good example of a hero. She was a tireless worker for a cause in which she believed. She is famous for her book entitled *Silent Spring*. In *Silent Spring,* Carson alerts us to the dangers of pesticides on our environment. Little was known about these chemicals until she used research to show how we are poisoning the earth. Although she was highly criticized for her claims, Carson never quit and was eventually shown to be right.

A good way to choose your topic—or person—is to use one of the following three different strategies:

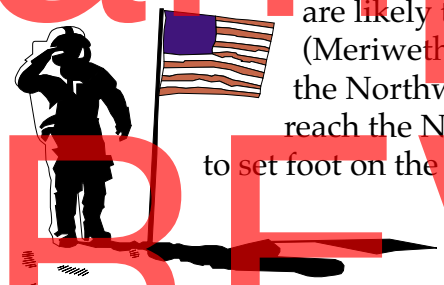
(1) You can choose a person you already know something about. If you've always wanted to know more about this person, now is your chance. Perhaps you want to use your research paper to organize what you already know and will discover into a report.

(2) You can choose a person you know nothing about but have always been curious to know more. Perhaps you have often heard the name George Washington Carver—a famous African-American scientist. Now is your chance to find out just who this famous American is and his place in history. Perhaps you feel that you should know more about the life of Benjamin Franklin. If so, use this project to fill in a gap in your knowledge.

(3) You can go to a book or other **text** about heroes or notable persons and scan the pages until you find someone who intrigues you. Look under

heroes, for instance, in your library's card catalog or computerized catalog. A book on heroes might lead you to scan a chapter on a notable American named Walt Disney. You may become intrigued by this famous person after you find out that Florida's Disney World is named after him.

Using a similar approach, you may want to find out about a hero in a subject or field in which you are interested. For example, perhaps you have always been interested in explorers: those folks who go where no person has gone before. Using "explorers" as a subject or keyword, you are likely to run across works on Lewis and Clark (Meriwether Lewis and William Clark), who charted the Northwest; Admiral Peary, who attempted to reach the North Pole; or Neil Armstrong, the first man to set foot on the moon.



Neil Armstrong

Ask Questions: Creating Guidelines for Your Search

Once you have selected a topic, you are ready for the next step: *gathering information*. Gathering information about a subject is a lot like gathering stones in the desert. If you just started picking up stones, you would end up with an endless number of stones, all different shapes and sizes. However, if you searched only for pale stones that were smooth and about the size of your fist, you would be able to limit the number you collected.

Similarly, you will most likely find many articles, books, tapes, and even videos on your topic. The problem will quickly become not a shortage of information but rather that there is too much information!

Think back to the example of buying a CD player. If you tried to listen to and test every one of the hundreds of players now being sold, your search would likely become a full-time project. However, by limiting the focus of your search, you can quickly narrow the field.

Your search would be just the same if you attempted to find out everything about Rachel Carson. You would end up with heaps of information. The key to an efficient search is to know what your are looking for—*to focus your search*. You don't want to tell readers everything about Carson. You do want to tell readers about "Rachel Carson the hero." The more you can limit your search, the more efficient your search will be from beginning to end. So develop the questions you want to answer.

Begin with the most general question. (Remember: If you were searching for a CD player, your most general question would be, "Which CD player is the best buy?") For this project, the most general question is the following: "Is this person a hero?" Use this question to lead you to another question: "What makes a hero?" To answer this question you must develop criteria. *Criteria* are standards used to evaluate or judge something.

Criteria are a helpful way to analyze something. If you simply asked, "What makes a hero?" and set off for answers, your search would not be very efficient. You would find many facts and ideas about the famous person you selected. If you listed them, you would end up with pages of unorganized data. However, if you break down the general question "What makes a hero?" into more specific questions, you will have questions to guide your search. You will then look for answers to these specific questions. You will be able to organize each fact or idea you find by putting it under the question it helps answer.

The following questions, or criteria, have been developed to help you judge whether the famous person you are researching is a hero.

Qualities of a Hero: Criteria for Evaluating a Famous Person

Question (A): Did this person see himself or herself as being on a *quest* or *mission*, and if so, did this person conduct himself or herself with *honor* and with an internal sense of right and wrong while on this quest or mission?

> Some people have accomplished many things, but they have done so dishonestly. In the 1950s, Senator Joe McCarthy became famous for "hunting" down people he claimed were working to illegally overthrow the government of the United States. He was soon discovered to have accused people unfairly. He often had no or little evidence on which to base his accusations.
>
> Rachel Carson, on the other hand, was highly criticized for her claims about environmental pollution. She did not, however, let people's criticisms and pressures from corporations and the government stop her. Her work was scientific—she had *evidence* for her claims. She felt she was on a mission, and she accomplished her quest with *honesty and dignity*.

Question (B): Did this person have a special *ability* that set him or her apart from most people?

This ability could be, for example, physical. Jackie Robinson, the first African-American baseball player to play in the major leagues, was an extraordinary athlete. This ability could also be intellectual. Albert Einstein was an extraordinary thinker.

Rachel Carson's special ability was *insight*. She saw more clearly than almost anyone else what was happening to the planet Earth. She saw that unless we changed our practices, we would do great harm to our environment.

Question (C): Do we still see this person as a hero?

Some people become more heroic over time. As we look back we may have an even greater appreciation for this person's life and deeds. The person you are researching has been dead for at least 15 years, probably more. Find at least two articles, books, or other items that have been published within the last couple of years. Compare these recent evaluations of this person with evaluations published during or just after his or her lifetime.

Thirty-five years after Rachel Carson's death, she is more appreciated and honored than during her own lifetime. We now know just how accurate her claims were about the environment. In addition, research has shown just how many obstacles she had to overcome in order to discover her findings and then to make them public.

Qualities of a Hero
Criteria for Evaluating a Famous Person

- Did this person see himself or herself as being on a *quest* or *mission*, and if so, did this person conduct himself or herself with *honor* and with an internal sense of right and wrong while on this quest or mission?
- Did this person have a special *ability* that set him or her apart from most people?
- Do we still see this person as a hero?

Note how the three criteria above [(A), (B), and (C)] can be used to structure your essay. The structure of an essay is the way it has been put together or its design.

1. The introductory paragraph is the first paragraph in an essay. It introduces the subject and states the thesis. The thesis statement tells readers the main point of the essay or the claim the essay will support.

2. The body paragraphs support, explain, or illustrate the thesis statement. Each body paragraph focuses on a subtopic. They are, in a way, witnesses that get on the stand and tell readers why the thesis is valid—or why the thesis statement is well-founded and logical.

3. The concluding paragraph is the last paragraph in the essay. It may summarize the essay and bring the writing to a gentle close.

In the essay you will write, the answer to each of the above questions or criteria will serve as the focus of each *body paragraph*. The answer to question (A) will be the focus of paragraph two, the answer to question (B) will be the focus of paragraph three, and question (C) will be the focus of paragraph four. The rest of each paragraph will provide supporting details. You may have more body paragraphs that cover other points that you would like to make about your topic. If so, simply continue to follow the format described for body paragraphs.

As you can see, spending time doing prewriting will save you much time when you begin to write your essay. Without a good plan developed during the prewriting stage, you will just be wandering through your research like…well, like a wanderer in the desert.

Search for Answers: Finding the Content for Your Report

Now that you know what you are looking for, you can begin your search with confidence. To give yourself a broad picture of this person, read some general articles on him or her. An **encyclopedia** or a biographical dictionary is a good place to begin. You will, no doubt, find some answers in these texts, so keep the questions you want to answer handy.

Then move from the general to the specific. Use your library's card catalog or online catalog, microfilm catalog, and indexes to magazines and newspapers to help you find specific works on your subject. Catalogs and indexes will tell where you can find books, chapters in books, articles, and even multimedia materials on your subject. Most catalogs and indexes include a brief description of the book, article, or other item. Read these

closely. Ask yourself, "Does this sound like a book or article that discusses answers to my questions?" In other words, narrow your search before you begin hauling armloads of books from the stacks or downloading articles from a computer.

Your readers will first need to be introduced to the person you have chosen to write about for your research report. A brief biography will help readers begin to become interested in your subject. The biography should include dates of birth and death. It should also include descriptions of the hero's family, education, and notable accomplishments. As you read about this person, pick out items that are related to the accomplishments that made this person famous or a hero. For example, if Rachel Carson were your subject, some of the biographical information you might have collected include the following:

Rachel Carson:

—born May 27, 1907, western Pennsylvania; died 1964 (*tells the hero's lifespan*)

—grew up several hundred miles from Atlantic Ocean (*surprising information because much of her work is on the ocean and marine life*)

—encouraged by mother to write (*she later went on to write important books on the environment and nature, combining her love for writing with her love of the ocean*)

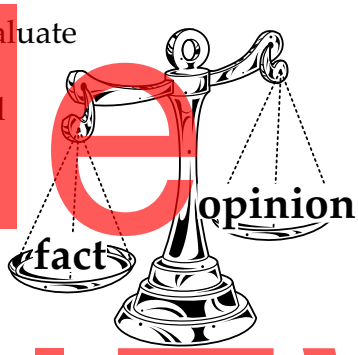
—earned a scholarship to Pennsylvania College for Women in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (*without this scholarship, she might not have developed skills to research and write books*)

—published *Silent Spring* in 1962 (*the project that launched her reputation as an environmentalist*)

Any article, book, or other kind of material from which you take information or ideas is called a **source**. A *source* can also be a video, a television program, an interview with a person, or any other text or person from which you get information or ideas. A *reliable source* is one that you have judged to contain truthful and well-researched information, valid or well-reasoned arguments, or that is written by a recognized expert on the subject. A *reliable source* on any topic is an article or book that is carefully researched and written objectively. An unreliable source is any material that does not use careful research or that uses

poorly reasoned arguments. When a classmate passes exaggerated or unfounded stories about another classmate, he or she is an unreliable source.

As you read and do research, you will need to evaluate your sources and judge what is a reliable or trustworthy source and what is not. You will need to determine what is fact and what is opinion in each text. You will very likely use both facts and opinions from sources. However, you will want to be sure that you don't claim that an opinion you found is a fact.



Before using an opinion from a source, you will need to judge whether it is a valid or sound claim. You need to evaluate the evidence used to support an opinion. If there is enough evidence and if the evidence is truthful, then the opinion is valid. If, however, the evidence is scant and is not true, then the opinion is not valid.

Read the two paragraphs on Rachel Carson below taken from two different sources. An analysis follows each. (Note: An *environmentalist* is someone who studies the environment or our surroundings. The *environment* includes the land, the water, even the climate.)

> Rachel Carson was the finest environmentalist of all time. Many people have said so and many books also support this claim. Those closest to her have said that she was a tireless worker. They also have said that her work helped change the way we think and use chemicals on the land. Even her enemies came to fear the strength of Rachel Carson's work.

This paragraph presents a bold opinion about Rachel Carson. This opinion or claim is not necessarily false. However, the writer doesn't present very strong evidence to support this opinion. For example, who are the "Many people" who have said she is the "finest environmentalist of all time"? Which books "support this claim"? How do people know "that her work helped changed the way we think and use chemicals on the land"? And what evidence is there that "her enemies came to fear" her work? All of these things may be true or valid statements, but we the readers have only been given unsupported generalizations. We have not been given specific evidence which we can check.

Now read another paragraph on the same topic. The information in the parentheses directs us to the source of the information. You will learn more about supplying this information later in the unit.

> Rachel Carson was one of the greatest environmentalists in history. As Mary A. McCay writes in her biography of Carson, "No one has represented the interests of the earth more faithfully or better taught its value than Rachel Carson" (108). Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, was on the *New York Times* best seller list within two weeks after its publication. People all across the country paid attention to her warnings, and it was not long before laws were put in place regulating the use of pesticides. In 1972, Paul Brooks published a book about Carson's literary works. As he states in his preface, "one should remember that, in her intense feeling for man's relationship to the living world, she was ahead of her time" (xi). Many chemical corporations and farmers may not appreciate Carson's work, but even they cannot deny her reputation as a sound thinker who used persuasive evidence to make some of the most important arguments of her and our lifetime.

This paragraph also presents a bold opinion. However, unlike the first paragraph, this one uses persuasive evidence to support its opinion or claim. Notice that specific names and people are used. There are no references to just a general and unnamed source. Instead, there are two writers who have studied Carson and her work: Mary A. McCay and Paul Brooks. In addition, readers can also find out if Carson's book was really on the *New York Times* best seller list and whether or not laws were put in place regulating the use of pesticides. Consequently, a researcher can use this writer's claim—"Rachel Carson was one of the greatest environmentalists in history"—with confidence that it has validity.

Application

Write a paragraph that describes how and why you selected the particular person you chose to research and write about for your **research report**. *Begin by explaining which of the three* **strategies** *described on pages 102-103 you used to begin your selection.*

English 3

Find Helpful Sources: Locating Books, Magazine Articles, and Other Sources That Answer Your Questions

Fortunately, over many years, libraries have developed systems to help us locate the books, magazine articles, and other sources that may be helpful to our research.

Find Books: Using the Card Catalog

There are two systems available in most libraries for finding books: the card catalog and the online catalog. The card catalog is usually a large rectangular cabinet that has many small drawers with cards alphabetized from *A* to *Z*.

The *card catalog* provides an alphabetical listing of every book in the library or school media center. Each book is usually cataloged with three different cards: an *author card*, a *title card*, and a *subject card*. Today many public, school, and university libraries have their card catalogs on computer. Computerized or online card catalogs are searched by author, title, and subject also.

> The *author card* is filed alphabetically according to the first letter of the author's last name.
>
> The *title card* is filed alphabetically according to the first word of the title, unless the first word in the title is an article (*a*, *an*, or, *the*). In this case, it is filed alphabetically according to the second word in the title.
>
> The *subject cards* provide all those books in the library which deal with a given topic. These cards are arranged alphabetically by the first word of the subject located at the top center of the subject entry card.

Once you have located a book in the card catalog, the *call number* (Dewey decimal number) classifies the book by its subject area. Copy down the call number and use this number to find the book on the shelves of the library.

Other information found on the card includes a brief description of the book, the publisher, and date of publication.

Let's say, for example, you want to find a book on a person who was a leader of the Civil Rights movement in this country during the 1960s. If you checked the card catalog under "Civil Rights," you would find all of the listings of books the library has on this subject. You might find the following subject card:

Civil Rights—United States

323.4 D 7373 Douglas, William O.
Freedom of the Mind
PUBLISHER: Doubleday
DATE: 1964
SUBJECTS: Freedom of Speech
Civil Rights

If, by chance, you happened to know that William O. Douglas has written a book on this subject, you could have located information on this book by checking its author card:

323.4 D 7373 Douglas, William O.
Freedom of the Mind
PUBLISHER: Doubleday
DATE: 1964
SUBJECTS: Freedom of Speech
Civil Rights

If, by chance you knew the title of the book, you could have located information on this book by checking its title card:

Freedom of the Mind

323.4 D 7373 Douglas, William O.
PUBLISHER: Doubleday
DATE: 1964
SUBJECTS: Freedom of Speech
Civil Rights

Notice that on the subject, author, and title card, the numbers in the left margin are the same. In this example, the *call number*, 323.4 D 7373, directs you to the location of the book. In this example, you would look for the stack that had 323.4. Once you located the right stack, you would find this book shelved by its number. It would be between a book with the call number 323.39 and a book with the call number 323.41.

If you wanted to find the book *Silent Spring* written by Rachel Carson, you could find it either by checking the right subject, author, or title card. If you did not know either the author or title, you would run across this book under the subject of "Environment." If you did not know the author but knew the title, you could find the title card (*Silent Spring*) listed alphabetically. If you only knew the author, you could locate this book by finding the author card, listed alphabetically as "Carson, Rachel."

Find Books: Using the Online Catalog

Most libraries now have their materials listed on an online catalog. The online catalog is computerized and speeds up locating materials. Most computerized catalogs will permit you to search either for books or for periodicals (magazines and journals). If you are searching for a book, you will be able to search according to the author, the title, or the subject—the same options you have when using the card catalog. The online catalog, however, also permits you to search using a *keyword*. You can search using only a part of the title or author's name.

As a general rule, use only the major key words when doing a keyword search. Insignificant or common words (such as *the*, *with*, *from*) will only slow down the search by requiring the computer to retrieve and compare thousands of entries. Words of one- or two- characters (such as *an*, *be*, *of*, *to*) are not processed, so it is a waste of time to enter them. For instance, if you wanted to look up information on The French Revolution, you would not include the word "the."

If you are unsure of the spelling of a word, you may shorten or truncate it anywhere after the first three letters by using an asterisk (*). Truncation can also be used to include more word forms: comput* will bring up computer, computers and computing.

Some online catalogs can even be accessed through the Internet. This will make it possible for you to know exactly what you want before you even go to the library. Once you've found the books or periodicals that you

want to find, you'll need to use a library map or ask the librarian where to find those particular call numbers.

The Internet has its own language—terms and phrases that are used to describe applications and other items common to this system. Please refer to pages 10-11 in "Unit 1: Online Technology—Using the World Wide Web" for more search engine information. The following are a few definitions that will help you when you research your topic on the Internet.

Browser: A software program on an individual computer used to view various Internet resources. *Netscape* is an example of a browser.

Search Engine: A program that connects you to a database of web sites and Internet resources. Enter a topic or keyword(s) and a search engine will locate the databases or listing that may contain the information you want to find.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): The standard way to give the address of any resource on the Internet that is part of WWW. A URL looks like this: http://www.yahoo.com OR ftp://ftp.netscape.com.

World Wide Web (WWW): The entire collection of Internet resources that can be accessed (including text, graphics, sound files, etc.) using web browsing material.

Colleges, universities, and many public libraries use LUIS online system for searching. Schools, kindergarten through high school, use a system called SUNLINK which allows access to resources across the state. SUNLINK can be accessed using the World Wide Web. The URL for SUNLINK is as follows: http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu.

You can search for materials in a single school location on the World Wide Web, or you can search your district, region, or entire state. To search for information, enter any information you know about the materials you need, then click on "find it." If you only know the first name of an author and one or two words of the title, enter that in the appropriate boxes and SUNLINK will do the work. SUNLINK on the web allows you to search by format, language, and/or location. Remember: As a general rule, use only the main key words when doing a "power search."

Nonprint materials can also be located in SUNLINK. A format search can be done alone or in combination with entries or the author, title, subject, and/or anyword lines in the keyword/Boolean search screen. The code for the format you wish to locate must be entered on the FORMAT/LANG search line. Here are some of the valid format codes for SUNLINK:

- books—fam
- computer software—fmx
- kits—fox
- maps—fex
- musical records—fjx
- poster and prints—fkx
- spoken recordings—fix
- videos and recordings—fgx

Find Articles: Using the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*

There are many different ways to find articles that have been published on your subject. However, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* has one of the most complete and helpful listings available to you. The *Reader's Guide* lists articles that have very recently been published and those that were published long ago. In addition, it is available in the reference section of most libraries or on CD-ROM.

Like the card catalog, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* is an index—it lists articles that have been published in periodicals. *Periodicals* are magazines and journals. The *Reader's Guide* has many volumes. Each volume covers a year or a span of years. All articles are listed according to subject and author. A subject could be something quite general, such as "civil rights movements." A subject can also be a person; for example, Rachel Carson. If you looked under the subject "Rachel Carson," you would find articles that have been written about Rachel Carson. If you wanted an article written by a particular author, such as Philip Sterling, then you would check Sterling, Philip.

The *Reader's Guide* will tell you, among other details, the name of an article, the magazine or journal where it can be found, and a brief description of the article's subject or content. Before heading for the *Reader's Guide*, take a list of all the magazines and journals your library carries. This will help you save time. You only want to copy down the information on articles *if* your library has the magazine or journal in which it is published.

Using Indexes to Find Magazine Articles

The *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* is an author-subject index to selected popular periodicals published in the United States. Many other periodical indexes are also available in a variety of subject areas. When doing a research report, however, this index is a good place to begin finding recent articles published in magazines on a topic.

At the front of each *Reader's Guide* issue is a list of the publications included in the *Reader's Guide*, as well as a key to the abbreviations used in the listing. If you are doing a research report on videotapes, for example, you would look under that heading in the alphabetical listing of topics. A sample entry in the *Reader's Guide* might look like the listing below.

> Videotapes
>
> Tube Food. il Hi Fi 31:A15Mr; A10-A12 My: A4 Je; 56 O '90

The following will explain each part of the example:

Tube Food is the title of the article.

il means that the article is illustrated or has a picture with it.

Hi Fi is the abbreviation of the name of the magazine in which the article appears: *High Fidelity*.

31 is the number of the volume of the magazine.

A15 is the page on which the article starts.

Mr names the month of the magazine—March.

A10-A12 My is another article from a different issue of the magazine. The article is found on pages A10-A12 in the May edition of *High Fidelity* magazine.

A4 Je is a third article from the same magazine on the same subject. The article is found on page A4 of the June issue of the magazine.

56 O means a fourth article is found in the same magazine, but in the October issue, starting on page 56.

'90 means all four of these issues were published in the year 1990.

Sometimes a listing will say *See Also* at the beginning, which means that there are other listings under which you may look for additional information. Sometimes a listing will say *see* at the beginning. In this case, you must look under the topics listed to find information on your topic.

Practice

Use the **card catalog** *or* **online catalog** *in your school media center to complete the following. Ask your teacher or librarian for help if you need it.*

1. Write the name of a well-known composer, musical group, or any other subject of interest.

   _____

2. Write the names of all the books given under that subject.

   _____

   _____

3. Locate the books in the media center.

4. Write the name of a familiar book from the card or online catalog.

   _____

5. Write the brief description of the book given on the card or screen.

   _____

   _____

6. Locate the book on the shelf.

7. Locate a famous author in the card or online catalog.

8. Write the information given on the card or screen below.

   _____

   _____

9. Using the call number given on the card or screen, find the location of the book in the media center.

Practice

Read the following entry from the ***Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*** *and answer the questions which follow.*

Fast Food Restaurants
See also:
Burger King Corporation
Fannie's Chicken (firm)
McDonald's Corp.
Pepsico, Inc.
Sonic Industries, Inc.
Wendy's International, Inc.
Fast-food joints are getting fried. B. Bremmer. il *Business Week* p. 90 Ja '90 Fat of the land (nutritional analysis of fast food; interview with M. Jacobsen) il por *People Weekly* 21:38+ Ap 2 '91

1. What is the heading of the listing? _____

2. What is the date of the magazine in which an article was published entitled "Fast-food joints are getting fried"?

   _____

3. In what magazine is there an interview with M. Jacobsen?

   _____

4. On what page of *Business Week* does the article begin about "Fast-food joints are getting fried"?

   _____

5. If you wanted further information, list four topics under which you could look, according to *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.*

   _____

   _____

6. What does *il* mean in the listing? _____

7. What do you think the + after *People Weekly* 21:38 means in the article entitled "Fat of the Land"?

_____

8. To find an article on cassette recordings, under what subject or topic would you look in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*?

_____

9. To find articles on video games, under what other subjects could you also look in the *Reader's Guide*? List three.

_____

_____

_____

10. In the *Reader's Guide*, find a review of the videotape, *Batman*. Write the title of the magazine, volume, page, date, and name of reviewer below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional Reference Books: Finding Answers and Overviews Fast

You have most likely spent some time in the reference section of your school or local library. This section is filled with books and volumes that provide information. Any index, such as the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, is a reference book. We *refer* to it for information. Encyclopedias are also reference books, as are **atlases**, **almanacs**, and dictionaries. As you may have noticed, these particular books and volumes *cannot* be checked out of the library.

The following are some reference books you might find helpful in writing your research report:

Biography Index is a cumulative index (or listing) of biographical material in books and magazines.

Dictionary of American Biography contains short biographies of more than 13,600 Americans who are no longer living.

Bartlett's Familiar Quotation contains thousands of quotations. The quotations are arranged in chronological order, from the distant past to the present. You may want to scan this reference work for an interesting quotation and then see whether the person who said it would make a good subject for your essay.

Notable American Women 1607-1950 is a biographical dictionary containing sketches of more than 1,350 women.

Who's Who in America—1998 is a biographical dictionary of notable living men and women.

Who Was Who in America (2 vol -1607) is a biographical dictionary of notable nonliving men and women.

There is also a *Guide to Reference Books* published by the American Library Association which lists and describes general reference books of all kinds from around the world.

The reference works listed above could be especially helpful to you as you begin to work on your research report. However, biographical reference

works are just one of many kinds of reference works you will find in your library. The following are some of the most used reference works:

General Encyclopedias provide articles on a wide range of subjects. The articles are intended as introductions to their subjects. Articles are listed alphabetically by subject. Some of the more commonly found encyclopedias include the following:

- *Collier's Encyclopedia*
- *Encyclopedia Americana*
- *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*

There are also *specialized encyclopedias* in your library. This type of encyclopedia focuses on a particular subject or area of study. These reference works will include introductory articles as well as more in-depth articles. If you are unfamiliar with a subject, a good way to use encyclopedias is first to use a general encyclopedia and then go to a specialized encyclopedia. The following are some of the specialized encyclopedias available:

- *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*
- *Encyclopedia of Biological Sciences*
- *Encyclopedia of Crime and Justice*
- *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- *Encyclopedia of Psychology*
- *Reference Encyclopedia of the American Indian*

Atlases are a collection of maps bound together. An atlas can include many different types of maps. It may contain maps showing the topography of different areas or regions. It may contain maps showing the roads of different cities, states, or countries. It may even contain maps showing the per capita income, or the average amount of money earned by people in different areas or regions.

Almanacs are published yearly and contain information about a particular year. The range of information found in an almanac is quite wide and includes weather, politics, world events, sports, and economics, to name just a few.

Manage Information: Organizing Your Findings

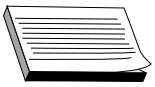
During your search for answers, you will gather many pieces of information. The kind of system you use for managing the information you gather will make the difference between using your time efficiently or finding yourself flipping aimlessly through piles of hard-to-use notes.

Store Information: Three Ways to Record Your Findings

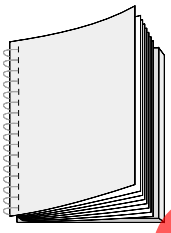
People who have been doing research for a long time often develop their own systems of storing information. Most, however, begin with one of the three time-tested methods. Three of the best ways to store the information you gather are (1) on 3X5-inch notecards, (2) in a spiral notebook, or (3) on a computer. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Notecards permit you to put one piece of information on each card. They can then be shuffled into organization when it comes time to write a draft of your paper. However, notecards are easy to lose. A research notebook holds your information in one place and is easy to carry. You may eventually need to tear the sheets out to organize them, and scraps of paper are harder to shuffle and manipulate than notecards. Shuffling—*cutting* and *pasting*—is easy on a computer. Unfortunately, most computers are not portable.

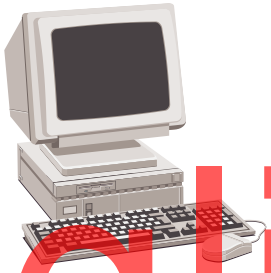
Three of the Best Ways to Store Your Information

1. 3X5-inch notecards



2. spiral notebook





3. computer

Store your information in bits; one piece of information to a notecard or to a section of a page in a notebook or computer file. Each entry must also include the source from which you borrowed the piece of information. Identifying the source is known as *documenting the source* or *citing the source*. If you do not cite a source and give credit where credit is due in your report, you are, in effect, stealing the information. To steal an idea or bit of information is called ***plagiarism***. It is a serious offense, as is any form of theft.

A good way to manage your information and avoid plagiarism is to set up a working **bibliography**. A *working bibliography* is a list or collection of all articles, books, and other sources checked for information or ideas while preparing a report or article. For each source—book, article, or other item—take a 3X5-inch card. In the left-hand corner, write the following: author's last name, author's first name, the title of the article, the book, or magazine from which it came, publishing date, and pages. In the right-hand corner, place a number. For your first source, use a number 1; for your second source, use a number 2, and so on.

This information will eventually go on your **Works Cited page**. The Works Cited page appears at the end of your report. It provides readers with the same information on the sources, cited or used, in your report. Readers will then be able to find these sources if they wish to check your information or read more on the topic.

The following is a list of the most commonly used entries on a Works Cited page. Use these forms in your working bibliography and then again on your Works Cited page. Note the order of the information and the indenting of the second (and third) line(s). If a form for one of your entries is not listed below, check the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. If this is not available, your teacher or librarian will direct you to another source containing this information.

The following lists ways to cite entries on your Works Cited page:

- A source that has one author:

Owen, Marna. *Health.* Paramus, NY: Globe Fearon Publisher, 1994.

- A source that has two or three authors:

Meeks, Linda, and Phillip Heit. *Health: A Wellness Approach*. Columbus, OH: Merrill, 1991.

- A source that has more than three authors:

Fodor, John T., et al. *Health for Living*. Irvine, CA: Laidlaw Brothers, Publishers, 1980.

- A source that is a single work from an anthology:

James, Henry. "The Middle Years." *The Riverside Anthology of Literature.* Douglas Hunt. 2d ed. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991. 96-110.

- A source that is a book without an author:

American Heart Association. *Exercise and Your Heart.* Dallas: American Heart Association, 1993.

- A source that is an article in a reference book:

"Mammals." Rare and Endangered Biota of Florida. 1992 ed.

- A source that has a signed article in a magazine:

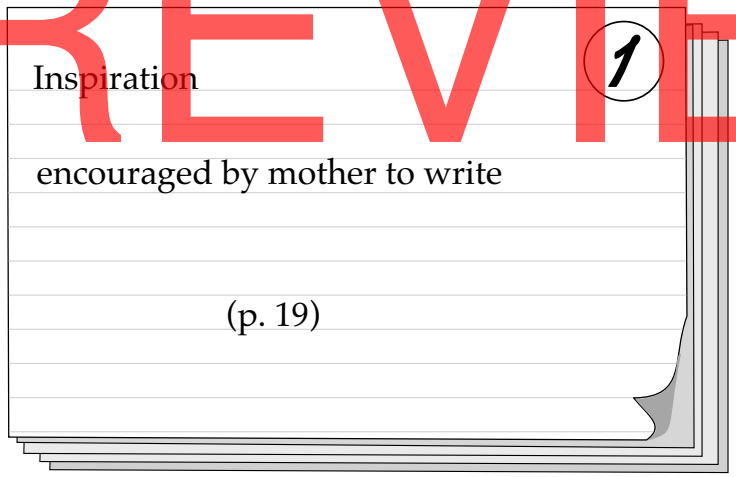
Gage, Nicholas "The Teacher Who Changed My Life." *ParadeMagazine* 17 Dec. 1989: 22-23.

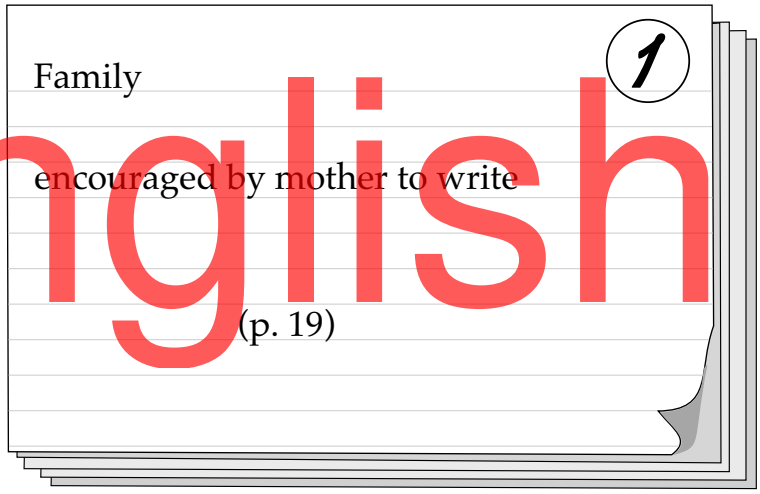
- A source that is a periodical on a computer information service:

Shipley, Lorraine. "Seeing Heroes in Everyday Life." *New York Times* 22 Dec. 1981: B2+. Rpt. in Heroes, Vol. 3. Ed. Joe Corso, Miami, FL: Hero Series, 1990.

(The information you need for this type of entry is provided by the computer service.)

Each time you borrow a piece of information or an idea from a book or article, place a number 1 or number 2, etc., in the right-hand corner of the notecard, sheet of paper, or computer entry. This number will tell you the source this bit of information came from in your research. Write the information on the notecard, followed by the page from which it came. In addition, in the upper left-hand corner, write a word or phrase that describes the information or idea you are recording. Sometimes a piece of information can be described in more than one way. Note that in the sample notecards below, the information falls under two headings: *Inspiration* and *Family*. In such a case, write the information on two cards and put one heading (for example *Inspiration*) on one card and the other heading (for example, *Family*) on the other card. The more ways you describe your information, the more possibilities you create for using the information.





Borrowing Information from Sources: Using the Summary, Paraphrase, and Direct Quotation

You will want to collect this information in ways that will be easy to use when it comes time to organize and write your report. The three forms you will use in this project are the **summary**, **paraphrase**, and **direct quotation**.

The Summary: Only the Main or Most Important Lines

When you summarize an article or book, you use your own words to capture the main idea(s). The *summary* boils down the most important ideas in the source into a concise description. Imagine you've just heard a long speech. As you leave the auditorium, a friend says: "Tell me what the speaker said as quickly as possible." Your brief response would be a *summary* of the speech.

This skill, like many in this unit, is one you have often used. Think back to the brief description of a story, television program, or movie you told to a friend. "Oh, the movie was about a young girl who surprises herself by showing tremendous courage as she saves her family from a killer hurricane." In just a few words you have captured the basic idea (or plot).

Many young writers make the mistake of using actual words or sentences from the source to compose their summary. Rather than gaining a full understanding of the ideas in the source, they end up simply remembering some of the actual words in the source. To avoid this problem, follow the steps below:

1. Preview the article as you would any reading assignment.
2. Read the article carefully but without stopping.
3. Read the article again, writing a single word or phrase in the margins to summarize each paragraph or section of the article. Do not use words from the article for your marks in the margins, except for special terms or key vocabulary.
4. Turn the article over and on a 3X5-inch notecard, in your research notebook, or in a computer file, write a summary using only fragments. (A *fragment* is an incomplete sentence.)

5. When you begin writing your first draft, you will then turn these fragments into complete sentences and thoughts composed wholly of your own language.

Remember: Even though you have used your own language to describe an idea or deliver information from a source, you have still *borrowed* the idea or source. Therefore, you must cite the source, or make it clear that you have taken the idea or information from someone else's work. (See pages 123-125.)

Below is an essay followed by a sample summary. The essay, "How the Strong Get rEVENge," is by George K. Richards. It appeared in the December 1995 issue of the magazine entitled, *Peace Watcher.* (*Peace Watcher* is a fictitious magazine, but the example is a demonstration of the proper way to cite sources in summary and paraphrase.)

How the Strong Get rEVENge

Recently, the news has been filled with accounts of people who have hurt or even killed one another during a feud. In nearly all of these cases, one or both parties felt that they had been wronged by the other. They felt the other had been disrespectful to them. At some point in our lives, almost all of us will experience this feeling. It is not a new feeling to the human race. It does seem, however, that our response to being treated rudely has been to react with violence. The cast of people who can incite our need for revenge seems limitless. It may be our parents or siblings who make us feel small as they take out their daily frustrations on us. Or maybe it's a teacher. Almost certainly some of our peers will be cruel at times. It can be students from another school or even a stranger on a city bus. All of these people and experiences can wear on our self-esteem and make us feel badly about ourselves. Some would argue that the way to get revenge on those who hurt or insult us is to hurt them back. I am here to argue that there is a far sweeter kind of revenge that does not include violence.

Why Hurting Back Feels Good

There is something to be said about hurting those who have hurt us. There is something about being insulted or hurt by someone that leaves us with a white hot pain in our souls. Almost immediately the pain festers and turns to rage. The rage rushes through us like wildfire, burning up our good sense, our self-control, and leaving in its wake nothing but itself. Sometimes we feel that the only way to put that wildfire out is to strike back at the offender—be it a friend or enemy, family or stranger. No doubt there is a momentary satisfaction when you strike back in word or deed. You get to say those famous last words to yourself: "No one can treat *me* like that!"

This satisfaction, however, is short-lived. We may then find ourselves in one of two positions: (a) We strike back and find ourselves in trouble, having been caught violating a school policy or local or state law. Violence in almost every situation is illegal. When we respond with violence, we have helped the offender to keep on hurting us: (b) We get away with our revenge—but not really. We thought the offender was a loser for acting the way he did, and now we've imitated his behavior. He's tricked us into the old *monkey see, monkey do* response. You may be doing the hurting, but the offender is pulling your strings.

The Worthy Life Alternative

So what is this sweeter kind of revenge? It's simple and it is the cornerstone of most modern religions: Live a worthy life! To get even with someone who has done you harm, don't attempt to harm him or yourself. Do not get even with an unsupportive or unloving parent by committing crimes or doing drugs. Do not get even with cruel classmates by fighting or starting rumors. The best kind of revenge against people who have harmed you is to live a life of which you can be proud. Work hard at your interests and be as successful as you can in life. When you live a worthy life, you raise your self-esteem and end the hurt others have done to you. Best of all, you use revenge to improve yourself and to learn to take control of your own life.

Where Do You Want to Be in 20 Years?

Do some imagining right now to compare the two kinds of rEVENge available. In the first scenario, your peer group hurts you and you respond by acting out. You fight or lose interest in school and hobbies—somehow you believe that such acting out will show others that you are the boss and no one can show you disrespect. In 20 years, when your dreams are just memories, that nasty peer group is smugly smiling, as they recount how easy it was to steal your dreams. However, there's another scenario; try it on for size. That peer group sees you in 20 years, a successful and respected person, and they can see how you had something strong inside of you. You responded to their rudeness by raising your self-esteem and keeping focused on your future. Now I ask you: How much sweeter could revenge be than that?

Summary: Get to the Point

Richards, George K. "How the Strong Get rEVENge." *Peace Watcher* Dec. 1995: 34-36.

In "How the Strong Get rEVENge," George K. Richards argues that although some people use violence to strike back at those who humiliate or hurt them, a better way is to "live a worthy life." In addition, Richards stated that when you live a worthy life and achieve your potential, you show the offender that your strength of character could not be diminished by attacks from others.

Notice that this summary contains only two sentences and 67 words. The first sentence tells the main point of the essay—people should respond to rudeness by living "a worthy life." The second sentence explains the value of her main point—why the writer thinks that living such a life provides one with sweet revenge.

Application

Select one of the **articles** *you have found on your hero.* **Preview** *the article and then read through it twice, making notations in the margins or in your notebook about the topic of each paragraph. Then answer the questions below to form a* **summary**.

1. How many sections or subheadings does this article have? _____
2. What word, phrase, or fragment would you use to describe each section or subheading?

   _____

   _____

   _____
3. What single word, phrase, or fragment would you use to describe the main idea of the article?

   _____
4. Write the bibliographic information of this article on the line below.

   _____
5. Using your answers to questions 2 and 3, write a two- or three-line summary of the article on the lines below.

   _____

   _____

   _____

The Paraphrase: A Retelling in Your Own Words

The *paraphrase*, like a summary, includes the main idea presented in the source material. A paraphrase, however, is longer. Using your own language, your paraphrase retells *in detail* the information and ideas found in the source. Imagine, this time, that as you leave a speech your friend says: "I didn't follow the speaker's argument about why history is such an important subject to study. Would you retrace what she said for me? Oh, and would you do it in your own words, preferably little ones that I can understand?"

If you are able to paraphrase an article or a section of an article in your own words, you will know that you fully understood the contents. You are ready to use an article in your essay when you've transformed the language into your own.

Remember: Like a summary, if you use a paraphrase in your essay, you must cite the source. (See pages 123-125.)

Below is a sample of a paraphrase based on the essay, "How the Strong Get rEVENge," by George K. Richards, which is on pages 128-130.

Paraphrase: Put It in a Few of Your Own Words

> Richards, George K. "How the Strong Get rEVENge." *Peace Watcher* Dec. 1995: 34-36.
>
> In "How the Strong Get rEVENge," George K. Richards argues that everyone will face being shown disrespect by someone else. In too many cases, Richards claims, the experience led to violence, sometimes even resulting in permanent injury or death. He argues that there is a better way to seek revenge than using violence.
>
> He does, however, understand that using violence on those we see as having wronged us can be satisfying. This satisfaction is short-lived and can have dramatic consequences. One can end up arrested, injured, or dead. Even if one gets away with violence, one has only imitated the behavior of the one who originally had shown disrespect. Sometimes we attempt to hurt this

person, who can be a parent, teacher, or peer, by doing badly in our school work, job, or in general. Such behavior, he explains, only lets the offender continue to hurt us.

The best response is to "live a worthy life" and achieve our potential. That, he claims, is the sweetest kind of revenge. We succeed and show the offender that our strength of character could not be diminished by attacks from others.

The paraphrase, at 202 words, is shorter than the original, which is 633 words. However, the paraphrase retells nearly all the major points and the subtopics that appear in the original. A good way to think of the relationship between this paraphrase and the original is to think of concentrated orange juice and regular orange juice. Like the paraphrase, the concentrated orange juice has everything that the regular orange juice has, except that all the water has been removed.

Application

Use the same **article** *you used for your* **summary** *in the Application on page 131 to answer the questions below. Use your answers to* **paraphrase** *the* **article**.

1. How many sections or subheadings does this article have? _____

2. What is the main idea of each section and what details are used to explain or support each main idea? (Use fragments in your descriptions.)

   Section 1: Main idea— _____

   Supporting details: _____

   Section 2: Main idea— _____

   Supporting details: _____

   Section 3: Main idea— _____

   Supporting details: _____

   Section 4: Main idea— _____

   Supporting details: _____

3. Write the bibliographic information of this article on the line below.

   _____

4. Paraphrase your answers to question 2 above, using complete sentences.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

The Direct Quotation: Using an Actual Word, Phrase, or Sentence from a Source

In some instances you will want to use the actual words of the author. Sometimes a word, phrase, or sentence is so perfect in capturing an idea or thought that it cannot be replaced without losing much of the meaning. When you record something word for word, you are using a *direct quotation*.

Direct quotations must be put in quotation marks (" "). As with all borrowed material, you must cite the source from which you took the quotation. (See pages 123-125.)

As an example, imagine that you are using the essay "How the Strong Get rEVENge" for your own research paper on the causes of violence among youths. You think that the writer has perfectly captured in words the anger that drives some youths to lose their self-control and become violent. You find a good spot for this quotation and use it in this form:

> Why, when some youths feel they have been shown disrespect do they respond by doing things they otherwise would never consider? The writer Ginger K. Richards says that the pain of being shown disrespect often turns to rage, and then the "rage rushes through us like wildfire, burning up our good sense, our self-control, and leaving in its wake nothing but itself" (page number xx).

As another example, imagine that you have found a quotation about Rachel Carson from the famous scientist Hermann J. Muller in a book by Philip Sterling. The scientist praised Carson for calling attention to the "…ever accumulating multitudes of poisons which are permeating the human body." A quotation from Muller in Sterling's book would be a good testimonial to Carson because he is so well respected in science. In your description of Carson's major contributions, you find a good place for the quotation, and use it in this form:

> The famous scientist Hermann J. Muller praised Carson for calling attention to the "…ever accumulating multitudes of poisons which are permeating the human body" (Sterling 152).

The skillful writer uses only a few quotations. Too many quotations will overshadow your own voice, words, and ideas. So use quotations the way you would use a strong spice in cooking—just a pinch or two.

Application

Using the same **article** *you used for your* **paraphrase** *in the Application on page 134, follow the directions below to create your* **topic sentence**.

1. Select one phrase and one sentence from the article that are particularly revealing or interesting.

   Phrase: _____

   Sentence: _____

2. Explain what this phrase and sentence reveal or why they would help you explain an important point or idea.

   Phrase: _____

   Sentence: _____

3. Create a sentence which combines your own words and the quoted phrase. (Remember to surround the phrase with quotation marks.)

   _____

   _____

4. Write a phrase to introduce the quoted sentence. (For help in how to combine an introductory phrase with a direct quotation, see the example on page 135.)

   _____

   _____

Structure Your Research Report: Using Your Questions to Organize Your Essay

Once you have collected the information and ideas you want, it is time to organize them. The formal essay generally has a structure. Like a building, it is built according to a design. A good way to develop a structure is to ask yourself: What is the main point of my essay? (In this project, the main point will be whether your subject meets the criteria for being considered a *hero*.) Then ask yourself: What information do my readers need first, second, third, etc., in order to understand my main point and be persuaded that it is valid?

Return to the criteria or the list of qualities that make a hero. (See pages 104-105.) Since you carefully planned your search during the prewriting stage, the structure of your essay has already been worked out.

Paragraph 1: Who was this person? (Readers first need to know about the subject—in this case the selected person. A *biography* of the person will provide this information. In addition, this biography should create interest in your readers. You will know your opening paragraph is successful if readers begin thinking: "This is interesting, tell me more!" This paragraph will also lead up to and include a thesis statement.)

Paragraph 2: Did this person have a mission or quest, and did he or she maintain a strong sense of right or wrong, even in the face of obstacles? (This is simply the first criterion for determining whether this person is a hero.)

Paragraph 3: Did this person demonstrate any special abilities, for example, insight, extreme intelligence, or physical courage? (This is simply the second criterion for determining whether this person is a hero.)

Paragraph 4: Has this person's status as a hero withstood the test of time? Do people today still consider him or her a hero? (This is simply the third criterion for determining whether this person is a hero.)

Paragraph 5: What can we learn from this person's history? In what ways would this person serve as a good role model? In what ways would this person not serve as a role model? (In the concluding paragraph, you will want to highlight and tie together the essay's important points. In addition, you will want to draw a final conclusion for readers.)

To begin organizing your information and ideas, separate your notecards into five piles corresponding with the five paragraphs on page 137. If you have used a word or phrase to describe each notecard, this job should be easy.

After separating your information into piles, you will want to examine each pile carefully. The information you have collected on the cards, along with the answers you have written on page 136, will support each **topic sentence** (often the first sentence) of the paragraph. Then order the information so it supports and explains your topic sentence.

In some cases, you will find the same information in more than one pile. (This will occur if you used more than one heading and notecard for the same piece of information.) At this point, then, you must decide which topic sentence the information is most closely related to in your report.

For example, take the question used to organize paragraph 2: "Did this person have a mission or quest, and did he or she maintain a strong sense of right or wrong, even in the face of obstacles?" In an essay written about Rachel Carson, the answer is "yes," and the topic sentence became the following:

> In spite of the many obstacles Rachel Carson faced, she continued trying to alert the public about threats to the environment.

The pieces of information, or notecards, are ordered in the following way to best support and explain the topic sentence:

> **Information #1:** corporations, farmers criticized Carson's book *Silent Spring*
>
> **Information #2:** Carson attacked use of DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) pesticide; corporations said this research unreliable; DDT needed to grow enough food
>
> **Information #3:** attacked because she was a woman; women couldn't be trusted; stuck by her research
>
> **Information #4:** also overcame poor health: cancer, arthritis, ulcer
>
> **Information #5:** persevered; *Silent Spring* led to laws banning/restricting use of dangerous chemicals

Application

After separating your information into paragraph piles and studying your notes, fill in the blanks below to create a **topic outline**. *Use only fragments—a word or phrase.*

1. What word or phrase best describes this person's life? _____

   _____

   In what order will your information best support this claim?

   Information or idea #1: _____

   Information or idea #2: _____

   Information or idea #3: _____

   Information or idea #4: _____

2. Did this person have a quest or mission, and did he or she go about this quest or mission with a strong sense of right and wrong?

   _____

   In what order will your information best support these claims?

   Information or idea #1: _____

   Information or idea #2: _____

   Information or idea #3: _____

   Information or idea #4: _____

3. Did this person have a special ability, and if so, what was it?

_____

In what order will your information best support this claim?

Information or idea #1: _____

Information or idea #2: _____

Information or idea #3: _____

Information or idea #4: _____

4. Do we still see this person as a hero today? _____

In what order will your information best support this claim?

Information or idea #1: _____

Information or idea #2: _____

Information or idea #3: _____

Information or idea #4: _____

5. What can we learn from this person's life? Would he or she make a good role model? Why or why not?

_____

In what order will your information best support or explain these claims?

Information #1: _____

Information #2: _____

Information #3: _____

Information #4: _____

Writing the First Draft: Turn Your Research into Sentences and Paragraphs

So far in this unit, you have selected a topic, kept a working bibliography of sources, made clear notes from your sources, and organized these notes into an outline. You are now ready to write a first draft.

When you write a first draft, you take your paragraph piles and mold them into sentences and paragraphs that make sense to your readers. Most first drafts are messy. Calling this effort a *first* draft implies that there will be at least a *second* draft. Knowing that you will have the opportunity to revise and improve this draft should help you to write freely. Don't sweat over each word in the first draft. Use the first draft to experiment. Try out new words. Move sentences around in paragraphs to see which order presents your information and ideas most logically. You will be able to polish individual words, rewrite sentences, and add missing details in the second draft.

The Thesis Statement: Making Your Claim

Your first task is to write a *thesis statement*. A thesis statement tells your readers what you believe about your topic. It is a claim: a statement the rest of your essay will support. Your topic, for example, may be Rachel Carson; however, Rachel Carson is not your thesis statement. Your thesis statement would make a claim or state an opinion about her: She is a hero; or she is not a hero according to the criteria being used to evaluate her. In this particular research paper, your thesis statement will tell your readers the answer you found to this question: "Is this person a hero?" A good way to determine this answer is by using the following chart:

Qualities of a Hero

	YES	NO
1. Did this person see himself or herself as being on a quest or mission, and if so, did this person conduct himself or herself with **honor**, and with an internal sense of right and wrong while on this **quest**?		
2. Did this person have a special ability that set him or her apart from most people?		
3. Do we still see this person as a hero?		

If your selected person scores a YES on all three criteria above, then he or she is a complete hero. If he or she scores a YES on two criteria, then he or she has heroic qualities and is nearly a hero. If he or she scored only a single YES, then he or she is not a hero.

Rachel Carson scored a YES on all three criteria. A thesis statement for an essay on her could read: **"Because of the honorable way in which she pursued her goal, the insight she showed about the environment, and the positive lasting impression she left, Rachel Carson is indeed a complete hero."** Your thesis statement should be placed at the end of the first paragraph.

Note that this thesis statement begins with "Because"—the statement includes reasons why the writer claims Carson is a hero. Here is the thesis statement again, with each reason numbered: "Because of (1) the honorable way in which she pursued her goal, (2) the insight she showed about the environment, and (3) the positive lasting impression she left, Rachel Carson is indeed a complete hero." Note that each of the reasons given in support of Carson will become the topic of a body paragraph (paragraphs 2, 3, and 4). Paragraph 2 will show that she *pursued her goal or mission in an honorable way*; paragraph 3 will show that she *had a special kind of insight about the environment*; and paragraph 4 will show that she *is still considered a hero*. As you can see, a thesis statement not only states the main idea you will develop in your report, it may also indicate the organization pattern your report will follow. The thesis statement will also reflect your tone and point of view regarding the topic.

Paragraph 1: The Introduction

In the first sentence of your essay, tell readers something startling or interesting about this person. This will *hook* their interest and give them a reason to continue reading. Follow the opening sentence with a brief biography. The opening paragraph should lead smoothly to the thesis statement which will serve as the final sentence of this paragraph. (In the sample introductory paragraph below, the *hook* is italicized and the thesis statement is bolded.)

Example of introductory paragraph:

> *Although she grew up hundreds of miles from the ocean, Rachel Carson developed a lifelong interest in the sea*. She was born on May 27, 1907,

in western Pennsylvania and lived there until she left to attend college in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Even as a child she loved to write and was encouraged by her mother to do so (Wadsworth 19). After taking science courses in college, she became torn between becoming a writer and studying science (Sterling 58). Fortunately, she was eventually able to combine her two great loves and became a science writer who focused on marine topics. She used this ability to alert the world to the damage the use of chemicals was doing to the environment and particularly to the sea. Proving to the world that she was right about the hazardous use of chemicals became her mission. **Because of the honorable way in which she pursued her mission, the insight she showed about the environment, and the positive lasting impression she left, Rachel Carson is indeed a complete hero.**

Body Paragraphs: The Meat of the Essay

Each body paragraph should begin with a *topic sentence*. The topic sentence works in a paragraph the same way a thesis statement works in an essay. Whereas the thesis statement tells readers the main point or claim of the essay, the topic sentence conveys the main point or claim of the paragraph.

You will use the information and ideas you've researched, as well as your own thoughts, to complete the paragraph. The paragraph must persuade readers that the claim or opinion made in your topic sentence is valid. (In the sample paragraph on pages 142-143, the topic sentence is italicized.)

Remember: Like the thesis statement, the topic sentence makes a main point, claim, or states an opinion, not just a statement of fact.

For example, a statement that read, "Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* was published in 1962" is a statement of fact; it can be checked and verified. Therefore, it cannot be a topic sentence for it does not make a claim that the rest of the paragraph can support and discuss. A good way to think of a topic sentence (and a thesis statement) is to imagine yourself standing before your class. You begin by saying, "Today I will try to convince you that . . ." and then complete this sentence with a claim or an

opinion. You will then use the rest of your time (or paragraph) to persuade your classmates that your claim or opinion is valid.

Study the example of a body paragraph below. Look at the topic sentence: "In spite of the many obstacles Rachel Carson faced, she continued trying to alert the public about threats to the environment." Note that this statement is not a fact, unlike the date of Carson's birth or the years she attended college or the year she died. Instead, this statement is the writer's claim or opinion. In the rest of the paragraph, the writer must persuade readers that this claim or opinion is valid.

Use a test to see whether your topic sentence (or thesis statement) is a claim or a fact. Try to write a question about your topic sentence that cannot be answered by any information in the topic sentence. Consider, for example, the following sentence: "It takes 365 days for the earth to revolve around the sun." The only question we could ask of this sentence is, "How many days does it take the earth to revolve around the sun?" The answer, of course, is in the original sentence: 365 days. Therefore, this sentence cannot be a topic sentence.

Now consider the above topic sentence: "In spite of the many obstacles Rachel Carson faced, she continued trying to alert the public about threats to the environment." Here are some of the questions this sentence suggests: "What were the obstacles Carson faced?" "How did she continue trying to alert the public about threats to the environment?" "What were the threats to the environment?" As you read the body paragraph below, notice how each of these questions is answered in the paragraph. As you can see, the topic sentence prompts questions that the rest of paragraph must answer. (In the sample paragraph below, the topic sentence is italicized.)

Example of a body paragraph:

> *In spite of the many obstacles Rachel Carson faced, she continued trying to alert the public about threats to the environment.* After her book *Silent Spring* was published in 1962, many corporations which made chemicals and many farmers which used these chemicals began to denounce Carson's claims (Sterling 154). She focused much of her attack on DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), a chemical used to kill damaging insects (Wadsworth 92). Chemical companies called her research unreliable, and farmers claimed that without these chemicals, they would not be able to grow enough crops to

feed the American people. Carson, however, stuck by her research. Carson also had to overcome another obstacle—her poor health. While working on *Silent Spring* she suffered from cancer, arthritis, and an ulcer (Kudlinski 51). However, nothing could stop her, and *Silent Spring* led to many laws banning or restricting the use of dangerous chemicals.

The Concluding Paragraph: Tie It All Together

The concluding paragraph ties the entire essay together. It should briefly summarize the body paragraphs. It should also add an insight that you, the writer, have based on your research and thinking. Notice that even the concluding paragraph has a topic sentence, which tells readers what the paragraph will discuss. (In the sample paragraph below, the topic sentence is italicized.)

Example of concluding paragraph:

We can learn much from Rachel Carson's life. She followed her love of writing and science, and found a way to do both rather than sacrifice one. When her discoveries about the harm chemicals were doing to the environment were attacked, she—a single woman facing powerful corporate men—would not back down. Through it all she acted with confidence, probably because she loved writing about nature and did careful research to back up her claims. Passion and knowledge were her weapons in the very important fight she waged. In the end, her work made a difference in the way we treat planet Earth.

Practice

Place a √ next to the examples below that could be used as **topic sentences**. *Place an* **X** *next to the examples that could* **not** *be used as* **topic sentences**. *Next to the examples that* are *topic sentences, write the questions the topic sentence prompts.* ***Remember:*** *a topic sentence must be a* **claim** *or an* **opinion**.

_____ 1. Two hurricanes swept through Florida last year.

_____

_____ 2. Ft. Lauderdale is on the coast, whereas Tallahassee is landlocked.

_____

_____ 3. Education is necessary for anyone who is going to be successful in the Information Age.

_____

_____ 4. The high temperature yesterday was 92°.

_____

_____ 5. The best all-around exercise is roller-blading.

_____

_____ 6. Talent is something you are born with—it cannot be learned.

_____

_____ 7. The United States is bordered in the west by the Pacific Ocean and in the east by the Atlantic Ocean.

_____

_____ 8. Unless the city widens Main Street, many businesses downtown will fail.

_____

Application

Answer the questions and fill in the blanks below to produce the **hook**, **thesis statement**, *and* **topic sentences** *of your report.*

Paragraph 1 (introduction)

1. (opening sentence of paragraph:) What startling or dramatic information, question, or quotation will hook your readers' interest about this person?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. (thesis statement—last sentence:) Describe the way in which this person fits or does not fit the criteria for being considered a hero.

   _____

   _____

   _____

Paragraph 2 (body)

3. (topic sentence—first sentence in paragraph:) Tell whether this person was on a quest or mission and whether he or she had a strong internal sense of right and wrong.

   _____

   _____

   _____

Paragraph 3 (body)

4. (topic sentence—first sentence in paragraph:) Tell whether this person had a special ability that set her or him apart from most people.

_____

_____

_____

Paragraph 4 (body)*

5. (topic sentence—first sentence in paragraph:) Describe how history has treated this person. Do we see him or her in the same way, as more of a hero or as less of a hero than he or she was seen in his or her lifetime?

_____

_____

_____

Paragraph 5 (conclusion)

6. (topic sentence—first sentence in paragraph:) Describe what we can learn from this person's life, if anything.

_____

_____

_____

**As noted before, you may have more body paragraphs depending on the amount of relevant research material you found.*

Writing Your First Draft: Get Your Thoughts and Research on Paper

At this point you should have the opening sentence, thesis statement, and topic sentences. Now you are ready to begin drafting, or writing, your report. When you are finished writing this version of your report, you will have completed your first draft. To say that you have written a first draft implies that there will be a second draft. Knowing that you will have an opportunity to sharpen and revise your report should help relax you as you write. Write as good a first draft as you can, but don't sweat over every single word or even whole sentences.

Developing the Paragraph: Lead with a Topic Sentence, Follow with Details

As you have learned, the topic sentence tells readers the main idea or the claim you are going to support in a particular paragraph. Next, your ideas or claims need to be supported with relevant evidence—facts, anecdotes, and statistics—from reliable sources. The rest of the paragraph, then, must have enough relevant information or reasons to persuade readers that your claim is valid or believable. The sentences that deliver this support are called *detail sentences*. Many paragraphs also have a concluding sentence that summarizes the paragraph by restating the central idea. The topic sentence and the concluding sentence are the most general statements in a paragraph.

There are many different ways to provide details in a paragraph. The categories below are some of the most common and effective ways of developing detail sentences.

1. **Definitions.** Use a definition to define a word, a process, or a concept.

   Example: A decade means 10 years.

2. **Descriptions.** Use a description to explain what something looks like, feels like, sounds like, tastes like, etc.

   Example: The rotting fish was mottled and covered with algae.

3. **Examples.** Use an example to give readers a specific instance.

   Example: A ball tossed into the air shows the force of gravity.

4. **Facts.** Use a fact to support an opinion or claim you are making.

   Example: The timer on the security camera shows that they got home before 8:00 p.m.

5. **Statistics (numbers or percentages).** Use statistics to prove what you are claiming is correct.

   Example: Twenty percent of the class got an "A" on the test.

6. **Reasons or Causes.** Use a reason to justify a statement.

   Example: Driving under the influence of alcohol can cause accidents.

Sometimes writers have a hard time including enough details to support a main idea. If this happens to you, check the list above for ideas on the kind of details you could add to your paragraph.

Remember: Readers need clear and accurate details to understand what you have written.

Study the example below of a paragraph that has a topic sentence followed by detail sentences. The topic sentence is italicized.

> *Until about 150 years ago, most parents thought of and treated their children as younger adults.* Many children worked right along side of their parents as soon as they were old enough. If the father was a cobbler, his children most likely helped to make and fix shoes. Parents who worked in factories thought themselves lucky if they could get their children jobs working right along side of them. Children did not have lengthy childhoods, as we might imagine.

Notice that the *topic sentence* clearly states the main idea of the paragraph. It helps readers prepare for what follows: Readers expect that the sentences that follow, *the detail sentences*, will discuss, explain, and support how children were treated as "younger adults." Read the paragraph again, and note how each detail sentence refers to the topic sentence.

Structuring Your Paragraph: The Five-Sentence Design

A paragraph can have a wide number of sentences. Paragraphs in very learned texts may run as many as 20 or even 30 sentences. At this point in your writing career, try to compose paragraphs of about five sentences. In this number of sentences, you can present a topic sentence with enough details of support and a concluding sentence.

Practice

Underline the **topic sentence** *of the following paragraphs. Then tell if it was developed by examples, facts, descriptions, or reasons.*

1. Ants are truly interesting creatures to study. The species is over 100 million years old. They are social creatures living in large colonies divided into a queen and her workers. Ants live longer than most insects. Queen ants have lived as long as 20 years and workers nearly 10 years.

   _____

   _____

2. Time has influenced the many styles of architecture. Early American is characterized by simple rectangles. The Gothic style, which dates back to the middle of the 12th century, has a pointed arch rather than the rounded arch of the earlier Romanesque style. The Renaissance style of the 15th century was a revival of the Romanesque. The skyscraper is an example of modern architecture, which can use the characteristics of earlier styles.

   _____

   _____

3. The scientific method involves several steps. First you identify a problem—a question that you think you can answer through further investigation. Next you gather more information to determine a possible answer to your question. This possible answer is called a hypothesis. Then you carry out an experiment to test your hypothesis. Through observations of the results of your experiment, you draw a conclusion. If your conclusion continues to prove true in your and other scientists' experiments over a long period of time, then you can construct a theory that answers your question in a general way. The scientific method insures that the answers we find to our questions and mysteries will be accurate and, most likely, useful.

_____

_____

4. Your appearance can play a major role in whether or not you get the job you seek. Even though a pair of ripped jeans may not mean you can't perform the job, they may cost you a chance to show that you are a good worker. Employers generally look for applicants who dress neatly and conservatively. Before applying for a particular job, take a look at how others who work there dress. This will give you a good idea of how to dress for your interview.

_____

_____

Practice

Practice writing a **five-sentence paragraph** *by using the instructions below. You can use this format when you compose your paragraphs for your research report. Remember: A paragraph can contain many different number of sentences, but at this point in your writing career, five sentences is a good structure to use. It will contain one* **topic** *sentence, three* **detail** *sentences, and one* **closing** *sentence.*

1. Write a topic sentence about a subject or hobby you know well.

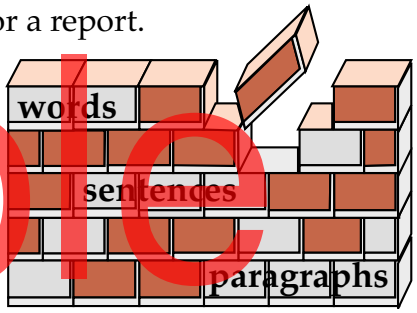
2. List three facts that support or explain your topic sentence.

3. Write three sentences using the facts in number 2. If you need to, change the order of your facts.

4. Write a sentence that sums up the importance of the sentences you just wrote. It should answer the question "so what?"

The Well-Built Paragraph: Using Unity and Coherence

There are many building blocks in an essay or a report. Words, of course, are the smallest building blocks, then sentences, and then paragraphs. If you were to think of building a house, the words would be the boards, the sentences would be the floors, walls, and ceilings, and the paragraphs would be the rooms. Paragraphs, then, have to be designed so that all the boards, floors, walls, and ceilings fit together. If they don't fit together, then the room will not offer much use or value. Similarly, if the words and sentences do not fit together, the paragraph will not be very readable. It will not be a paragraph that gives your readers information and ideas *in a way* that they can grasp and use. Well-written paragraphs have both *unity* and *coherence*.



Unity: When Every Sentence Points to the Main Idea of the Paragraph

A paragraph, as you know, is a group of sentences that all discuss and support a single idea or claim. When all of the sentences in a paragraph discuss, illustrate, or otherwise develop the main idea, the paragraph has unity. All of the sentences are unified or work together. A good test for every paragraph you write is to take each sentence and ask: "Does this sentence focus on the topic sentence or main idea?" If it does, then it adds to the unity of the paragraph. If it does not, then it should be revised to do so. If you discover that the content of the sentence is not directly focused on the main idea, then delete it.

A good way to think about unity is to imagine watching an exciting movie. What if, in the midst of the most dramatic scene, when the heroine is hanging by a fingernail from the Statue of Liberty, the movie suddenly showed the streets below and then focused on an unusual car. What if the movie followed the car for a few blocks and then returned to the dangling heroine? The effect of the scene would be lost. Your interest would be lessened. So it is when we read a paragraph that is focused on a subject for three or four sentences and then suddenly shifts to a different subject or focus. When this happens, we also begin to lose our trust in the writer. We may think that this writer is not very competent, and we may even wonder if we can trust the writer's research.

Practice

A paragraph is a group of organized sentences which discuss **one main idea**. *Read the following paragraphs. Each one has a sentence that does* not *belong. Write down the sentence that does* not *belong.*

1. An actor does not always make a lot of money by making a television show. Only a small percentage goes to the actor. The actor has to split the money with managers, producers, and the studio. Harrison Ford is a wonderful actor. However, an actor's percentage can still be a large sum of money.

   _____

   _____

2. In the last few decades, we have developed many safety devices to make many activities much safer. Unfortunately, if these devices are not used properly, they will not offer nearly as much protection. Take, for example, the seat belt. If it is not worn across the hips and down low on the waist, then it will not fully protect a driver or passenger. The belt that is worn higher, up around the naval, can lacerate and bruise our inner organs in an accident where our bodies are thrown forward. It's a small thing—pushing the belt down onto our hips—yet it can mean the difference between coming out of an accident injury free or suffering internal bleeding. Many people get sick when they see blood; some will even faint. Similarly, the bicycle or motorcycle helmet is often positioned wrong. On a hot day or after many miles on either cycle, many of us start to push the helmet back on our heads and even loosen them a bit. The helmet is no longer secure. It can now shift during a jolt and expose the skull. Unfortunately, many of us seem to believe that simply having safety devices on our bodies will keep them safe. Don't believe it. They are not good-luck charms that will protect us magically. Use them correctly or suffer the consequences.

   _____

   _____

3. Watching sports on television has become one of the most popular hobbies in the United States. Most people, however, do not know how to get the most of their sports viewing. Most people watch only the ball, whether they are watching a basketball, baseball, volleyball, or any other sport in which a ball is used. Consequently, most viewers have no idea about what happens *away* from the ball during the action. Do you know, for example, what offensive basketball players do when they don't have the ball? Stock car racing is the most popular spectator sport in the world. Have you ever watched Magic Johnson dribble down court between and around defensive players as if they were standing still? Similarly, in baseball, when a ball is relayed from an outfielder to an infielder, have you ever watched to see how the other infielders position themselves to back up the throw and prepare themselves for a play at one of the bases? If you haven't, then you're only watching half the game.

_____

_____

4. There are many breeds of dogs for sale in the local pet shops. The pet store owners report that they sell more Dobermans and German shepherds than any other breed. Their customers tell them that they want these breeds for protection. Other popular breeds are toy poodles and cocker spaniels. Fido is John's pet. People like poodles and cocker spaniels because they are smaller dogs. Some customers buy the more exotic breeds like the Rhodesian ridgeback and the Irish wolfhound. The pet shop owners have to keep these different breeds to sell to their patrons.

_____

_____

Coherence: Connecting Sentences to One Another

A paragraph is coherent when one sentence leads naturally and smoothly into the next sentence. Your readers should be able to see how a point or piece of information made in one sentence relates to a point or piece of information in the next sentence, and so on. There are many different ways to achieve coherence; this unit will focus on two of them. One of these is to present information and points in an orderly way. If you were to instruct someone in fixing a flat tire, you would not tell them to remove the flat tire before you told them to loosen the lug nuts and jack-up the car. Therefore, think of ordering your sentences so that your readers can follow your discussion or argument.

Another way to create coherence is to use **transitions**. A *transition* is a word or phrase that bridges or links one sentence to another. (Transitions can also be used to link one part of a sentence to another, one paragraph to another, or even an entire section of an essay to another section.) Transitions help the ideas and information in a paragraph fit together. If sentences were train cars, transitions would be the couplers between them. There are many different ways to organize a paragraph and many different transitional words and phrases that can link sentences. The following are some of the methods used to arrange sentences and produce links in a paragraph:

Chronological: If the paragraph is describing events, arrange them in the order in which they happened.

> *The day went from bad to worse.* I was awakened when a baby rattlesnake shook his rattle in my face. *Then* the toaster burst into flames, and turned breakfast into crumbs. *After* that flaming experience, I rushed to my car only to find four flat tires and a dead battery. *Finally*, I went back inside, got in bed, and pulled the covers over my head.

Note that in the above paragraph ordered according to time, the transitions used to smoothly move from one sentence to another are *Then*, *After*, and *Finally*. Without transitions to link, order, and make clear the relationship between sentences, your paragraph will read like a bunch of

sentences tacked together. Even the best content will read poorly without transitions to help readers understand.

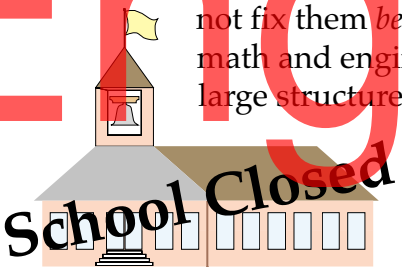
Examples and Reasons: If the topic sentence makes a general claim, support it with examples or reasons.

> *Although watching sports on television has become one of the most popular hobbies in the United States, most people do not know how to get the most out of their sports viewing.* Most people watch only the ball, whether they are watching a basketball, baseball, volleyball, or any other sport in which a ball is used. *Consequently*, most viewers have no idea about what happens away from the ball during the action. Do you know, *for example*, what offensive basketball players do when they don't have the ball? *Similarly*, in baseball, when a ball is relayed from an outfielder to an infielder, have you ever watched to see how the other infielders position themselves to back up the throw and prepare themselves for a play at one of the bases? If you haven't, then you're only watching half the game!

Note that in this paragraph that uses examples and reasons to support the topic sentence, the transitions "Consequently," "for example," and "Similarly" clearly tell us how the sentence relates to the one before it. The sentence that begins with *consequently* will tell the *effect* of a cause that has previously been described. The transitional word *similarly* will give us a reason or example that is *like* the one just presented.

Cause and Effect: If the topic sentence presents a cause, the rest of the paragraph will describe its effects.

> *One day I woke up to find all the schools closed*. *As a result*, kids all over the country spent the day bored with nothing to do but get into trouble. They never learned or they forgot how to read. *Consequently*, books began to disappear because no one knew what to do with them. When bridges began to fall, they could not fix them *because* they did not know how to do the math and engineering it takes to understand and erect a large structure. *Because* they had no schools, kids never grew up and education simply became something that died in the past.



Note that in this paragraph showing the effects of schools closing, the transitions help readers follow a list of cause and effects. The transitions are *As a result*, *Consequently*, *because*, and *Because*. Take out these transitions and the paragraph becomes a list the reader must try to understand.

There are many possible ways to move smoothly from one sentence to another and link one sentence to another. The following is a partial list of transitions:

- To show an additional example, item, or idea: *again*, *also*, *besides*, *even more important*, *furthermore*.

  Example: I finally learned how to wait my turn in a discussion. *Even more important*, I finally learned how to listen.

- To show a contrast between two things: *although*, *but*, *however*, *in contrast*, *nevertheless*, *yet*.

  Example: The television has brought faraway places into our living room and educated us about many exotic places. *However*, the television has also brought us many worthless shows that waste our time with juvenile humor.

- To show an example: *for example*, *for instance*, *in fact*, *to illustrate*.

  Example: Education beyond high school can do more than just increase your knowledge and skills. *For example*, in higher education you may meet people from distant places with fascinating pasts and unusual ideas.

Practice

Underline the words or phrases that are used as **transitions** *or links in the paragraph below. Then, on the lines below, rewrite the paragraph without these transitions. Contrast the paragraphs and note how transitions add* **coherence** *to the paragraph.*

What keeps us from reaching out and making contact with people? Often the answer is the fear of rejection. When someone accepts us, we glow and feel good. On the other hand, few things in life make us feel worse than having someone reject us. And yet, people will rarely reject us unless we reject ourselves. This point is so important in any kind of social relationship that it deserves rephrasing: People are not likely to reject us if we have a good self-image.

Application

Now it is time to apply what you have learned to writing your own essay. Use the forms below to compose the **paragraphs** *of your first draft.*

Paragraph 1: Introductory Paragraph

1. Write the first sentence or hook of your essay on the lines below. (See Paragraph 1 in Application on page 148.)

   _____

   _____

2. List the information or idea you compiled under question #1 in the Application on page 148.

   _____

3. Write the thesis statement. The thesis statement should answer the question whether this famous person meets the criteria for being considered a hero. The thesis statement should also forecast, or tell, what your reasons are for considering this person a hero or for not considering this person a hero. Each of these reasons should become the topic of a body paragraph.

   The following are two models for writing a thesis statement for this research report. Note that the first model is for a person who does meet the criteria. The second model is for a person who does not meet the criteria. The third model is for a person who meets some of the criteria but not all three of them.

   (1) Because [fill in the name of your topic] conducted himself with honor while on his mission, had a special insight into his interest, and is still seen as a hero today; he is indeed a complete hero.

   (2) Because [fill in the name of your topic] did not conduct himself with honor while on his mission did not have a special insight into his interest, and is no longer seen as a hero today, he is not a hero.

(3) Because [fill in the name of your topic] did not conduct himself with honor while on his mission but did have a special insight into his interest and is still seen as a hero today, he is a partial hero.

(Note that a partial hero may have two of any of the three criterion but does not have all three. In such a case, your thesis should explain which criteria he met and which criterion he did not meet.)

4. On a separate sheet of paper, write your introductory paragraph. Use #1 above as your opening sentence. Use the information and/or ideas you listed under #2 to create an interesting biography of your subject. Then use #3 above as your thesis statement and the last sentence of this paragraph. Try as best as you can to make this paragraph have unity. All the sentences should focus on a single main point. In addition, try to use transitions that will give this paragraph coherence.

Paragraph 2: Body Paragraph 1

1. Write the topic sentence of paragraph 2 on the lines below. Use the topic sentence you created under Paragraph 2 in the Application on page 148.

_____

2. List the information or idea you compiled under question #3 in the Application on page 148.

_____

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write paragraph 2. Use #1 above as your topic sentence. Use the information and/or ideas you listed under #2 to create the detail sentences that will support and discuss your topic sentence. Then develop a concluding sentence that sums up your paragraph but does not repeat your topic sentence. Try as best as you can to make this paragraph have unity. All the sentences should focus on a single main point. In addition, try to use transitions that will give this paragraph coherence.

Paragraph 3: Body Paragraph 2

1. Write the topic sentence of paragraph 3 on the lines below. Use the topic sentence you created under Paragraph 3 in the Application on page 149.

   _____

2. List the information or idea you compiled under question #4 in the Application on page 149.

   _____

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write paragraph 3. Use #1 above as your topic sentence. Use the information and/or ideas you listed under #2 to create the detail sentences that will support and discuss your topic sentence. Then develop a concluding sentence that sums up your paragraph but does not repeat your topic sentence. Try as best as you can to make this paragraph have unity. All the sentences should focus on a single main point. In addition, try to use transitions that will give this paragraph coherence.

Paragraph 4: Body Paragraph 3*

1. Write the topic sentence of paragraph 4 on the lines below. Use the topic sentence you created under Paragraph 4 in the Application on page 149.

2. List the information or idea you compiled under question #5 in the Application on page 149.

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write paragraph 4. Use #1 above as your topic sentence. Use the information and/or ideas you listed under #2 to create the detail sentences that will support and discuss your topic sentence. Then develop a concluding sentence that sums up your paragraph but does not repeat your topic sentence. Try as best as you can to make this paragraph have unity. All the sentences should focus on a single main point. In addition, try to use transitions that will give this paragraph coherence.

**As noted before, you may have more body paragraphs depending on the amount of relevant research material you found.*

Paragraph 5: Concluding Paragraph

1. Write the topic sentence you created under Paragraph 5 in the Application on page 149.

   _____

2. List the information or idea you compiled under question #6 in the Application on page 149.

   _____

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write your concluding paragraph. Use #1 above as your topic sentence. Use the information and/or ideas you listed under #2 to create the detail sentences that will support and discuss your topic sentence. Then develop a concluding sentence that sums up your paragraph but does not repeat your topic sentence. Try as best as you can to make this paragraph have unity. All the sentences should focus on a single main point. In addition, try to use transitions that will give this paragraph coherence.

Congratulations! You have now written much of the first draft of your research report. After you add a few more necessary features to this draft, it will be a complete first draft.

Documenting Your Sources: Give Credit Where Credit Is Due

You will be using sources to help support your thesis statement and topic sentences. The content you take from these sources is not your own—it belongs to the person who wrote it. Therefore, you must give credit to the source. Writers give credit to their sources in two ways. First you give credit to the source in the body or the text of your paper. The body or the text of your paper includes all the pages that contain your writing about your topic. The documentation you provide in the body of your paper is called ***in-text citations***. The name, in-text citation, describes what you are doing: providing citations or documentation for any borrowed material *in the text* of your essay.

Second, you give a more detailed description of your sources after the body or text of your paper. This list of sources is called the *Works Cited page*. Both the documentation you do in the body of your paper and on the Works Cited page have a specific form.

In-Text Citations: Identifying the Source of Specific Information and Ideas

"The citation identifies the source, just as a name card would identify you...."

When you use in-text citations, you identify the source of a piece of information, an idea, or a quotation at the end of the sentences or passage. The citation identifies the source, just as a name card would identify you to a roomful of strangers.

The form you will use for in-text citations and your Works Cited page in this essay is from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. The MLA style for citing electronic resources is similar to that for nonelectronic resources. Please refer to pages 18-20 in "Unit 1: Online Technology—Using the World Wide Web." There are also other forms available. Always ask your teacher which form you should use for a specific assignment.

The citation, or source of a piece of information or of an idea, is placed at the end of the sentence *but before the final punctuation*. The basic form includes the author's name and the page number from which the information was taken. The following is a partial list of the in-text citations most commonly used in a paper:

- If the author is named in the sentence, include only the page number:

In his biography of Rachel Carson, Philip Sterling wrote that for 20 years, "Rachel had made the most of her opportunities to study the sea, not only in print but directly with her own senses" (104).

- If the author is not named in the sentence, include the author's last name and the page number:

One biographer wrote that for 20 years, "Rachel had made the most of her opportunities to study the sea, not only in print but directly with her own senses" (Sterling 104).

- If the source was written by two or three authors, include all authors' names and the page number:

The middle class can be defined as a "broad but not undifferentiated category which includes those who have certain attitudes, aspirations, and expectations toward status mobility, and who shape their actions accordingly" (Schneider and Smith 19).

- If the source was written by more than three authors, include only the first author's name and the words *et al.*:

One action that government could take to revitalize social ecology would be to reduce the "punishments of failure and rewards of success" (Jencks et al. 8).

- If the source lists no author, include the name of the text and the page number:

In her controversial book *Silent Spring* (1962), she attacked the irresponsible use of insecticides. She warned that insecticides upset the balance of nature by destroying the food supply of birds and fish (*World Book Encyclopedia* 187).

- If you are using more than one source by the same author, include the author's last name followed by a comma, the name of the source, and the page number:

"If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life" (Carson, *A Sense of Wonder* 42).

Now return to your draft. Insert all of the in-text citations. This should be a fairly easy process. Just use your notecards, notebook, or computer files to identify the source of each piece of information or idea. Then document your source.

The Works Cited Page: Providing Detailed Information on All Sources Cited in the Text

The Works Cited page comes at the end of your essay. It lists all of the works you have cited in your essay. Do not include any sources you did *not* cite in the essay. Please refer to pages 18-20 in "Unit 1: Online Technology—Using the World Wide Web" for the MLA style for citations of electronic references.

Take your notecards that contain bibliographical information. (Review pages 123-125 that guide you through developing a "working bibliography" and the list for entries on a "Works Cited page.") Circle the first word of the entry. The first word will either be the author's last name, or if there is no author listed, the first word of the title. If the title begins with an article (*A*, *An*, or *The*), circle the second word. Then alphabetize your notecards. If you have more than one entry that begin with the same letter, alphabetize according to the first and second letter. For example, *Ramirez* would go above *Reese*. Once you've ordered these notecards, enter them on the *Works Cited* page using the following guidelines:

- Type the page number in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top of the page.
- Center the title *Works Cited* one inch from the top.
- Double-space before the first entry.
- Align each entry with left margin. If the entry needs more than one line, indent additional lines five spaces.
- Double-space each entry.
- Double-space between entries.

Application

Read and follow the directions below.

1. Now take a good long look at your first draft. Is your thesis clear? Is there any information missing? Does each paragraph have a topic sentence and detail sentences that give it coherence and unity? Are the paragraphs arranged in such a way that they get your point across effectively? What about transitions? Does your writing flow? All good writers are not really good writers; they're good rewriters. If you can, have someone else read your essay, and ask him to ask you questions about the topic. His questions may help you develop the paper.