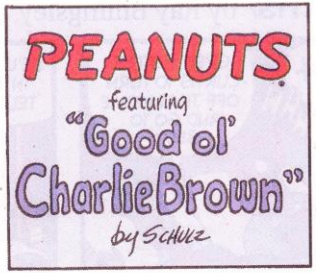
Tricks of the Academic Writer's Trade: The Language of *Cohesion*

Nigel A. Caplan

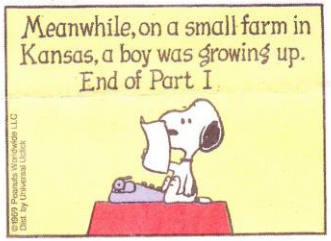
Assistant Professor

University of Delaware

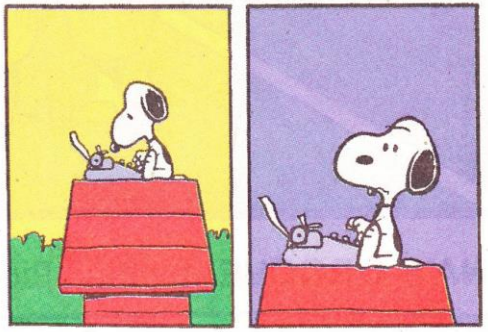
EAP Conference
St. Andrews University
February, 2017


PEANUTS
featuring
"Good ol' Charlie Brown"
by Schulz

It was a dark and stormy night
Suddenly a shot rang out. A door slammed. The maid screamed. Suddenly a pirate ship appeared on the horizon. While millions of people were starving, the king lived in luxury.

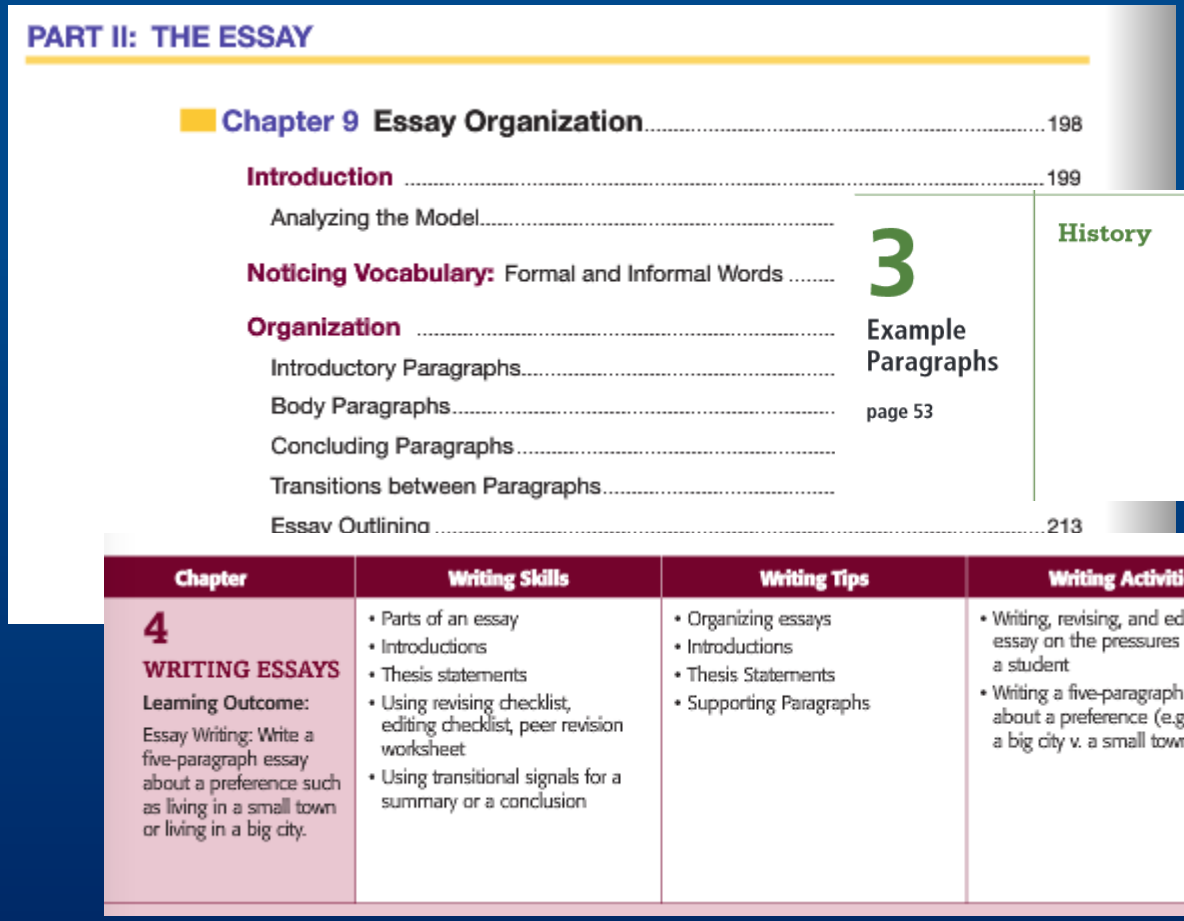

Meanwhile, on a small farm in Kansas, a boy was growing up.
End of Part I
©1969 Peanuts Worldwide LLC
Dist. by Universal Uclick

Part II
A light snow was falling, and the little girl with the tattered shawl had not sold a violet all day.
11-27



At that very moment, a young intern at City Hospital was making an important discovery.

I MAY HAVE WRITTEN MYSELF INTO A CORNER...
SCHULZ



PART II: THE ESSAY

Chapter 9 Essay Organization 198

Introduction 199

Analyzing the Model .....

Noticing Vocabulary: Formal and Informal Words .....

Organization .....

Introductory Paragraphs .....

Body Paragraphs .....

Concluding Paragraphs .....

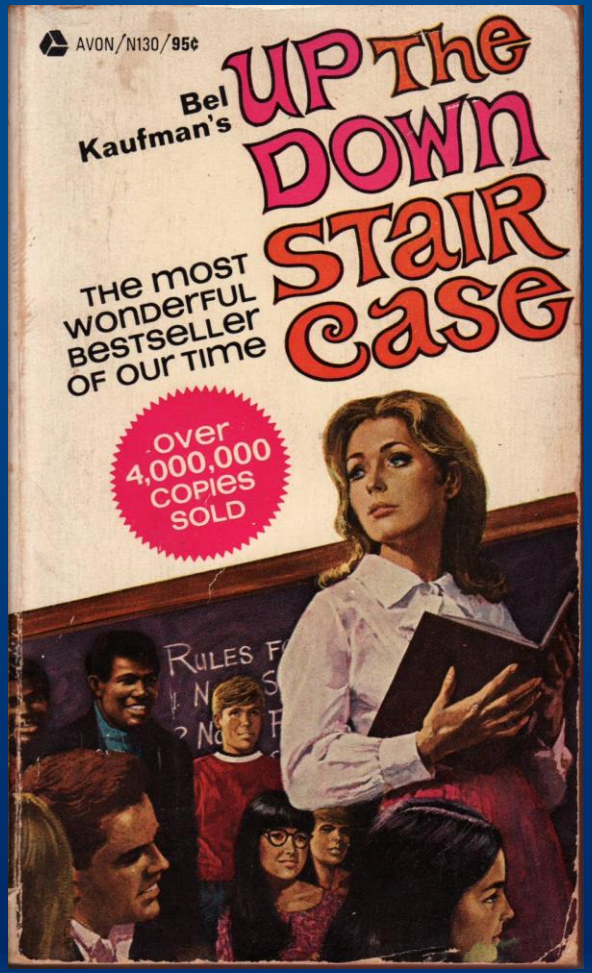
Transitions between Paragraphs .....

Essay Outlining 213

3 Example Paragraphs page 53	History	• Example organization • Examples as supporting details	• The simple present • Subject-verb agreement

Chapter	Writing Skills	Writing Tips	Writing Activities
4 WRITING ESSAYS **Learning Outcome:** Essay Writing: Write a five-paragraph essay about a preference such as living in a small town or living in a big city.	• Parts of an essay • Introductions • Thesis statements • Using revising checklist, editing checklist, peer revision worksheet • Using transitional signals for a summary or a conclusion	• Organizing essays • Introductions • Thesis Statements • Supporting Paragraphs	• Writing, revising, and editing an essay on the pressures of being a student • Writing a five-paragraph essay about a preference (e.g., living in a big city v. a small town)

Examples from *The Longman Writing Series, Ready to Write (Pearson), & Effective Academic Writing (OUP)*

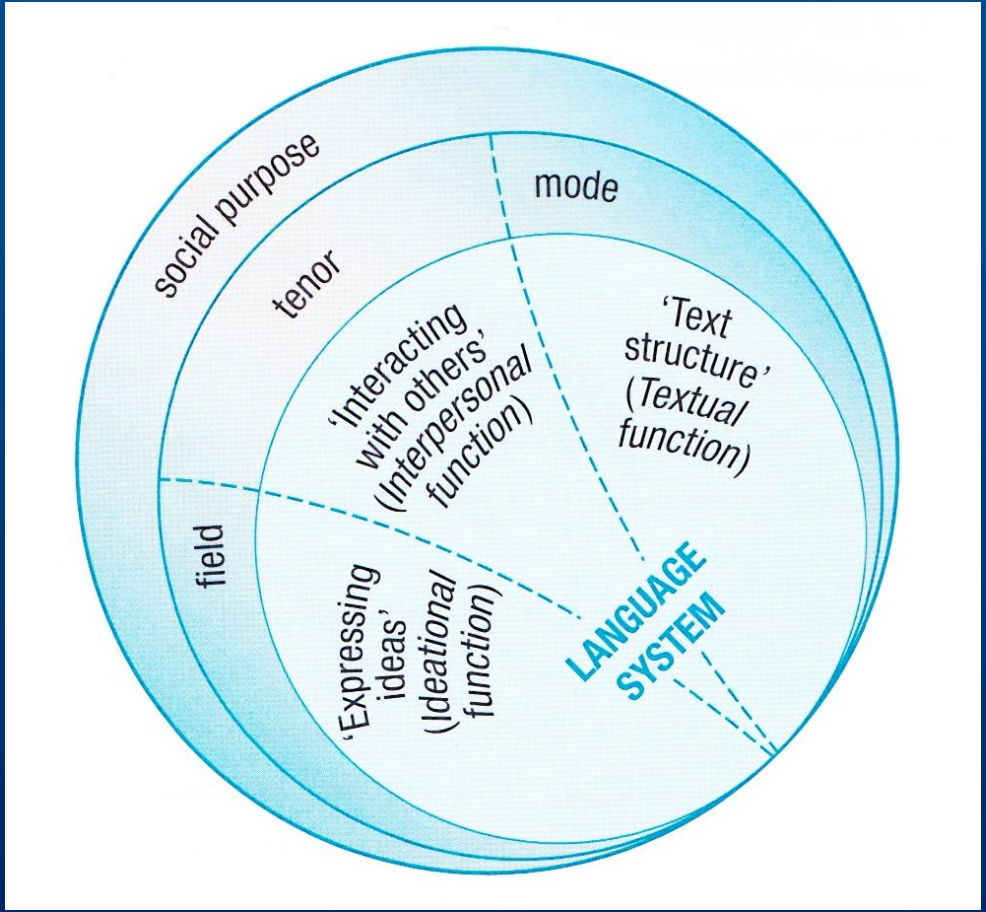


Writing clearly is thinking clearly!

[1]In neuroscience, the disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans, have been one of the largest research area. [2]The research showed understanding the complex functionality of the human brain would be beneficial for degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. [3]We used Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), which is a noninvasive imaging technique for the human brain mapping field. [4]Since the early 1990s, it has been a powerful tool in both research and clinical areas helping the further understanding of brain functions (Huettel, Song, and McCarthy, 2008.

(Caplan, *Grammar Choices*, Unit 8)

A Functional View of Grammar



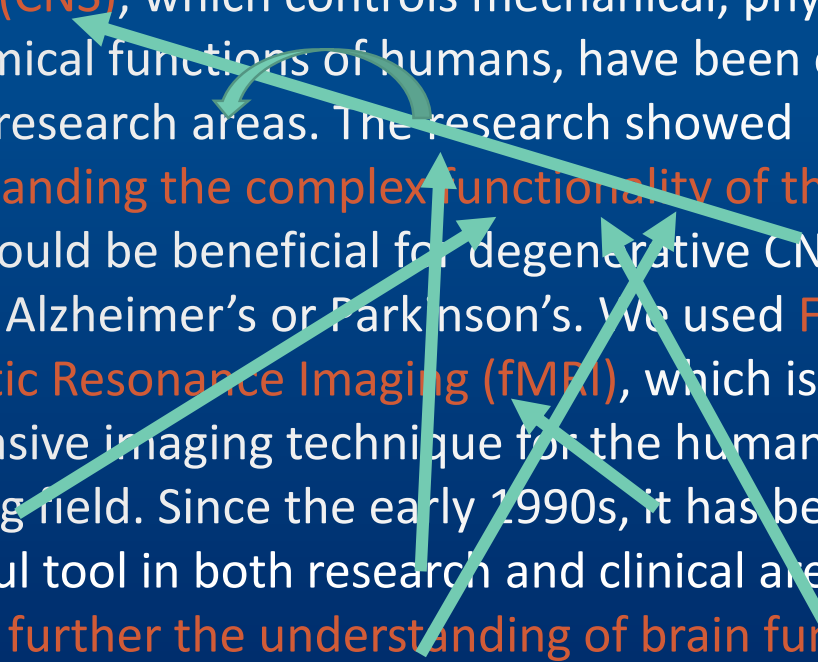
Derewianka & Jones, *Teaching Language in Context* (Oxford, 2012)

In neuroscience, the disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans, have been one of the largest research areas. The research showed understanding the complex functionality of the human brain would be beneficial for degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s. We used Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), which is a noninvasive imaging technique for the human brain mapping field. Since the early 1990s, it has been a powerful tool in both research and clinical areas, helping further the understanding of brain functions.

In neuroscience, the disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans, have been one of the largest research areas. The research showed understanding the complex functionality of the human brain would be beneficial for degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. We used Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), which is a noninvasive imaging technique for the human brain mapping field. Since the early 1990s, it has been a powerful tool in both research and clinical areas, helping further the understanding of brain functions.

In neuroscience, the disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans, have been one of the largest research areas. The research showed understanding the complex functionality of the human brain would be beneficial for degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. We used Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), which is a noninvasive imaging technique for the human brain mapping field. Since the early 1990s, it has been a powerful tool in both research and clinical areas, helping further the understanding of brain functions.

In neuroscience, the disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans, have been one of the largest research areas. The research showed understanding the complex functionality of the human brain would be beneficial for degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. We used Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), which is a noninvasive imaging technique for the human brain mapping field. Since the early 1990s, it has been a powerful tool in both research and clinical areas, helping further the understanding of brain functions.



Ahhh … that's better

One of the most important areas of neuroscience research in recent years has been disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans. The research into degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's would benefit from understanding the complex functionality of the human brain. Human brain mapping has been made possible by a noninvasive imaging technique called Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). Since the early 1990s, fMRI has helped the further understanding of brain functions in both research and clinical areas.

Ahhh … that's better

One of the most important areas of neuroscience research in recent years has been disorders of the central nervous system (CNS), which controls mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans. The research into degenerative CNS diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's would benefit from understanding the complex functionality of the human brain. Human brain mapping has been made possible by a noninvasive imaging technique called Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). Since the early 1990s, fMRI has helped the further understanding of brain functions in both research and clinical areas.

“I’m playing all the right notes …”

Victor Borge

“Just not necessarily in the right order!”

https://www.klru.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/victor-borge-piano-450x254.png

Follow the Theme

1It was a dark and stormy night. 2Suddenly, a shot rang out. 3A door slammed. 4The maid screamed. 5Suddenly a pirate ship appeared on the horizon. 6iWhile millions of people were starving, 6iithe king lived in luxury. 7Meanwhile, on a small farm in Kansas, a boy was growing up.

8iA light snow was falling, 8iiand the little girl with the tattered shawl had not sold a violet all day. 9At that very moment, a young intern at City Hospital was making an important discovery.

Controlling the Theme

The locations of golf courses have changed since the sport's introduction to the United States in the late nineteenth century. At that time, golf was primarily a sport for the wealthy …

Reading for Grammar

Why is Canadian English unique?

(BBC News)

The standard stereotype among Americans is that Canadians are like Americans, except they say ‘eh’ a lot and pronounce ‘out and about’ as ‘oot and aboot’. Many Canadians, on the other hand, will tell you that Canadian English is more like British English, and as proof will hold aloft the spellings *colour* and *centre* and the name *zed* for the letter *Z*.

Canadian does exist as a separate variety of English, with subtly distinctive features of pronunciation and vocabulary. It has its own dictionaries; the Canadian Press has its own style guide; the Editors' Association of Canada has just released a second edition of Editing Canadian English. But an emblematic feature of Editing Canadian English is comparison tables of American versus British spellings so the Canadian editor can come to a reasonable decision on which to use… on each occasion. The core of Canadian English is a pervasive ambivalence.

Canadian history helps to explain this. In the beginning there were the indigenous peoples, with far more linguistic and cultural variety than Europe. They're still there, but Canadian English, like Canadian Anglophone society in general, gives them little more than desultory token nods. Fights between European settlers shaped Canadian English more. The French, starting in the 1600s, colonised the St Lawrence River region and the Atlantic coast south of it. In the mid-1700s, England got into a war with France, concluding with the Treaty of Paris in 1763, which ceded 'New France' to England. The English allowed any French to stay who were willing to become subjects of the English King.

The Canadian accent – or accents, since there is a bit of variation across the country (and much more in Newfoundland) and a larger amount across socioeconomic levels – has a few signal features, and they, too, trace partly to the US and partly to Britain. The best-known feature is ‘Canadian raising’, which affects two specific diphthongs before voiceless consonants: the first part of the diphthong is higher in *ice* and *out* than it is in *eyes* and *loud*. The *out* raising makes the vowel sound more like ‘oot’ to American ears. This feature is present across much but not all of Canada. It may be influenced by Scottish English (many British emigres were Scots), or it may be a relic of Shakespeare-era pronunciation.

Controlling the Theme

- Move prepositions of time and location (Circumstances)
- Choose passive voice
- Use pronouns
- Use reference (*this, that, these, those, the*)
- Reverse dependent/independent clauses
- Nominalisation

Add the second sentence

1. Many high school students have problems fitting in socially. These

2. There has been a growing trend for graduate degrees to take longer. This

3. There are three interesting features in the new design. These

4. The first stage of the research was to collect data. In this

Nominalisation and Grammatical Metaphor

"learning how to mean is essentially a continuous expansion of a person's *registerial repertoire*: Learners keep mastering new registers, thereby expanding their personal meaning potential"

(Matthiessen, 2009)

Grammatical Metaphor

Congruent / Everyday	Incongruent / Academic
Things → nominal groups Processes → verbs (action, saying, thinking)	Verbs nominalised as Participants (things) Joined by relational (linking) verbs

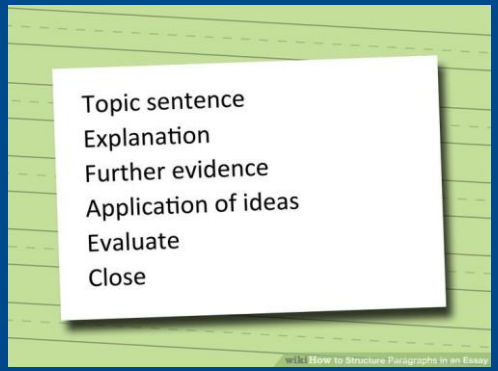
(Halliday & Martin, 1993; Matthiessen, 2009; Ryshina-Pankova, 2010)

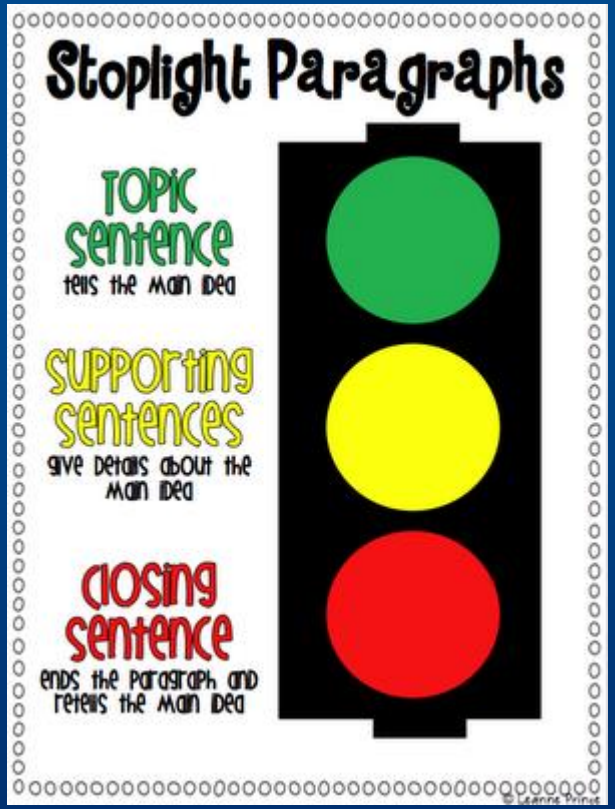
Your turn!

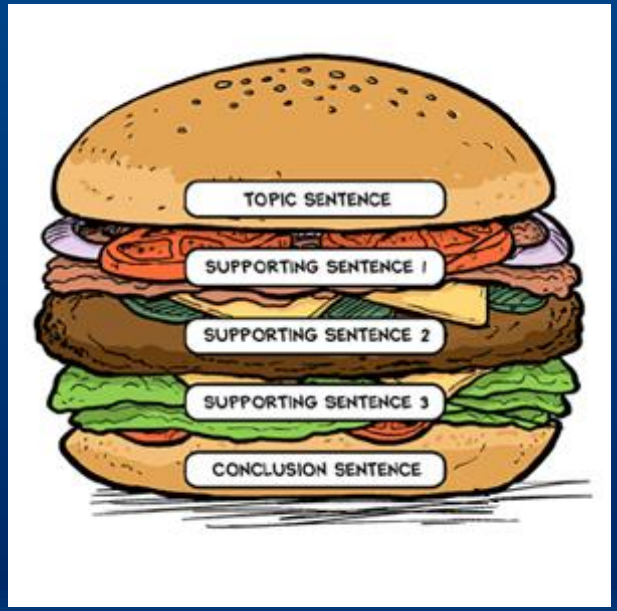
- I recorded how many calories I consumed during the weekend. My _____ was highest on Sunday.

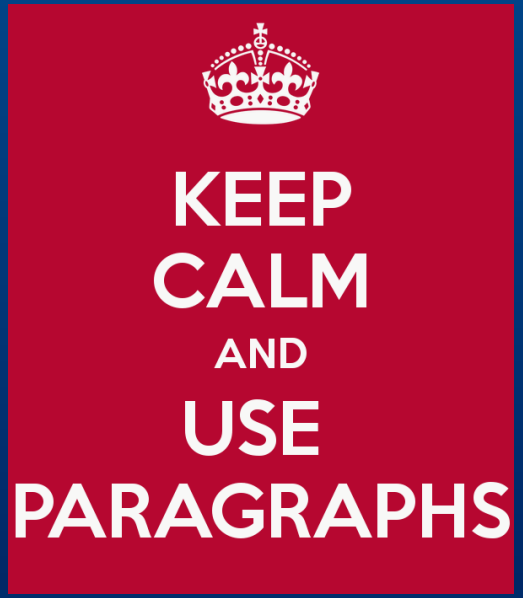
- Many students find that they gain weight in their first semester. This _____ is attributed to …

- A balanced diet can improve health and mood. Mood _____ can be attributed to …


Topic sentence
Explanation
Further evidence
Application of ideas
Evaluate
Close


Stoplight Paragraphs
TOPIC sentence
tells the main idea
supporting sentences
give details about the main idea
closing sentence
ends the paragraph and retells the main idea


TOPIC SENTENCE
SUPPORTING SENTENCE 1
SUPPORTING SENTENCE 2
SUPPORTING SENTENCE 3
CONCLUSION SENTENCE


KEEP
CALM
AND
USE
PARAGRAPHS

Three Paragraph Patterns

- Linking (zig-zag)
- Repeated Theme (linear)
- Super Theme (fan)

Linking (Old-New Information) – “Zig-zag”

Clause 1 Theme New information

Clause 2 Theme (old) New information

Clause 3 Theme (old) New information

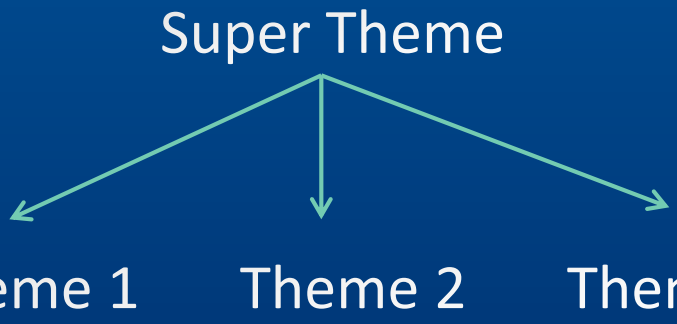
(Eggins, 2004, p. 324)

Repeated/Constant Theme

- Theme …..
- Theme ….
- Theme …

(Weissberg, 1984)

uper Theme (“Fan” Pattern)



(Weissberg, 1984)

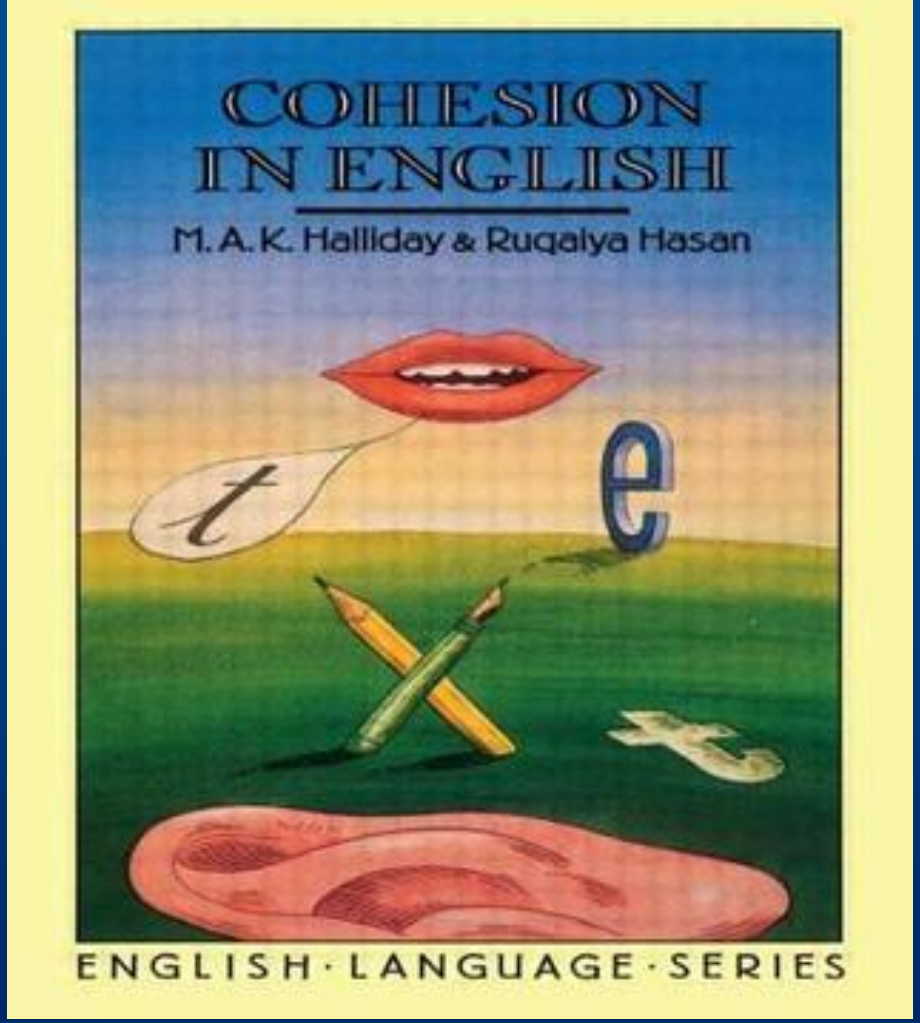
a.k.a. “hyper theme”

Starbucks has easily made their name by the unique treatment of their clientele as well. The Starbucks employee manual emphasizes the importance of presentation, encouraging employees to know the customers' names, drink orders or personal preferences (Simon 73). The employees play a vital role in creating the environment that Starbucks' regulars love, the feeling of community, relaxation, and comfort. This coffeehouse embraces the customer as an individual. Although Starbucks worries more about their profits than the experience of the individual, the two concepts are related. An increase in the customer's satisfaction with their Starbucks experience results in an increase in profit. The employees are encouraged to create a personal connection with the customer. For example, a barista may wish a college student luck on their finals during the end of the semester, as the young customer orders a large Frappuccino to take an edge off of the stress.

Starbucks has easily made their name by the unique treatment of their clientele as well. The Starbucks employee manual emphasizes the importance of presentation, encouraging employees to know the customers' names, drink orders or personal preferences (Simon 73). The employees play a vital role in creating the environment that Starbucks' regulars love, the feeling of community, relaxation, and comfort. This coffeehouse embraces the customer as an individual. Although Starbucks worries more about their profits than the experience of the individual, the two concepts are related. An increase in the customer's satisfaction with their Starbucks experience results in an increase in profit. The employees are encouraged to create a personal connection with the customer. For example, a barista may wish a college student luck on their finals during the end of the semester, as the young customer orders a large Frappuccino to take an edge off of the stress.

In the book, *Swearing: A Cross-Cultural Linguistic Study*, Magnus Ljung explores the origination of curse words and how they evolved. He explains that the development of swearing dates back to between 1198 and 1166 BC, when ancient Egyptians inscribed the words in stone slabs (45). These initial uses of swearing did not contain the curse words that we use today; rather the Egyptians inscribed statements that were meant to "call down evil on another person or object" (46). The Bible also introduced curse words, however, it also set forth rules that disapproved of their use (48). Modern curse words more familiar to us, such as "fuck, shit, and prick" did not come into existence until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (68-71). During this time, people deemed these four-letter words as forbidden and encouraged punishment if someone used them. People did not begin to use these words regularly until the twentieth century (67). In the last hundred years, cursing has become increasingly widespread, so much so that most words have become part of many individuals' everyday language.

In the book, *Swearing: A Cross-Cultural Linguistic Study*, Magnus Ljung explores the origination of curse words and how they evolved. He explains that the development of swearing dates back to between 1198 and 1166 BC, when ancient Egyptians inscribed the words in stone slabs (45). These initial uses of swearing did not contain the curse words that we use today; rather the Egyptians inscribed statements that were meant to "call down evil on another person or object" (46). The Bible also introduced curse words, however, it also set forth rules that disapproved of their use (48). Modern curse words more familiar to us, such as "fuck, shit, and prick" did not come into existence until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (68-71). During this time, people deemed these four-letter words as forbidden and encouraged punishment if someone used them. People did not begin to use these words regularly until the twentieth century (67). In the last hundred years, cursing has become increasingly widespread, so much so that most words have become part of many individuals' everyday language.


COHESION
IN ENGLISH
M. A. K. Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan
t
e
x
ENGLISH · LANGUAGE · SERIES

Where did all the language go?

(from the introduction to a popular ESL writing textbook)

"Students are interested in and capable of writing expressively in English … if they are supplied with the organizational tools to do so"

"Students need to explicitly taught that different languages organize information differently, and they need to be shown how to organize information correctly in English"

Thank you!

Nigel Caplan
University of Delaware English Language Institute
nacaplan@udel.edu
http://nigelteacher.wordpress.com
@NigelESL

Spring Colloquium, Portland, Oregon (19 March)
Summer Institute, Monterey, California (7-10 June)
Directory, resources, and listserv
www.gradconsortium.org