

# 11

## Academic Writing

*from paragraph to essay*

# Unity and Coherence

## *What is unity?*

Unity in writing is the connection of all ideas to a single topic. In an essay, *all ideas* should relate to the thesis statement, and the *supporting ideas* in a main body paragraph should relate to the topic sentence.

1-Read the essay on page 79 about Chinese medicine. Then do these tasks.

**a.** *Underline the thesis statement with two lines.*

**b.** Underline each topic sentences with one line.

**c.** List the supporting ideas in each main body paragraph on a separate piece of paper.

**d.** After you have finished, review the topic sentences and supporting ideas. Discuss how the topic sentences relate to the thesis statement and how the supporting sentences relate to the topic sentences.

Is the essay unified?

### Next Time, Try Chinese Medicine

The last time I had a cold, a friend suggested that instead of taking the usual cold medicines, I visit the traditional Chinese doctor in our city. Although I knew nothing about Chinese medicine, I decided to try it. When I walked in to the Chinese doctor's surgery, I was amazed. It was not at all like my usual doctor's. There were shelves up to the ceiling full of glass containers filled with hundreds of different dried plants and other things I could not identify. Could this really be a doctor's surgery? It seemed very strange to me. When I met the doctor, he explained that Chinese medicine is thousands of years old. The plants in the jars in his office were herbs. These herbs could be mixed together to make medicines. He explained the philosophy of Chinese medicine. The philosophy of traditional Chinese medicine is not the same as the philosophy of modern medicine, but it is useful for curing many health problems.

Modern medicine focuses on illness. If a patient with a cough visits a modern doctor, then the doctor will give the patient a medicine to stop the cough. If the patient also has a fever, the doctor may give a different medicine to stop the fever. For every person with a cough, the doctor will probably recommend the same cough medicine. The philosophy of modern medicine is to stop problems like coughing and fever as quickly as possible. Western doctors usually see illness as an enemy. They use medicines like weapons to fight diseases.

Chinese medicine, in contrast, has a different philosophy. Instead of focusing on a patient's health problems, Chinese medicine tries to make the patient's whole body well again. Specifically, doctors of Chinese medicine believe that inside people, there are two types of energy. The first type of energy, called 'yin', is quiet and passive. The other type of energy, called 'yang', is active. When these two energies are in equal balance, a person is healthy. When there is an imbalance—too much yin, for example—a person becomes unhealthy. A doctor of Chinese medicine doesn't try to stop a person's cough by giving a cough medicine. Instead, the doctor gives a mixture of herbs that will restore balance in the patient's body. As a result, when the body is in balance, the cough will stop naturally.

The Chinese doctor's herbs seemed strange to me at first, but they made me feel better. My cold wasn't cured instantly, but I felt healthy again after a few days. For a very serious health problem, I would probably visit a modern hospital, but the next time I catch a cold, I am going back to the Chinese doctor. Chinese medicine definitely works for some health problems.



a. Thesis statement: *The philosophy of Chinese medicine is not the same as the philosophy of modern medicine, but it is useful for curing many health problems.*

b. Topic sentences: First main body paragraph: **Modern medicine focuses on illness.**

Second main body paragraph: **Instead of focusing on a patient's health problems, Chinese medicine tries to make the patient's whole body well again.**

c. Supporting ideas:

First main body paragraph:

- *In modern medicine, a patient with a cough gets medicine to stop the cough.*
- *Different medicine given for fever.*
- *Same medicine given to all people.*
- *Philosophy of modern medicine- stop problems quickly.*

### Second main body paragraph:

- *Chinese medicine-two types of energy in people.*
- *One type is yin (passive).*
- *Second type is yang (active).*
- *Healthy when there is equal balance of energy.*
- *Imbalance means the person is unhealthy.*
- *Don't stop illness by giving medicine.*
- *Herbs given to restore balance, so illness stops naturally.*

## **d. The essay is unified**

## Editing an essay for unity

### **Keeping unity in an essay**

One way to keep unity in an essay is to edit the outline for ideas that are not relevant to the thesis statement or topic sentences (see Unit 9).

Likewise, after you have written the essay, it is helpful to review the text and look for ideas that do not relate to the thesis or the topic sentences.

2- Read this thesis statement and main body paragraphs. The writer has begun to cross out sentences that do not belong. There is still one large piece of the text that should be removed because it isn't relevant to the thesis. Can you find it? Look at the edited version in exercise 6 on page 85.



Thesis statement: Sign language, the language used by many deaf people, has a 500-year history.

The first sign language for deaf people was developed in Europe in the 1500s. In Spain, a man named Pedro de Ponce was the first person to teach deaf children using sign language. Another Spaniard, Juan Pablo de Bonet, was the first person to write a book on teaching sign language to deaf people. ~~Most of his students were from rich families.~~ Another important teacher who influenced the development of sign language was a Frenchman named Abbé de L'Épée. L'Épée understood that deaf people could communicate without speech. He started to learn the signs used by a group of deaf people in Paris. Using these signs, he developed a more complete French sign language. ~~L'Épée also taught religion classes.~~ Another Frenchman, Louis Braille, also lived during this time. He invented a system of reading and writing for blind people, using raised bumps that can be felt with the fingers. In Germany, a man named Samuel Heinicke was another important teacher of the deaf during this time. However, he did not use sign language for instruction. Instead, he preferred to teach the deaf to understand other people by looking carefully at other people's mouths when they spoke. This is called lip or speech reading.

Speech reading became a popular way of teaching deaf in the United States in the mid-1800s. Alexander Graham Bell, who invented the telephone, was one of the strongest supporters of teaching deaf people to do speech reading. Bell became interested in deafness and teaching deaf people. With his interest in science and the production of sound, he focused on ways of helping the deaf communicate with

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listening tools and speech reading. He eventually opened a training school for teachers of the deaf.

~~Not much is known about the use of sign language among deaf people in the United States before the 1800s.~~ The early 1800s were an important period in the development of American Sign Language. In 1815, a man named Thomas Gallaudet became interested in teaching deaf people. He travelled to Europe to study ways of communicating with deaf people. He was twenty-seven years old at this time, and he studied at a school for deaf students in Paris for several months. In 1817, Gallaudet returned to the United States, and he brought with him Laurent Clerc, a deaf sign language teacher from Paris. Gallaudet started the first school for the deaf, and Clerc became the first sign language teacher in the USA. ~~The school, called the American School for the Deaf, still exists in Hartford, Connecticut.~~ American Sign Language developed from the mixture of signs used by deaf Americans and French Sign Language. Today, it is used by more than 500,000 deaf people in the United States and Canada. ~~About twenty million people in the United States have hearing problems, and about two million of these are deaf.~~

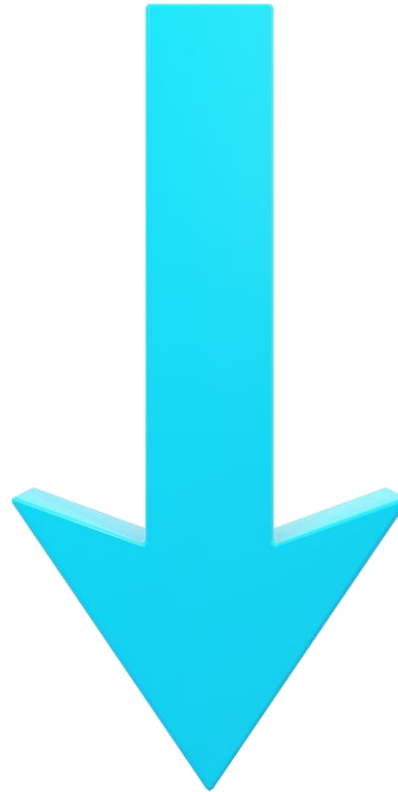
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The Edited Version of this essay should be like this



The first sign language for deaf people was developed in Europe in the 1500s. In Spain, a man named Pedro de Ponce was the first person to teach deaf children using sign language. Another Spaniard, Juan Pablo de Bonet was the first person to write a book on teaching sign language to deaf people. Another important teacher who influenced the development of sign language was a Frenchman named Abbé de L'. Epée. L'. Epée understood that deaf people could communicate without speech. He started to learn the signs used by a group of deaf people in Paris. Using these signs, he developed a more complete French sign language.

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# *Coherence*

**Coherence** is the *orderly relationship of ideas*, each leading smoothly and logically to the next. You must weave your ideas together so skillfully that the reader can easily see how one idea connects to another and to the central thought. This central thought, of course, is expressed in the topic sentence for a paragraph and in the thesis for an essay.

- Coherence is related to unity. Ideas that are arranged in a clear and logical way are coherent. When a text is unified and coherent, the reader can easily understand the main points.

As you learned in Unit 9 , creating an outline helps make a well-organised essay. When organising your ideas, think about what type of organisation is the best for your topic or essay type. Here are some examples of **types of writing** and good ways to organise them.

## Type of writing

- Chronology (historical events, personal narratives, processes)
- Description
- Classification
- Comparison / contrast
- Argumentation / persuasion and cause / effect

## Type of organisation

- Order by time or order of events/ steps
- Order by position, size, and shape of things
- Group ideas and explain them in a logical order
- Organise in point-by-point or block style
- Order from least important to most important

This means that we should think of  
the over-all pattern of the essay:

For a **time** pattern: *first, then, soon, later, following, after, at that point, etc.*

For a **space** pattern: *up, down, right, left, beyond, behind, above, below, etc.*

For an **emphasis** pattern: *first, second, third, most, more, another, etc.*

**Do not confuse **unity** and **coherence**.**

**Coherence** involves the **clear movement** of thought from sentence to sentence or paragraph to paragraph.

**Unity** means **staying on** the topic.

A unified and coherent outline would become incoherent if the parts were scrambled, but the outline technically would still be unified.

These qualities of writing go together.

You should stay on the topic and make clear connections.

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Look again at the essay in exercise 1 on page 79. What type of organisational pattern does the essay use? How do you know? What about the text in exercise 2 on pages 80 and 81?

-The essay in **exercise 1** uses comparison / contrast organisation. The topic of modern medicine is contrasted with Chinese medicine. It has block style organisation.

-The essay in **exercise 2** has chronological organisation. The main body paragraphs are organised by different periods in history.

# *Cohesive devices*

Cohesive devices are words and phrases that connect sentences and paragraphs together, creating a smooth flow of ideas.

These include:

- 1- transitions ( words and phrases)
- 2- pronoun & proform references
- 3-repetition of key ideas ( key words)



## ➤ Transitions

As you've learned in previous units, there are many transition words and phrases in English that are used to connect sentences together or relate ideas to one another. Here are several types of writing and some common transitions that are used with them.

Chronology	Comparison	Contrast	Additional information	Examples	Cause and effect	Concluding ideas
<i>before</i> <i>after</i> <i>next</i> <i>since</i> <i>first, second</i> <i>while</i> <i>when</i>	<i>likewise</i> <i>compared to</i> <i>similarly</i> <i>as ... as</i> <i>and</i>	<i>however</i> <i>on the other hand</i> <i>but</i> <i>yet</i> <i>in spite of</i> <i>in contrast</i> <i>although</i> <i>instead</i>	<i>and</i> <i>also</i> <i>in addition</i> <i>in fact</i> <i>furthermore</i> <i>moreover</i> <i>Another ...</i> <i>is/was</i>	<i>for example</i> <i>in general</i> <i>generally</i> <i>for instance</i> <i>specifically</i> <i>in particular</i>	<i>therefore</i> <i>so</i> <i>thus</i> <i>as a result</i> <i>since</i> <i>because</i>	<i>in conclusion</i> <i>in summary</i> <i>finally</i> <i>therefore</i> <i>to conclude</i> <i>to summarise</i>

4- Use transitions from the list above, or others that you know, to connect these sentences taken from the essay about Chinese medicine on page 79. When you have finished, compare your answers with the essay.

Possible answers:

**Instead of** focusing on a patient's health problems, Chinese medicine tries to make the patient's whole body well again. **In particular**, doctors of Chinese medicine believe that inside people, there are two types of energy. The first type of energy, called 'yin', is quiet and passive. The other type of energy, called 'yang', is active. When there is an imbalance-too much yin, **for instance**, a person becomes unhealthy. A doctor of Chinese medicine doesn't try to stop a person's cough by giving a cough medicine. **Rather**, the doctor gives a mixture of herbs that will restore balance in the patient's body. **Thus**, when the body is in balance, the cough will stop naturally

# Pronoun reference

Two sentences can be connected by the use of a pronoun. A pronoun (*he, she, it, they*, etc.) takes the place of a noun (a person, place, thing, or idea) or a noun phrase (several words that refer to a person, place, thing, or idea).

Look at the following example taken from the essay on sign language:

**American Sign Language** *developed from the mixture of signs used by deaf Americans and French Sign Language. Today, [it](#) is used by more than 500,000 deaf people in the United States and Canada .*

The pronoun [it](#) refers back to the subject, ***American Sign Language***, and connects the two sentences together.

- 5 For each of the *italicised* pronouns in this passage, identify the noun or noun phrase to which it refers. Write your answers on the lines below the text.



Barcelona

Barcelona, Spain's second biggest city and the capital of Catalonia, is a popular tourist attraction for several reasons. First, the city is ideally located for both the mountains and the beach. Although <sup>a</sup> it is on the coast, <sup>b</sup> it is only a couple of hours away from the Pyrenees. In addition, Barcelona is both modern and historic. There are many stylish hotels. <sup>c</sup> It has a clean and efficient underground system, and visitors can find a variety of shops and restaurants, especially in the Eixample area. The oldest area of the city, the Barrio Gótico, or Barri Gotic in Catalan, is very beautiful because many of <sup>d</sup> its oldest buildings were protected as areas of the city were rebuilt or developed. The most interesting thing about Barcelona may be <sup>e</sup> its Catalan heritage. Approximately 70% of the people living in and around Barcelona speak Catalan, a Romance language related to Spanish, and <sup>f</sup> they speak Spanish as well. In addition to the strong Catalan background, there are large groups of people who originally came from other parts of Spain such as Andalucía and Murcia living <sup>g</sup> there. All of <sup>h</sup> this makes Barcelona a great place to visit.

- a. It = the city / Barcelona
- b. It = Barcelona
- c. Its = the Barrio Gótico<sup>s</sup> / Barri Gotic<sup>s</sup>
- d. Its = Barcelona's
- e. They = Catalan speakers in and around Barcelona
- f. There = in Barcelona
- g. This = all of the previous supporting points in the paragraph



Look at this paragraph:

*Modern **medicine** focuses on illness. If a patient with a cough visits a modern doctor, then the doctor will give the patient a **medicine** to stop the cough. If the patient also has a fever, the doctor may give a different **medicine** to stop the fever. For every person with a cough, the doctor will probably recommend the same cough **medicine**. The philosophy of modern **medicine** is to stop problems like coughing and fever as quickly as possible.*

## Repetition of key nouns or ideas

Another way to connect ideas in an essay is by repeating important words and phrases.

This will help the reader remember the main ideas in the text.

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Read these revised paragraphs from the essay on sign language. Underline examples of transition use, pronoun reference, and repetition of key words.

The first sign language for deaf people was developed in Europe in the 1500s. In Spain, a man named Pedro de Ponce was the first person to teach deaf children using sign language. Another Spaniard, Juan Pablo de Bonet was the first person to write a book on teaching sign language to deaf people. Another important teacher who influenced the development of sign language was a Frenchman named Abbé de L'. Epée. L'. Epée understood that deaf people could communicate without speech. He started to learn the signs used by a group of deaf people in Paris. Using these signs, he developed a more complete French sign language.

The early 1800s were an important period in the development of American Sign Language. In 1815, a man named Thomas Gallaudet became interested in teaching deaf people. He travelled to Europe to study ways of communicating with deaf people. He was twenty-seven years old at this time, and he studied at a school for deaf students in Paris for several months. In 1817, Gallaudet returned to the United States, and he brought with him Laurent Clerc, a deaf sign language teacher from Paris. Gallaudet started the first school for the deaf, and Clerc became the first sign language teacher in the USA. American Sign Language developed from the mixture of signs used by deaf Americans and French Sign Language. Today, it is used by more than 500,000 deaf people in the United States and Canada.

## 7 .This paragraph needs more connection. Revise it

Ho Chi Minh City, in Vietnam, is a fascinating destination for travelers to Southeast Asia. It is located on the Mekong River. It was once an important trading center for the French in Southeast Asia. The influence of French culture can still be felt. () Many people, especially the older generations, learned French in school and still can speak it very well. () Some cafés serve French-style bread and pastries in Ho Chi Minh City. Expensive hotels and restaurants serve French food. () Many of the buildings in the city are built in French style. The Vietnamese and the French fought. () The French eventually left the country. There are museums and monuments documenting the country's long-and often bloody history. If you are looking for a unique city to visit in Southeast Asia, Ho Chi Minh City is an attractive choice.

Ho Chi Minh City, located on the Mekong River in Vietnam, is a fascinating destination for travelers to Southeast Asia. **It** was once an important trading centre for the French **there**, **and** the influence of French culture can still be felt. **For example**, many people, especially the older generations, learned French in school and still can speak **it** very well. **In addition**, some cafés serve French-style bread and pastries in Ho Chi Minh City, **and** expensive hotels and restaurants serve French food. **Another sign of French influence** is that many of the buildings in the city are built in French style. There are also many museums and monuments documenting the country's long - and often bloody - history. The Vietnamese and the French **also** fought, **but** the French eventually left the country. If you're looking for a unique city to visit in Southeast Asia, Ho Chi Minh City is an attractive choice.

# 11. These pairs of sentences need to be joined together to form English proverbs.

Choose the best transition word or phrase to connect each pair. .

A-Don't count your chickens ..... .. they hatch.

1. before
2. so
3. because

B- ..... .. life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

1. Before
2. When
3. Because

C-Time flies .. .. .. you 're having fun.

- 1-after
2. although
3. when

D- You can lead a horse to water, ..... .. you can 't make it drink.

1. and
2. but
3. or

E-Laugh, ... .. the world laughs with you . Cry, ..... .. you cry alone.

1. and, but
2. and, and
3. but, but

F- You don't know what water is worth ..... .. your well is dry.

1. because
2. after
3. until



# Answers

A- Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

**Meaning:** Do not think about future rewards as if they were present now.

B- When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

**Meaning:** Turn a difficulty into a chance.

C- Time flies when you are having fun.

**Meaning:** Enjoyable time passes very quickly.

D- You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink.

**Meaning:** You may give a suggestion or advice, but you cannot force the person to follow it.

E- Laugh, and the world laughs with you . Cry, and you cry alone.

**Meaning:** people prefer to be with those in good mood.

F- You don't know what water is worth until your well is dry.

**Meaning:** We do not feel how important is something until we lose it.