L**ecture: Developing the Relationship between Ideas**

So far we have gone over several different strategies for pre-writing to assist you in coming up with information to write about. But a paragraph is not just a list of facts or ideas about a topic, it has to present the information in a meaningful way.

In order to do that, the sentences have to be related to one another. Certain words provide clues as to how the sentences are related. Here is an example, see if you can figure how the relationship.

**Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history. He finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring.**

The first sentence is a compound sentence using the conjunction but to join the two independent clauses. But is used to show contrast – the difference between two things. Jamal is good at one thing – not at another – contrast!

**That was a good speech, but it would have been better with more facts.**

The word but takes the idea of the speech being good, and lets you know that what follows is a way that the speech was not good. Now lets look at the second sentence. Notice it is a simple sentence that provides more information, an example, about something in the previous sentence. Here is the example again with an additional sentence added:

**Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history. He finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring. Yesterday some of his friends came over to help him find a job.**

What is the relationship between the new sentence and the previous sentence? Well, the sentence is about Jamal, but it does not tie back to his school work, which is also a key part of the other two sentences. Lets try adding more sentences.

EXAMPLE 1: **Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history (1). He finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring (2). Yesterday some of his friends came over to help him find a job (3). They ended up filling out forms all afternoon so Jamal did not get his homework done (4).**

EXAMPLE 2: **Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history (1). He finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring (2). Yesterday some of his friends came over to help him find a job (3). Because Jamal is good at math, Lee thought he should apply to be a cashier at a coffee stand (4).**

Which of the two examples have clearer relationships between all of the sentences. In other words, which one goes more logically from one idea to the next? Think about this and be sure you have an answer before proceeding.

Example 2 has clearer relationships between the ideas in the sentences and is more logical. The final sentence establishes the relationship between sentence 3 and 4 and ties it back to sentence 1. Each sentence is now building upon the sentences that came before, and the topic of the paragraph is going to be how being good at school can help you in other areas.

In Example 1, the final sentence creates a relationship between sentence 3 and 4, one of cause and effect. Because event A happened (his friends came over), the effect B followed (he did not get his homework done). However, it is not clear why not getting is homework done is important. At this point, the reader still is unsure about what is the topic of the paragraph.

Here are some common relationships between sentences with words used to signify those relationships:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Examples | Cause/Effect | Contrast/Differences | Conclusion |
| and, another, in addition, such as, moreover, for example, for instance, to illustrate, | because, because of, caused by, as a result, consequently, therefore, thus | but, yet, neither, not, however, although, nevertheless, in contrast, though | in conclusion, finally, to sum up, in the end |

Use a highlighter to mark all of the words that indicate a relationship. Check your answers on the next page.

**Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history (1). He finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring (2). Yesterday some of his friends came over to help him find a job (3). Because Jamal is good at math, Lee thought he should apply to be a cashier at a coffee stand (4). However, Jamal really hates the smell of coffee, so he thought he’d rather work at the hot dog stand (5). In the end, they agreed that it would be best to apply at many stores to increase his chances of getting hired (6).**

Your paragraph should look like this:

**Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history (1). He finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring (2). Yesterday some of his friends came over to help him find a job (3). Because Jamal is good at math, Lee thought he should apply to be a cashier at a coffee stand (4). However, Jamal really hates the smell of coffee, so he thought he’d rather work at the hot dog stand (5). In the end, they agreed that it would be best to apply at many stores to increase his chances of getting hired (6).**

As you can see, it is not necessary for every sentence to contain a word that establishes a relationship. In the example above, sentences 2 and 3 do not, but it is clear from the context why the sentences are there. However, one way to improve this paragraph would be to practice sentence combining so that every sentence does contain a word that establishes its relationship to the others.

**Jamal is good at math and soccer, but he is not good at history; he finds memorizing a bunch of names and dates boring (1). Yesterday some of his friends came over to help him find a job, and because Jamal is good at math, Lee thought he should apply to be a cashier at a coffee stand (2). However, Jamal really hates the smell of coffee, so he thought he’d rather work at the hot dog stand (3). In the end, they agreed that it would be best to apply at many stores to increase his chances of getting hired (4).**

Here is another example. Use a highlighter to mark all of the words that indicate a relationship. Check your answers on the next page.

Sherlock Holmes solved the mystery of ‘The Red-Headed League’ by using deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning is when you take pieces of information and then draw a conclusion from that information. His friend, Dr. Watson, has the same information, yet he cannot solve the mysteries. He is smart, however, Sherlock Holmes has a unique talent. Another way Holmes can solve mysteries is through the notes and journals he keeps to track information. In the end, it is clear that Sherlock Holmes is the best crime solver.

Your paragraph should look like this:

Sherlock Holmes solved the mystery of ‘The Red-Headed League’ by using deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning is when you take pieces of information and then draw a conclusion from that information. His friend, Dr. Watson, has the same information, yet he cannot solve the mysteries. He is smart, however, Sherlock Holmes has a unique talent. Another way Holmes can solve mysteries is through the notes and journals he keeps to track information. In the end, it is clear that Sherlock Holmes is the best crime solver.

**PRACTICE 1:** Create a paragraph from the simple sentences listed below using one of each of the four types of relationship words from the chart (example, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, conclusion). You may need to revise the sentences to make them make sense, and feel free to practice sentence combining. When you are done, turn your paragraph in to the dropbox.[[1]](http://angel.southseattle.edu/AngelUploads/Content/WAOL_OCLMASTERENGL9Y/_assoc/51E338D10FC64F7F91FC7F2A0ECC97E1/#_ftn1)

1. The Sherlock Holmes’ stories take place in the late 1800’s in England.

2. They had to do things differently than we do today.

3. They used horse-drawn cabs instead of cars.

4. The streets were narrow and it took longer to get around.

5. There was no electricity or telephones or computers.

6. Holmes kept journals to track information.

7. It would have been fun to live at that time.

[[1]](http://angel.southseattle.edu/AngelUploads/Content/WAOL_OCLMASTERENGL9Y/_assoc/51E338D10FC64F7F91FC7F2A0ECC97E1/#_ftnref) If you are not sure what relationship words are or why they are important and cannot complete this practice, contact your instructor.