THE EFFECTS OF ADVANCE ORGANIZERS

ON EFFECTIVE COMPOSITION

ACHIEVEMENT

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The mastery of language and writing are considered to be of primary
importance by evaluators of the American secondary school. Ernest L.
Boyer professesses: "The first curriculum priority is language. Our use
of complex symbols separates human beings from all other forms of life.
Language provides the connecting tissue that ꞈbinds society together,
allowing us to express feelings and ideas, and powerfully influence the
attitudes of others. It is the most essential tool for learning."[1]
Other reformers such as Theodore Sizer, Mortimer Adler, and the authors of
The Nation at Risk also stress the importance of the written word. Search-
ing for better ways to communicate this importance of writing to students,
the researcher stumbled onto the concept of advance organizers. Charles
H. Clark and Thomas W. Bean present a definiton of advance organizers
as "introductory passages which are intended to facilitate the learning of
targeted material. Their origin and use is based on Ausubel's subsumption
theory which holds that 'cognitive structure is hiearchically organized
in terms of highly inclusive concepts under which are subsumed less
inclusive subconcepts and informational data.'"[2] An advance organizer
according to David P. Ausubel, its creator, is "introductory material at
a higher level of abstraction, generality, and inclusiveness than the
learning passage itself, and an overview as a summary presentation of the
principal ideas in a passage that is not necessarily written at a higher
level of abstraction, generality, and inclusiveness, but achieves its

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effect largely by the simple omission of specific detail."[3] One of the leading proponents of advance organizers, David P. Ausubel, suggests that advance organizers supply a significant difference in retaining an utilizing unfamiliar but meaningful verbal material.[4] R. E. Mayer further states, "A good organizer provides an organized conceptual framework that is meaningful to the learner, and that allows the learner to relate concepts in the instructional material to elements of the framework."[5] However, the use of advance organizers as an effective teaching device is still questionable after over twenty years of research.[6] A field of research that has had little if any investigation concerns the use of advance organizers to aid in effective writing achievement. Most advance organizer research concerns the written word (summaries, outlines, headings, etc.) or verbal instruction given in the fields of math, science, or reading. The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of advance organizers on student achievement in writing as illustrated by vocabulary usage and sentence structure. The study will project that no significant difference in achievement will be noted between students exposed to advance organizers and those not exposed. The study will establish three writing groups whose work on three assignments will be evaluated using the Fry Readability Graph. The data received will be analyzed, a conclusion reached, and recommendations given.

ENDNOTES

[1]E. L. Boyer. <u>High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America</u>. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1983, p.85.

[2]C. H. Clark and T. W. Bean. "Improving Advance Organizer Research: Persistent Problems and Future Directions." <u>Reading World</u>, October 1982, Vol. 22, No. 1, p.3.

[3]David P. Ausubel. "In Defence of Advance Organizers: A Reply to the Critics." <u>Review of Educational Research</u>, Spring 1978, Vol.48, No.2, p.252.

[4]David P. Ausubel. "The Use of Advanced Organizers on the Learning and Retention of Meaningful Verbal Material." <u>Journal of Educational Psychology</u>, 1960, Vol.51, p.267.

[5]R. E. Mayer. "Twenty Years of Research on Advance Organizers: Assimiliation Theory Is Still the Best Predictor of Results." <u>Instructional Science</u>, 1979, Vol.8, p.162.

[6]C. H. Clark and T. W. Bean. p.2.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Although differing opinions exist concerning the effectiveness of

advance organizers, most researchers will agree the use of advance

organizers has some merit. Mayer contends that it is now possible to

suggest conditions for the use of advance organizers. He contends

advance organizers should be used "where the learner does not normally

possess or use an assimilation context for incoroporating the new material."[1]

Mayer stresses advance organizers can be most useful in helping a learner

when the material appears unorganized or unfamiliar or when the learner

lacks the related knowledge or ability to comprehend the knowledge.

Among the foremost critics of advance organizers, Barnes and Clawson de-

nounce the vagueness of any definition of advance organizers. Barnes and

Clawson also suggest the necessity of a long term study since most completed

studies do not show sufficient improvement in achievement to warrant the

use of advance organizers.[2] The critics of advance organizers do not

doubt the validity of Ausubel's theory of subsumption;[3] what these critics

do question is the aspects of the research paradigms utilized by those

supporting this learning theory. Research has not been accomplished with

adequately described scientific principles culminating in meaningful con-

clusions.[4] Lawton and Wanska state that Barnes and Clawson's implication

that the completed research has "not been adequately described according

to scientific principles in such a way as to permit meaningful conclusions

to be drawn" is an over generalization and generally unfair.[5] However

even Ausubel himself states that perhaps if advance organizers do have a

fault it lies not in the theory but in the failure of those conducting

research "to adhere to the explicit operational criteria of what an

organizer is and in part to various methodological deficiencies in research

design."[6] The study of Luiten, Ames and Ackerson postulates that advance

organizers do have a small but positive effect on both learning and

retention.[7] Chaudhari and Buddhisagar suggest that presentation of

advanced organizers helps in the processing and retaining of information

read.[8] Cook implies advance organizers can be of partial use as summary

information depending upon where and how they are utilized.[9] The ability

of the subjects also affects the utility of advanced organizers. Tyler,

Kinnucan, and Delaney found poor readers required the use of certain types

of advance organizers while the type of advance organizers used by good

readers was immaterial.[10] Brooks, Spurlin, Dansereau, and Holley found

that embedded and intact headings facilitate the retention of material.

More importantly, the headings were even more effective when the learner

was made aware of their purpose.[11] Wilhite established that questions

which direct a subject's attention to the material hierarchy facilitates

effective encoding in reading prose.[12] Finally, Beeson espouses the idea

that intellectual skills presented in the context of an anchor idea

demonstrate meaningful learning by the use of lateral transfer; however,

verbal instructions rate the lowest of the three tests of transfer thus

indicating the need for research in this area. Almost all research com-

pleted in the area of advance organizers pertains to the use of summaries,

outlines, and/or headings in the subject areas of reading, math, general

science, or computer science. None of the literature available examines

the idea of utilizing advance organizers to facilitate the process of

writing; thus, it is necessary that research be accomplished in this area.

ENDNOTES

[1]R. E. Mayer, "Twenty Years of Research on Advance Organizers: Assimilation Theory Is Still the Best Predictor of Results." Instructional Science, 1979, Vol. 8, p.161.

[2]B. R. Barnes and E. U. Clawson. "Do Advance Organizers Facilitate Learning? Recommendations for Further Research Based on an Analysis of 32 Studies." Review of Educational Research, Fall 1975, Vol. 45, No. 4, P.638.

[3]David P. Ausubel, The Psychology of Meaningful Verbal Learning: An Introduction to School Learning. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1963, p. 24.

[4]B. R. Barnes and E. U. Clawson, p. 638.

[5]J. T. Lawton and S. K. Wanska. "Advance Organizers as a Teaching Strategy: A Reply to Barnes and Clawson." Review of Educational Research, Winter 1977, Vol. 47, No. 1, p. 233.

[6]D. P. Ausubel, "In Defense of Advance Organizers: A Reply to the Critics." Review of Educational Research, Spring 1978, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 255.

[7]J. Luiten and G. Ackerson. "A Meta-analysis of the Effects of Advance Organizers on Learning and Retention." American Educational Research Journal, Summer 1980, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 211-218.

[8]U. S. Chaudhari and M. Buddhisagar. "Educational Technology Research: Whole Versus Part Presentation of Advance Organizers in Text in Relation to Intelligence." Educational Technology, June 1981, Vol. 21, No. 6, pp. 32-35.

[9]N. M. Cook. "Summaries: Further Issues and Data. "Educational Review, 1981, Vol. 33, No. 3, p. 215.

[10]S. W. Tyler, H. Delaney and M. Kinnucan. "Specifying the Nature of Reading Ability Differences and Advance Organizer Effects." Journal of Educational Psychology, 1983, Vol. 75, No. 3, pp. 359-373.

[11]L. W. Brooks, J. E. Spurlin, D. F. Dansereau, and C. D. Holley. "Effects of Headings on Text Processing." Journal of Educational Psychology, 1983, Vol. 75, No. 2, pp. 292-302.

[12]S. C. Wilhite. "Prepassage Questions: The Influence of Structural Importance." _Journal of Educational Psychology_, 1983, Vol. 75, No. 2, pp. 234-244.

[13]G. W. Beeson. "Influence of Knowledge Context on the Learning of Intellectual Skills." _American Educational Research Journal_, Fall 1981, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 363-379.

CHAPTER III

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

Noting the importance of communicating through writing and reviewing the literature concerning the use of advance organizers to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, the researcher determined to investigate the effectiveness of advance organizer theory as an enhancer to better writing. It was determined there would be no significant differene in achievement shown by increased vocabulary usage and the utilization of more complex sentence structure by students exposed to advance organizers as compared to students not exposed to advance organizers.

CHAPTER IV

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Subjects

The sample for this investigation was comprised of three level three grammar classes consisting of sixty-six (66) sophomore status students of above average ability as determined by previous testing or performance determined by recorded academic grades and teacher recommendation. The subjects were broken into three intact groups: group a consisting of twenty students, group B consisting of twenty-two students, and group C consisting of twenty-four students.

Instrument

Fry's readability Graph, which has been assessed for validity, was used as a measuring device. Using this device, students or the researcher followed the procedure of: (1) count off a one hundred word passage, (2) determine the number of syllables in the passage, (3) count the number of sentences in the passage, (4) determine the average length of sentences and the number of syllables per sentence, and (5) find the position on the Fry graph to determine the approximate reading level.[1] If micro-computers are available they can be programmed to utilize the Fog Index which will facilitate determining the grade level at which a given work has been written.[2] All students were assigned to complete three paragraphs: a multiple example paragraph, an expository paragraph, and a data paragraph.

Design

A quasi-experimental group control was utilized. A pre-writing
assignment (multiple example paragraph) was used to assess initial
equivalence. Two post-writing assignments were administered after treat-
ments. This design was selected because attempts were made to control
all threats with the exception of randomization. Intact groups from
the five (5) like courses offered by the school were randomly selected
for inclusion in the study.

Procedure

All students received the handout prepared by the Ponca City High
School English Department designating items deemed important to consider
when writing an essay or paragraph. These handouts were discussed. Then
all groups received the assignment to write a multiple example paragraph.
After all students had written their first paragraph, those students in
experiment group A were presented a lecture concerning readability levels
and were then assigned to apply the readability formula to their personal
writing to determine at what grade level they were writing. Students
in experimental group B were presented a lecture concerning readability
levels but were not assigned to apply the readability formula to their
personal writing. Students in the control group C received only the usual
instructions given to students writing a paragraph. All students in the
three groups were assigned the second paragraph (expository paragraph).
Upon completion of the assignment, group A again applied the formula to
their work; while group B received a lecture about determining readability
levels of wring, and group C recieved no unusual treatment. The same
procedure was followed for the third paragraph assignment (data paragraph).
Data was then collected and analyzed to help form a conclusion.

ENDNOTES

¹Lou E. Burmeister. <u>Reading Strategies for Middle and Secondary School Teachers</u>. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1978, p. 33.

²Baird R. Shuman. "A Dozen Ways for English Teachers to Use Micro-computers." <u>English Journal</u>, October 1985, Vol. 74, No. 6, p. 38.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Once the groups had completed the three (3) writing assignments,
the data could be collected and evaluated. Group A was the only group
to record any significant writing achievement as determined by vocabulary
usage and utilization of a more complex sentence structure from the use
of the advance organizer and its application. Group A had an average
increase of 1.00 as a group after the results of the two treatments were
compared to the initial equivalence instrument. Group B who received
treatments but were not required to apply the procedure experienced a
loss of 1.06 in writing achievement. Group C who received no unusual
treatment experienced a loss of .75. Eleven students in group A, three
in group B, and seven in group C achieved gains in the levels of writing.
In group A six students experienced drops in the writing levels while
seventeen in group B and twelve students in group C also experienced
drops in their writing levels. Three students in group A, two students in
group B and five students in group C all remained at their initial writing
levels showing no improvement or loss.

TABLE I

GROUP A

STUDENT	COMPOSITION 1 WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		COMPOSITION 2 WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		COMPOSITION 3 WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		TOTALS WRITING/GAIN LEVEL	OR LOSS
1	10	B	10	B+	9	B	9.5	-.5
2	11	B-	7	C+	7	B-	7.0	-4.0
3	9	B-	8	B-	7	C+	7.5	-1.5
4	9	C+	6	B	11	B	8.5	-.5
5	8	B+	8	B+	9	B+	8.5	+.5
6	11	B	11	B	13	B	12.0	+1.0
7	11	B	13	B+	11	B+	12.0	+1.0
8	11	C+	8	C-	12	B-	10.0	-1.0
9	8	C+	10	B	11	B	10.5	+1.5
10	11	B	12	C+	16	B+	14.0	+3.0
11	8	C+	7	C+	13	C+	10.0	+2.0
12	8	C+	8	C+	8	B-	8.0	0.0
13	9	C+	9	B	10	B-	9.5	+.5
14	14	B	15	B	12	B+	13.5	-.5
15	7	B	4	C+	14	B-	9.0	+2.0
16	8	B	9	B-	7	B	8.0	0.0
17	9	B+	11	B+	13	B+	12.0	+3.0
18	8	C+	9	C+	9	B-	9.0	+1.0
19	11	B+	11	C+	11	B	11.0	0.0
20	9	A-	8	B	13	B+	10.5	+1.5
	9	B-	9.20	B-	10.8	B	10.0	+1.0

TABLE II

GROUP B

STUDENT	COMPOSITION 1 WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		COMPOSITION 2 WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		COMPOSITION 3 WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		TOTALS WRITING/GAIN LEVEL OR LOSS	
1	8	C+	6	B-	9	B	7.5	-.5
2	5	C-	10	C+	13	B	11.5	+6.5
3	9	B-	8	B+	14	A-	11.0	+2.0
4	10	C+	10	C-	9	A-	9.5	-.5
5	9	C+	9	B	16	B	12.5	+3.5
6	7	D	7	C+	7	B-	7.0	0.0
7	7	B	5	C+	7	A-	6.0	-1.0
8	8	D-	7	C-	6	B	6.5	-1.5
9	8	C-	5	C	6	C+	5.5	-2.5
10	7	C-	4	D	7	C+	5.5	-1.5
11	9	C-	5	C-	5	D-	5.0	-4.0
12	9	B-	5	C	5	C	5.0	-4.0
13	8	C-	6	C-	8	D+	7.0	-1.0
14	8	D	11	D	5	B	8.0	0.0
15	8	B-	7	B	8	B+	7.5	-.5
16	12	B-	9	A-.	12	A-	10.5	-1.5
17	10	B-	7	B-	12	A-	9.5	-.5
18	10	C-	5	D	10	B	7.5	-2.5
19	9	C+	6	D	8	B	7.0	-2.0
20	9	C-	5	D	10	F	7.5	-1.5
21	9	C-	5	C-	8	C+	6.5	-2.5
22	11	C	5	B	11	C+	8.0	-3.0
	8.6	C	6.68	B-	8.4	B-	7.54	-1.06

TABLE III

GROUP C

STUDENT	COMPOSITION 1		COMPOSITION 2		COMPOSITION 3		TOTALS	
	WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		WRITING/GRADE LEVEL		WRITING/ LEVEL	GAIN OR LOSS
1	12	D	5	C	7	B+	6.0	-6.0
2	5	C-	5	C-	5	B-	5.0	0.0
3	12	C	9	B	13	A-	11.0	-1.0
4	5	D	8	C+	9	B	8.5	+3.5
5	10	B-	6	C-	7	C+	6.5	-3.5
6	5	C-	5	C+	10	B+	7.5	+2.5
7	8	D	5	C-	6	B+	5.5	-2.5
8	11	C+	10	C+	11	D-	10.5	-.5
9	9	B-	9	B-	10	A-	9.5	+.5
10	5	C-	5	C	8	D	6.5	+1.5
11	8	C	8	C+	6	C+	7.0	-1.0
12	8	C-	4	C	9	B	6.5	-1.5
13	9	B	8	C+	9	B+	8.5	-.5
14	9	C-	4	C+	9	B-	6.5	-2.5
15	9	C	10	C	8	A-	9.0	0.0
16	8	C+	6	C	10	C	8.0	0.0
17	7	C	5	C+	7	C+	6.0	-1.0
18	7	C+	5	C-	7	C+	6.0	-1.0
19	11	B	10	B+	14	A	12.0	+1.0
20	9	A-	7	B	11	A-	9.0	0.0
21	8	D	5	C	13	B	9.0	+1.0
22	12	C-	4	C+	8	D-	6.0	-6.0
23	10	C	10	C+	10	C	10.0	0.0
24	5	C+	6	B	8	B-	7.0	+2.0
	8.4	C	6.4	C+	8.9	B-	7.65	-.75

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research confirms Barnes and Clawson's critique of lack of

sufficient improvement in achievement to warrant the use of advance

organizers. Group B, the group to receive only advance organizers

information suffered the most serious losses of any of the groups. The

reason for this could be as Beeson suggests that verbal instructions are

the least effective of all advance organizers and group B received only

verbal instructions. The study also confirms the opinions of Brooks,

Spurlin, Dansereau, and Holley that advance organizers are more effective

when the group is aware of the purpose of the advance organizers. By

applying the procedure, group A was made more aware of the purpose of

the advance organizer; consequently, this group showed the only significant

improvement of any of the groups. The type of paragraph seemed to have a

great impact on the levels of writing students were able to achieve.

On the initial equivalence multiple example paragraph, group A scored an

average of 9.00, group B scored an 8.60, and group C scored an 8.4.

After the first treatment and writing paragraph two, the expository

paragraph, all groups experienced a decline in the writing levels: group

A declined by .20, group B declined by 1.92 and group C declined by 2.00.

After the second treatment and writing the third paragraph, the data

paragraph, students in all groups illustrated some improvement: group A

increased 1.80, group B experienced a .20 decrease overall but that was

an increase of 1.72 over paragraph two, which group C increased .5.

The decline of writing levels after the first treatment may have been due to the type of paragraph rather than the treatment itself. Further because the writing level was not always consistent with the grades received many students expressed the opinion that the writing level was not a valid criteria upon which to base their writing improvement. This discrepancy in grades as related to vocabulary and sentence structure basically tells the composition teacher that these two areas are not necessarily of primary importance in improving composition skills.

The simple verbal use of advance organizers did not produce significant improvement but actually produced lower achievements than no organizers at all. The incidence of improvement involving the use of advance organizers occurred when students were required to apply the advance organizers to this work, even then the type of paragraph had great impact on the significance of the advance organizers.

The question of whether or not an empirical study can be applied to effective composition skills arises. The old debate concerning objective and subjective grading was obvious. The graders were supposedly using the criteria of improved vocabulary usage and more structually advanced sentence construction to evaluate the students' writings. However, the mere improvement in vocabulary usage and sentence structure did not necessarily coincide with an improved grade. Before significant improvement can be achieved in the area of research concerning writing with the use of advance organizers, better criteria must be established for what constitutes effective writing. Only after better criteria are established could the possibility exist for effective research which may or may not include the use of advance organizers.
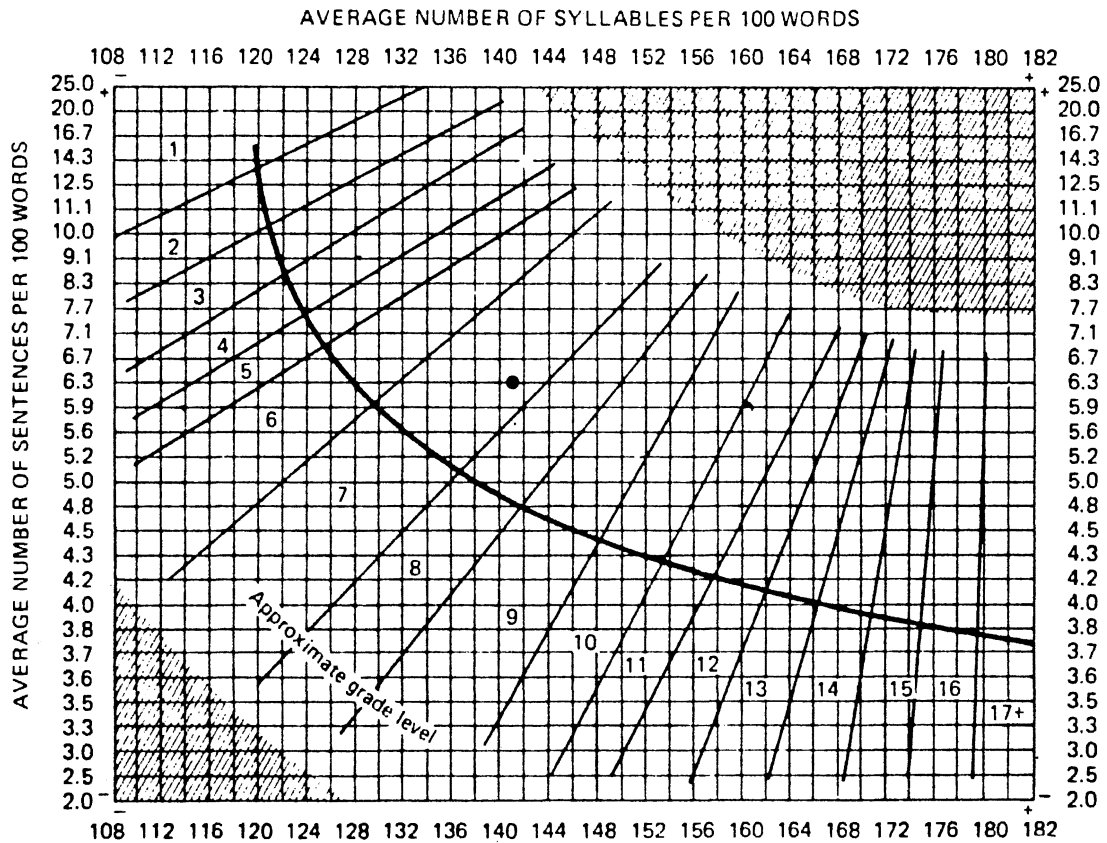
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    Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 75, No. 2 (1983), pp. 234-244.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

FRY'S READABILITY GRAPH[1]

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SYLLABLES PER 100 WORDS

108 112 116 120 124 128 132 136 140 144 148 152 156 160 164 168 172 176 180 182

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SENTENCES PER 100 WORDS

25.0
20.0
16.7
14.3
12.5
11.1
10.0
9.1
8.3
7.7
7.1
6.7
6.3
5.9
5.6
5.2
5.0
4.8
4.5
4.3
4.2
4.0
3.8
3.7
3.6
3.5
3.3
3.0
2.5
2.0

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17+

Approximate grade level

108 112 116 120 124 128 132 136 140 144 148 152 156 160 164 168 172 176 180 182

APPENDIX B

COMPOSITION PROGRESS CHART

COMPOSITION	DATE	NUMBER OF SENTENCES	NUMBER OF SYLLABLES PER SENTENCE	READING/ WRITING LEVEL	GRADE
1					
2					
3					

APPENDIX C

CHECKLIST FOR THEME[2]

UNITY

    1. Thesis statement and topic sentences explicitly stated? (Is the thesis statement the last sentence of the introduction? Are the topic sentences the first sentences of the paragraphs?)
    2. Topic sentences directly support thesis statement?
    3. All details directly support the topic sentences?

COHERENCE

    1. Transition devices used to connect topic sentences to thesis statement, to show relationship of paragraphs, and to connect details within paragraphs?
    2. Topics organized in some order (chronological, emphatic, spatial, logical)?
    3. Details arranged in some order?

DEVELOPMENT (support)

    1. Sufficient number of details in body paragraphs (150-200 words or 15-20 sentences)?
    2. Specific details in paragraphs?
    3. Each body paragraph clearly identifiable as a particular type of development?

SENTENCE SKILLS

THESIS STATEMENT

    1. Limited topic is subject of sentence?
    2. Makes an assertion about the limited topic in the main clause?
    3. Includes divisions of topic to be developed in body paragraphs?

INTRODUCTION

    1. Begins with an approach steop (lead-in) to announce the subject?
    2. Includes background necessary to understand the discussion?
    3. Ends on thesis statement?

CONCLUSION

    1. Does not introduce new ideas or topics?
    2. Does not contradict points developed in the paper?

3. Author comment is not subjective and/or emotional?
4. Thesis statement is not repeated verbatim?

TITLE

1. Reflects purpose, not just limited subject?
2. Is not a sentence?

APPENDIX D

MULTIPLE EXAMPLE PARAGRAPH[3]

Effective use of specific information is one important key to interesting, informative, and useful writing. Read the following paragraph:

"It's a man's world" is an old saying that just isn't true anymore. Nowadays, we constantly hear about women entering occupations that were once the exclusive preserve of men. Some women, having freed themselves of boring household tasks, refuse to become trapped again in the tedium of a typical "woman's job" in the business world. Others simply need the additional income often provided by a "man's job." Whatever the reason, the female influence is evident in many fields. Even some professional sports are not immune to the woman's touch. As the sex barriers fall, it seems more likely that the right "man" for the job may turn out to be a woman.

This paragraph is not bad, but it could be a lot better. What is needs is specific information (evidence) to clarify and back up the broad assertions it contains. A word of warning: In the actual writing of a composition, it isn't always necessary to provide specific examples for literally everything that is mentioned. Some things can safely be taken for granted. Besides, sentences and paragraphs that are "overloaded" with detail may become awkward and difficult to read. There is a factor of judgment and taste involved here, as in every other aspect of good writing. But the fact is that writing by high school students is far more likely to suffer from a lack of specific detail than from too much of it.

Read the following student paragraph:

"The modern American takes for granted electrical appliances that were unheard of at the turn of the century. These appliances really help to make life a pleasure for everyone. They bring comfort, and they often bring enjoyment. Most of us today don't even think of them as luxuries."

The term electrical appliances is mentioned in the first sentence, but instead of developing this topic with specific examples, the writer merely rephrases his ideas three times. The writer is padding, rather than clarifying. In developing the topic sentence, which expresses the main idea of the paragraph, the writer should try to give specific details to make the presentation clearer, more vivid, and interesting. General statements are sometimes necessary, but by themselves they tend to be vague and may even be confusing. You can often strengthen a paragraph by providing specific examples of the subject under discussion. Consider the revision of the above paragraph:

"The modern American takes for granted electrical appliances that were

unheard of at the turn of the century. In the morning, before he has even started thinking, his radio-alarm has gently awakened him. His first reaction my be to turn off the electric blanket that has warmed him during the night. In the kitchen the automatic coffee maker is perking. Within seconds of the man's arrival in the kitchen, the toaster has discharged two slices browned exactly to his liking. As he sips his coffee, the radio brings him more music or news."

The revision is clearer and more informative than the original because it uses at least four specific examples of electrical appliances: the radio-alarm, the electric blanket, the coffee maker, and the toaster.

In our daily conversations, we often provide examples - that is, details, particulars, specific instances - to explain statements that we make. Here are several statements and supporting examples:

"The A&P was crowded today. There were at least four carts waiting at each of the checkout lines and it took me forty-five minutes to get through a line."

"The corduroy shirt I bought at a sale is poorly made. When I washed it, the colors began to fade, one button cracked and another fell off, a shoulder seam opened and the sleeves shrunk almost wo inches."

"My son, Peter, is unreliable. If I depend on him to turn off a pot of beans in ten minutes, the family is likely to eat burned beans. If I ask him to turn off the thermostat before he goes to bed, the heat is likely to stay on all night."

ASSIGNMENT:

WRITE A PARAGRAPH ABOUT ONE QUALITY OF A PERSON YOU KNOW WELL, BELOW IS A LIST OF DESCRIPTIVE WORDS THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO PEOPLE. THEY ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS: YOU MAY WRITE ABOUT ANY OTHER SPECIFIC QUALITY. YOUR PARAGRAPH SHOULD FOLLOW ALL THE GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE PARAGRAPHS.

INDEPENDENT
BAD TEMPERED
STUBBORN
PERSISTENT
FLIRTATIOUS
SHY
RESPONSIBLE
AGGRESSIVE
STINGY
COURAGEOUS
DECEITFUL
LAZY
HONEST
JEALOUS
AMBITIOUS
MODEST
BIGOTED
SARCASTIC

PATIENT
EGOTISTICAL
ARGUMENTATIVE
SPINELESS
SOFT HEARTED
GOOD HUMORED
ENERGETIC

APPENDIX E

EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPH[4]

An expository paragraph can be a description of how to complete a process. Often this description will be in the form of a series of steps. The following is an example of a good expository paragraph:

MAKING AN ICE-CREAM SODA

When I worked behind a soda fountain during my high school days, I loved to make ice-cream sodas. Whenever someone ordered one, my first step was to reach behind me with my right hand and grab by the base a tall, heavy, ice-cream soda glass. Then, smoothly, I would twirl the glass upright as I spun over to where the syrups were kept. I would poise my left hand above the syrup, ready to squirt two inches of thick strawberry or chocolate flavoring into the bottom of the glass as soon as it arrived. Next, I would move a step down the aisle to where the ice cream was kept. There I would scoop, very neatly, two round balls of vanilla ice cream and drop them into the bottom of the glass. The ice cream was as hard as a rock to dip, and this was the one drawback of making ice-cream sodas. As the ice cream sank into the syrup, causing fingerpaint swirls of color to appear, I would insert a long-handled spoon with a small ladle. I would briefly stir this mixture with the spoon, and then squirt sletzer into the glass, taking care to aim directly onto the ice cream. Last of all, I would add a cherry as a finishing touch and serve the soda on a placemat with a small napkin alongside. Sometimes the customer would smile, reinforcing the pleasure I felt in my creation.

ASSIGNMENT:

USING THE CRITERIA FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE PARAGRAPH, YOU ARE TO SELECT A TOPIC AND COMPLETE AN EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPH. THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF ACTIVITIES ABOUT WHICH YOU MAY SELECT TO WRITE. THESE ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS: YOU MAY WRITE ABOUT ANY OTHER PROCESS YOU WISH FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES FOR TOPICS IN THIS CLASS.

WASH DISHES	PACK A SUITCASE
CHANGE A CAR OR BIKE TIRE	CLEAN A ROOM
PLAN A PARTY	PUMP YOUR OWN GAS
REPAIR A BROKEN WINDOW	REMOVE A SPLINTER
MAKE AN OMELET	WASH A CAR
DO THE LAUNDRY	TAKE A PULSE
PLANT SOMETHING	PLAY A SIMPLE GAME

APPENDIX F

DATA PARAGRAPH[5]

Read the paragraph below and then answer the questions that follow:

   If you thought that the United States was becoming more crowded in
the last decade or so, you were right. In the ten-year period between
1960 and 1970, our population swelled to more than 205 million people -
an increase of about 24 million. The average increase per square mile was
seven inhabitants. California's population increased most dramatically,
jumping from 15,700,000 to nearly 20,000,000. Forty-seven states became
more populous. In the decade of the 1960's virtually every area in the
United States became more densely populated.

1. Write the topic sentence of the above paragraph.
2. List any three statistics provided in the paragraph.
3. What is the function of the last sentence?

   In writing about certain types of subjects, you will have to provide
numerical details or statistics. Exact figures are needed in such cases
to support the main idea, to clarify your meaning and perhaps to prove a
point that you are advancing.

   The first and most important consideration in using numbers is accuracy.
If you are gathering figures on population from a government report, for
example, make sure that you pick up the numbers correctly, without trans-
posing figures or dropping a zero here and there. Also, it is your job
to present the figures in an orderly fashion that will be reasonably easy
to read and understand. A paragraph that drowns the reader in a flood of
statistics cannot be effective.

   Read the following paragraph, noting carefully how exact figures are
used:

   If you're looking for foods rich in vitamins and minerals, you'll
have a hard time finding them on supermarket shelves, according to some
scientists and nutrition experts. Practically every food we eat has lost
much of its original vitamin and mineral content in processing. A typical
3 1/2 ounce apple, for example, usually contains about 90 International Units
of Vitamin A. That same apple, cooked and jarred as applesauce, has only
about 30 units; strained for baby food, it has only 20 units. A 3 1/2
ounce serving of brown rice usually contains 303 milligrams of phosphorus.
Removing the bran and ching the food into fluffy white rice leaves only
136 milligrams; puffy the rice further reduces the phosophorus content
to only 40 milligrams. Right off the bush, 3 1/2 ounces of blueberries
contains about 280 International Units of Vitamin A, but canning the berries

in a heavy syrup leaves them only 40 units. Since most of what we eat
in the modern world has been processed to some degree scientists warn
that we may be unwittingly filling outselves with vitamin-deficient food-
stuffs.

1. Write the topic sentence of the paragraph.
2. Explain why it is necessary to make extensive use of numbers in this
    paragraph.
3. Three different foods are discussed in this paragraph. Select two
    of them and summarize what happens to the vitamin and mineral content
    when the foods are processed.
4. What is the function of the last sentence of the paragraph?

ASSIGNMENT:

FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE PARAGRAPH SELECT A
TOPIC THAT WILL EASILY LEND ITSELF TO THE USE OF NUMERICAL DETAILS OR
STATISTICS AND WRITE A GOOD DATA PARAGRAPH.

ENDNOTES

[1]Lou E. Burmeister. Reading Strategies for Middle and Secondary School Teachers. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1978, p. 37.

[2]"Checklist for Theme." English Department, Ponca City High School, Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1985.

[3]J. Langan. English Skills, first edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977.

[4]J. Langan. English Skills, second edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981.

[5]J. Langan. English Skills, first edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977.

VITA 2

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