

# STRUCTURE

## THE WORD >

## STRUCTURE REFERS TO

**T**he sequence of main sections or sub-topics, and the turning points between them. The sections should be perceptible and follow a logical order, and the links in that order should be apparent to the reader (but not heavy-handed: see “stitching”). But it should also be a progressive order—there should have a continuous direction of development or complication, not be simply a list or a series of restatements of or takes on the thesis (“Macbeth is ambitious: he’s ambitious here; and he’s ambitious here; and he’s ambitions here, too; thus, Macbeth is ambitious”) or list of elements found in the text. And the order should be supple enough to allow the writer to explore the topic, not just hammer home a thesis. (If the essay is complex or long, its structure may be briefly announced or hinted at after the thesis, in a road-map or plan sentence—or even in the thesis statement itself, if you’re clever enough.)

Gordon Harvey, “A Brief Guide to the Elements of the Academic Essay”

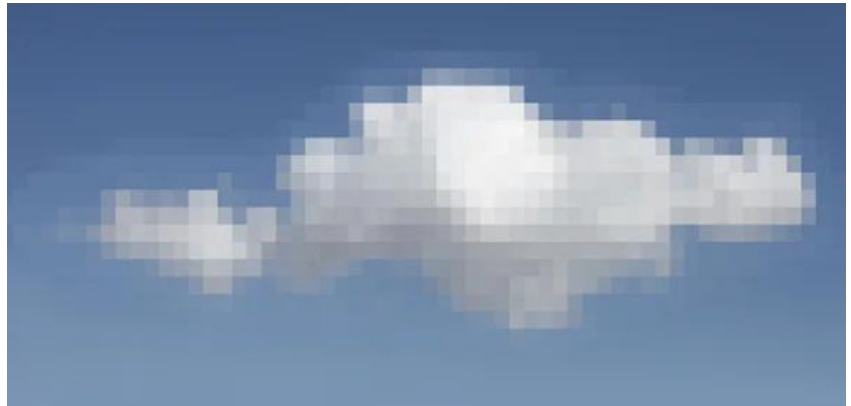
## PRACTICE >

## PUZZLING PARAGRAPHS

**Y**ou will be given a short article, published recently in *Scientific American*. This article will be unlike any you’ve encountered before—it will be scrambled into individual paragraphs. \*Gasp\* Your job is to

attempt to reassemble the article. You can write the order you’ve put it in below. Once you’ve reassembled the article discuss the following questions with your group:

1. What is the purpose of the article?
2. What cues did you look for in order to establish a logical order for the article?
3. How is the article organized? In other words, what is the logical progression of ideas? (Think big picture here).
4. What is the function of each paragraph? (Think smaller picture here).



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## YOUR ORDER: ACTUAL ORDER:

## PRACTICE 2.0 >

## SLICE N’ DICE

**T**oday, you completed Pre-Draft 1.4 (Lens Essay Outline). Let’s test the logic of your outline by cutting it up and seeing if a partner can reassemble it in the correct order.

Here’s the plan:

1. Cut up your outline so that you have two piles. One pile should have your topic sentences and the other pile should have your thesis and motive. (For this activity, we’ll leave your evidence and analysis alone.)
2. Switch piles with a partner and indicate which one is your thesis and motive.
3. Based on your thesis and motive, your partner should attempt to put the topic sentences in the correct sequence.

# STITCHING

## THE WORD >

## STITCHING REFERS TO

**W**ords that tie together the parts of an argument, most commonly (a) by using transition (linking or turning) words as signposts to indicate how a new section, paragraph, or sentence follows from the one immediately previous; but also (b) by recollection of an earlier idea or part of the essay, referring back to it either by explicit statement or by echoing key words or resonant phrases quoted or stated earlier. The repeating of key or thesis concepts is especially helpful at points of transition from one section to another, to show how the new section fits in.

Gordon Harvey, "A Brief Guide to the Elements of the Academic Essay"



## TIPS N TRICKS >

## EFFECTIVE BODY PARAGRAPHS

**A** paragraph is a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic or claim. In general, a body paragraph should include:

- **Topic Sentence:** this should summarize what's being argued in the paragraph. In other words, a reader should be able to tell from the first sentence what will be discussed in the paragraph.
- **Evidence:** Quotations, examples, data, etc. should be cited as evidence in support of your paragraph's central claim.

In order to avoid generalization, you should strive to use evidence that is as specific as possible. Evidence should be preceded by an introduction to its source and relevance and followed by analysis of its significance to your overall argument.

- **Analysis:** Evidence alone does not make your argument for you. Evidence requires analysis to make it relevant to an argument. Analyzing effectively requires showing or explaining how the evidence you have cited actually supports the larger claims your essay is making, both on the paragraph level and the thesis level. Because analytical sections are the places where your essay does real argumentative work, they should constitute the bulk of your paragraph (and essay).
- **Relevance:** The last sentence of the paragraph should tie back to the thesis to signal a clear progression of the argument.

## PRACTICE >

## HUH?: MAKE IT MAKE SENSE

**B**ased on the given claim and evidence, develop a full paragraph (6-7 sentences) that exhaustively links them. **Use at least two** stitching words or phrases from the handout.

- **Claim:** Younger Americans -- Millennials and adults in Generation Z -- are more concerned with counteracting climate change than older adults.
- **Evidence:** According to Pew Research, 81% of Millennials and 76% of Generation Z adults believe that the U.S. should prioritize alternative energy development, while 63% of Baby Boomers and older hold that perspective.

## YOUR PARAGRAPH