



DBB 308 WRITING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

1

Body Paragraphs

- ▶ **Body paragraphs are the place to develop your topic and prove your points.** You should organize body paragraphs according to some sort of pattern, such as chronological order or comparison/contrast.
- ▶ **A basic pattern for essays is logical division of ideas.** In this pattern, you divide your topic into subtopics and then discuss each subtopic in a separate paragraph.
- ▶ **Logical division is an appropriate pattern for explaining causes, reasons, types, lands, qualities, methods, advantages, and disadvantages.**

ECONOMICS	Explain the three causes of inflation.
AGRICULTURE/LANDSCAPE DESIGN	Describe the basic types of soils and the additives needed to prepare each type for planting.
U.S. HISTORY	Discuss the causes of the U.S. Civil War.
BUSINESS	Explain the three main forms of business organization.
HEALTH SCIENCES	Describe the various classes of drugs used to treat depression.

Three Keys

Here are three keys to organizing a logical division essay.

1. Divide your topic into subtopics, and then discuss each subtopic in a separate paragraph.
2. Write a thesis statement that indicates logical division.
3. Use transitions between paragraphs to guide your reader from one subtopic to the next.

- ▶ **The thesis statement of a logical division essay often indicates the number of subtopics:**
Native Americans have made valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture in four main areas.
Inflation has three causes.
- ▶ **The thesis statement may even name the specific subtopics:**
 - a. Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture, particularly in the areas of language, art, food, and government.
 - b. Inflation has three causes: excessive government spending, unrestrained consumer borrowing, and an increase in the supply of paper money

- ▶ Paired conjunctions (**both ... and, not only ... but also**) are an especially effective way to list two subtopics:
 - c. Young people in my culture have less freedom than young people in the United States **not only** in their choice of lifestyle **but also** in their choice of careers.
 - d. Puppies, like children, need **both** love **and** discipline to become responsible members of society.

- ▶ **A colon (:)** is often useful before lists of two, three, or more subtopics in a thesis statement:
 - e. Young people in my culture have less freedom than young people in the United States in **three areas: where they live, whom they marry, and what their job is.**
 - f. The Father of Psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, believed that the human mind had **three separate parts: the id, the ego, and the superego.**

A. Check (✓) the thesis statements that suggest logical division as a method of organization.

- 1. Teenagers demonstrate their independence in several ways.
- 2. My eighteenth birthday was the most memorable day in my life so far.
- 3. On their eighteenth birthdays, U.S. citizens receive two important rights/responsibilities: They can vote, and they can sign legal contracts.
- 4. In most occupations, women are still unequal to men in three areas: salary, power, and status.
- 5. Living in a dormitory offers several advantages to first-year students.
- 6. Photosynthesis is the process by which plants manufacture their own food.
- 7. A college degree in international business requires (1) a knowledge of business procedures and (2) a knowledge of cultural differences.
- 8. A computer is both faster and more accurate than a human.
- 9. Giving a surprise birthday party requires careful planning.
- 10. Being an only child has both advantages and disadvantages.

C. Complete the following thesis statements by adding subtopics to them. Be sure to check your sentences for parallel form.

1. A computer is necessary for college students for three reasons: _____

2. Students have a difficult time taking notes in class due to _____

3. Successful politicians have the following qualities: _____

4. A generation gap¹ exists in my home because of _____

5. To survive a major disaster such as an earthquake requires _____

6. My two sisters are as different as day and night not only in _____
_____ but also in _____

► A **thesis** is the most important sentence in your essay, so write it with special thought and care. Avoid these common problems:

► **Problem 1: The thesis is too general.**



TOO GENERAL	A college education is a good investment.
IMPROVED	A college education is a good investment for four reasons.
TOO GENERAL	Lasers are very useful.
IMPROVED	Lasers have several applications in industry and medicine.

- **Problem 2: The thesis makes a simple announcement.**

ANNOUNCEMENT	I am going to write about sports injuries.
IMPROVED	Avoid sports injuries by taking a few simple precautions.

- **Problem 3: The thesis states an obvious fact.**

	Problem 3: The thesis states an obvious fact.
OBVIOUS FACT	The Internet is a communication superhighway.
IMPROVED	The explosion of the Internet has had both positive and negative consequences.

- ▶ Linking paragraphs with transitions helps your reader see how the subtopics are related. Link one paragraph to the next **by adding a transition** to the topic sentence of the second paragraph. This transition may be a single word, a phrase, or a dependent clause that repeats or summarizes the main idea in the preceding paragraph.

Transition Signals for Logical Division of Ideas

Transition signals for logical division essays include many that you may already know.

Transition Words and Phrases	
<p>first, first of all, second, third, etc. next, last, finally also, in addition, moreover, furthermore</p>	<p>First, excessive government spending can lead to inflation.</p> <p>In addition, unrestrained consumer borrowing can cause inflationary tendencies.</p> <p>Finally, an increase in the supply of paper money gives rise to inflation.</p>
Coordinators	
<p>and both . . . and not only . . . but also</p>	<p>Both an increase in the supply of paper money and unrestrained consumer borrowing can cause inflationary tendencies.</p> <p>To lose weight, one must not only exercise regularly but also eat wisely.</p>
Others	
<p>the first <i>cause, reason, factor</i>, etc. the/a second <i>problem, result, advantage</i>, etc. one <i>problem, reason, important factor</i>, etc. another <i>way, reason, disadvantage</i>, etc. an additional <i>problem, result</i>, etc. in addition to <i>math and science</i>, . . .</p>	<p>A second cause is an increase in the supply of paper money.</p> <p>Regular exercise is one way to get fit and lose weight.</p> <p>In addition to government spending, unrestrained consumer borrowing can cause inflationary tendencies.</p>

Paragraph Transitions

INTRODUCTORY
PARAGRAPH

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

BODY PARAGRAPH 3

BODY PARAGRAPH 4

Aggressive Drivers

The number of vehicles on freeways and streets is growing at an alarming rate. This increase of motor vehicles is creating hazardous conditions. Moreover, drivers are in such a rush to get to their destinations that many become angry or impatient with other motorists who are too slow or who are in their way. Aggressive drivers react foolishly toward others in several dangerous ways.

TRANSITION WORDS

One way an angry driver may react is to cut off¹ another motorist.
(+ supporting sentences) _____

TRANSITION WORDS

Another way is to tailgate² the other car. (+ supporting sentences)

TRANSITION PHRASE

In addition to cutting off and tailgating other cars, aggressive drivers often use rude language or gestures to show their anger. (+ supporting sentences) _____

TRANSITION CLAUSE

Although law enforcement authorities warn motorists against aggressive driving, the number who act out their angry impulses has not declined. (+ supporting sentences)

Icebergs: A Potential Source of Water

1 In countries where rainfall is very sparse,¹ scientists must constantly seek ways to increase supplies of water. One method being considered is the use of desalination plants, which would remove salt from seawater. Another method being considered is the towing of icebergs. According to this method, large icebergs from Antarctica would be wrapped in cloth or plastic, tied to powerful tugboats by strong ropes, and towed to the countries needing freshwater. While this plan may have some potential, there are certain practical problems that must be solved.

2 The first problem is the expense. According to estimates, it would cost between \$50 million and \$100 million to tow a single 100-million-ton iceberg from Antarctica to, for example, the coast of Saudi Arabia.

3 _____ is the possibility that the iceberg would melt en route.² No one knows if an iceberg could be effectively insulated for such a long journey. At the very least, there is the possibility that it would break up into smaller pieces, which would create still other problems.

4 _____ there is the danger that a huge block of ice floating off an arid³ coast could have unexpected environmental effects. The ice could drastically⁴ change the weather along the coast, and it would probably affect the fish population.

5 _____ the cost of providing freshwater from icebergs would be less than the cost of providing water by desalinization, according to most estimates. It would cost between 50 and 60 cents per cubic meter to get water from an iceberg, as opposed to the 80 cents per cubic meter it would cost to get the same amount by desalinization.

6 In conclusion, before icebergs can become a source of freshwater in the future, problems involving cost, overall practicality, and most important, environmental impact⁵ must be solved.

The Concluding Paragraph

- ▶ The **conclusion** is the **final paragraph** in an essay. It has **three purposes**.
 - 1. It signals the end of the essay.** To do so, begin your conclusion with a transition signal.
 - 2. It reminds your reader of your main points,** which you can do in one of two ways: You can
 - summarize your subtopics.
 - paraphrase your thesis.
 - 3. It leaves your reader with your final thoughts on the topic.** This is your opportunity to convey a strong, effective message that your reader will remember.

Here are techniques that you can use to write a memorable conclusion.

16

Make a prediction.

We have seen how the costs of attending college have been rising while, at the same time, sources of financial aid for students have been disappearing. If this trend continues, fewer and fewer families will be able to send their children through four years of college.

Suggest results or consequences.

To sum up, the costs of attending college are up and financial aid for students is down. Fewer and fewer future members of the workforce are able to educate themselves beyond high school. As a result, the nation will waste the intelligence, imagination, and energy of a large segment of the present college-age generation.

Suggest a solution, make a recommendation, or call for action.

It is clear that the U.S. system of higher education is in trouble. For many students, four years of college is no longer possible because of increasing costs and decreasing financial aid. To reverse this trend, we must demand that government increase its financial support of colleges and universities and restore financial aid programs. Our future depends on it.

Quote an authority on the topic.

In conclusion, costs are rising and financial aid is declining, with the result that many can no longer afford to go to college. If our nation is to prosper, increased government funding for education is essential, even if it requires higher taxes. As Horace Mann¹ argued in his *Fifth Annual Report*, a nation's economic wealth will increase through an educated public. It is therefore in the self-interest of business to pay the taxation for public education.

Essay 1

Controlling Stress

Introductory Paragraph

The busy schedules that most adults face every day have created a growing health problem in the modern world. Stress affects almost everyone, from the highly pressured executive to the busy homemaker or student. It can cause a variety of physical disorders ranging from headaches to stomach ulcers and even alcoholism. Stress, like the common cold, is a problem that cannot be cured; however, it can be controlled. A person can learn to control stress in four ways.

Topic Sentences for Body Paragraphs

- A. Set realistic goals.
- B. Take up a hobby.
- C. Exercise regularly.
- D. Maintain close relationships with family and friends.

Concluding Paragraph

Studying in Great Britain

Introductory Paragraph

People come from all over the world to the United Kingdom to pursue education. Some come for a year, while others may stay four years or longer to complete a program or earn a degree. Of course, the first few weeks in a new country are always a little stressful, but knowledge of a few British characteristics and customs can smooth the path for new arrivals.

Topic Sentences for Body Paragraphs

- A. British people are usually reserved.¹
- B. British people are very orderly, so waiting in a queue² for a bus or in a shop is a must.
- C. The weather is no joke—it rains a lot.
- D. Cars drive on the left side of the road, and stepping off a curb can be dangerous if you are not used to looking to the right instead of to the left.

Concluding Paragraph

Essay Outlining

- ▶ Because an essay is long, it is important to **organize and plan before you begin to write**. The best way to do this is to **make an outline**. An outline not only organizes your thoughts, but it also keeps you on track once you begin to write.
- ▶ A formal outline has a system of numbers and letters such as the following. In other fields of study, different systems are used.
- ▶ **Roman numerals I, II, and III** number the major sections of an essay (**introduction, body, conclusion**)
Capital letters A, B, C, D, and so on label the **body paragraphs**.
Numerals 1,2,3,4, and so on number the **subpoints** in each paragraph.
Small letters a, b, c, d, and so on label the **specific supporting details**.

I. Introduction

Thesis statement: Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture, particularly in the areas of language, art, food, and government.

II. Body

A. Native Americans left a permanent mark on the English language.

- 1. Names of places—cities, towns, rivers, and states
 - a. States: Delaware, Iowa, Illinois, Alabama
 - b. Cities: Chicago, Miami, Spokane
- 2. Names of animals and plants
 - a. Animals: chipmunk, moose, raccoon, skunk
 - b. Plants: tobacco, squash

B. _____

- 1. Navajo rugs
- 2. Silver and turquoise jewelry
- 3. _____
 - a. Pottery
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

C. _____

- 1. Farming techniques
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
- 2. _____
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

- D. _____
1. Iroquois—large tribe with many branches (“nations”)
 Needed to settle disputes among various branches
 2. Five nations formed League of Iroquois
 - a. _____
 - b. Acted together when dealing with outsiders
 3. After independence, 13 colonies adopted similar system.
 - a. Each colony (future state) was autonomous in managing own affairs.
 - b. _____

III. Conclusion

We can easily see from these few examples the extent of Native American influence on our language, our art forms, our eating habits, and our government.

Review

- ▶ These are the important points covered in this chapter.
- ▶ **Main Parts of an Essay**
 1. **An essay has three main parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.**
 - The **introductory paragraph** consists of two parts: a few general statements to attract your reader's attention and a thesis statement to state your main idea. A thesis statement may also name the major subdivisions of the topic, and it may indicate how you will organize the essay.
 - The **body of an essay** discusses the subtopics, one by one. It contains as many paragraphs as necessary to explain all subtopics.
 - The **concluding paragraph** reminds your reader of what you have said. In it, you summarize your main ideas or paraphrase your thesis. You may also make a final comment on the topic for your reader to remember.
 2. **Use the logical division of ideas pattern to divide a topic into separate paragraphs.**
 3. **Link paragraphs with transitions; that is, show how one paragraph is related to the next by using appropriate transition words, phrases, or clauses.**
 4. **Prepare an outline to organize your ideas before you begin to write.**