

Logical Puzzles

A man builds a house with four sides to it.
The house is rectangular in shape.
Each side has a southern exposure.
A bear walks by the house.
What color is the bear?

I have two coins which equal \$0.55.
One is not a nickel.
What are the two coins?

A woman gives a beggar 50 cents.
The woman is the beggar's sister, but the beggar is not the woman's brother.
How can this be?

Given that all whales are mammals:

- A. If Moby is a whale...
- B. If Mabel is not a whale...
- C. If Manfred is a mammal...
- D. If Myrtle is not a mammal...

Given that when Ned can't go, Valerie can go:

- A. If Ned can't go, Valerie...
- B. If Ned can go, Valerie...
- C. If Valerie can go, Ned...
- D. If Valerie can't go, Ned...

If all dogs love Biscos and Wags is not a dog, then Wags does not love Biscos. Logical or not?

If all dogs love Biscos and Wags does not love Biscos, then Wags is not a dog. Logical or not?

If I am guilty, then I was at the scene of the crime.

- A. Am I guilty if I was at the scene of the crime?
- B. Am I guilty if I was not at the scene of the crime?
- C. Was I at the scene of the crime if I am guilty?
- D. Was I at the scene of the crime if I am not guilty?

Topic Sentences That Lose Readers

If your topic sentence does not give you the direction you need, you will struggle to write informative supporting sentences.

Unacceptable: Joe Wilson is interesting. (lacks focus)

Avoid: *interesting, swell, terrific, terrific*, and words like *thing, factor, and situation*

Unacceptable: George Washington was born in 1732.
Sears Tower in Chicago is the tallest building in the world.
Newborn babies eat every three hours.

These sentences have no controlling idea. They contain statistics or historical facts.

Unacceptable: There are two routes north to Vancouver.

The subject of the sentence is *two routes north to Vancouver*, and the predicate is *there are*. The predicate makes no comment about the subject; it does not limit or narrow the focus of the subject.

Revised: The routes north to Vancouver offer two different kinds of scenery.

Exercise

Underline the controlling idea in each of the following sentences, and list below at least three supporting ideas you might use to develop a paragraph.

1. Homeowners should eliminate fire hazards from their homes.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

2. Growing numbers of adults are recognizing the value of taking part-time college courses.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Paragraph Pattern

Employees in both business and industry should receive pay raises to cope with the rising cost of necessities. Food, for example, costs almost twice as much as it did five to ten years ago. Not too long ago a family of four had an adequate supply of food for about forty dollars a week, but today the same items cost eighty dollars or more. For example, ground beef that had sold for one dollar a pound now costs two dollars a pound. A loaf of bread now costs two dollars instead of eighty to ninety cents. Unless wages match rising prices, people will have difficulty buying necessities such as food.

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1. Food, for example, costs about twice as much as it did five to ten years ago.
2. Not too long ago a family of four had an adequate supply of food for about forty dollars a week, but today the same items cost eighty dollars or more.
3. For example, ground beef that had sold for one dollar a pound now costs two dollars a pound.
3. A loaf of bread now costs two dollars instead of eighty to ninety cents.

Unless wages match rising prices, people will have difficulty buying necessities such as food.

Diving In (To Paragraphs)!

Whales are among the most intelligent mammals ever to inhabit the earth. Scientists studying whales rate their intelligence on a level with higher primates because of their complex group behavior. For example, the impressive mammals have been seen teaching and disciplining their young, helping wounded fellow whales, engaging in elaborate sexual foreplay, and playing in definite game-like patterns. Whales continually need to search for food in order to survive. As fish populations decrease because of over fishing, the whale's quest for food becomes more difficult.

Whales are among the most intelligent creatures ever to inhabit the earth. Scientists rate their intelligence on a level with higher primates. Whales exhibit complex group behavior. The whaling industry ignores the whales' intelligence and threatens them with extinction. Whales have been seen teaching and disciplining their young, helping wounded fellow whales, engaging in elaborate sexual foreplay, and playing in definite game-like patterns. Scientific evidence shows that whales have a high order of social organization. They are able to coordinate such complex group activities because of the apparently effective communication system of sonar clicks and pings.

Whales are among the most intelligent creatures ever to inhabit the earth. Scientists studying whales rate their intelligence on a level with higher primates because of their complex group behavior. For example, these huge and impressive mammals have been seen teaching and disciplining their young, helping wounded fellow whales, engaging in elaborate sexual foreplay, and playing in definite game-like patterns. They are able to coordinate complex group activities because of their apparently effective communications system of sonar clicks and pings. All in all, scientific evidence shows that whales have a higher order of social organization. Unfortunately, the whales' intelligence is ignored by an industry that threatens them with extinction.

Transitions

Many words can be used to indicate the path followed by a writer's thoughts. They are called "direction signals." None of these words represents an action (verb) or a thing (noun). Nor do any of them describe an action or a thing (adverb, adjective). Rather, they point out to the reader the logical connection between the ideas. They reveal the relationships between the writer's thoughts. Of course, by concentrating hard, a reader can figure out the relationships; but a good writer does not impose such a burden upon a reader. Here is a list of some common direction signals.

- if/then (then is often left out)
- although; while; whereas
- because; since
- however; but; yet; on the other hand
- therefore; so; thus; consequently
- moreover; furthermore; in addition; and; also
- to begin with; initially; at first
- first, second, third, finally; in conclusion
- for example; for instance
- in particular; to be specific
- in short; in brief
- in general; as a rule
- of course; to be sure; naturally

Read the following essay and underline all the direction signals. Be sure to pick out direction signals that point to the relationship between parts of a sentence, as well as those direction signals that show the connection between whole sentences.

We do not read textbooks for amusement. Therefore, we should not use the same method for studying them that we use when reading novels. For one thing, much of the pleasure of reading fiction comes from our continuing surprise as the story unfolds, but we are usually confused by surprises in textbooks. For another, a good piece of fiction keeps us interested, awake, actively involved. However, textbooks often put us to sleep because there is no "action." And finally, it is not very important if we miss or forget some of the details or events in a novel. But that is surely not the case when dealing with a textbook.

The following procedure is recommended for readers of textbooks. First, don't start reading on the first page of a chapter, intending to move straight along as when reading a novel. If the chapter has a preface or introduction, read that. If it doesn't, then go to the end of the chapter where you are almost certain to find a summary. Begin there, because it will give you a general idea of the whole chapter and will indicate what points are most important. Second, become an active reader. The textbook will not capture your attention and maintain it, as a good novel does. Therefore, you must supply the interest. Ask yourself questions that you believe the chapter can answer, getting your ideas from the summary. If you are looking for specific answers, your interest can be maintained. Third, use a pencil or pen at all times, either to underline significant dates, names, or terms, or to write the answers to your questions in the margin or in a notebook. In short, you must become an active reader, because the textbook will not reach out and excite you.

Many students want to read faster, but they worry that this might result in a loss of understanding. They seem to be caught in an impossible situation. On the one hand, they were told many times, "Read carefully, so you will not miss anything important." And "carefully" meant "slowly." On the other hand, their teachers assigned a great many pages to read, more than could be read "carefully" unless every free hour was spent studying. So they read faster, whatever was the loss in comprehension. However, as they learned to read faster, they were happily surprised to see that their understanding actually increased.