PATTERNS *Plus*

A SHORT PROSE READER WITH ARGUMENTATION

MARY LOU CONLIN

THIRD EDITION

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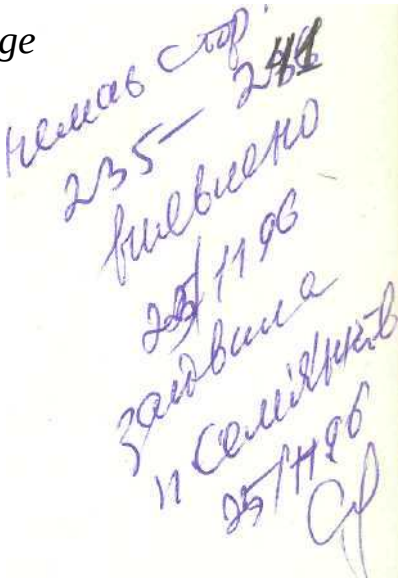
Mary Lou Conlin
CuyahogaCommunityCollege



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Preface

Since its first edition in 1985, *Patterns Plus: A Short Prose Reader with Argumentation* has offered students a variety of high-interest paragraphs and essays, as well as exceptionally complete and clear study apparatus. In this third edition, the aim is to preserve and enhance the strengths of past editions.

New to the Third Edition

Patterns Plus, Third Edition, strives to give students a variety of models for their own writing and the stimulus for lively classroom discussion. Features of the new edition include:

- 40 percent new selections. Selections by traditional favorites such as Russell Baker, Elizabeth Bishop, and E. B. White are joined by contemporary voices including Zora Neale Hurston, Annie Dillard, and Scott Russell Sanders.
- Chapter introductions have been completely revised and expanded to provide fuller treatment of the writing process.
- End-of-selection apparatus (Questions About the Reading, Questions About the Writer's Strategy, and Writing Assignments) have been thoroughly revised. Questions now progress from basic comprehension questions to questions with a more analytical focus.
- The Glossary has been expanded to include rhetorical and literary terms presented in the chapter introductions and in the end-of-selection apparatus. Glossary items are now boldfaced throughout the text for quick indentification.

An Overview of Patterns Plus

Chapter 1, an introductory chapter, describes the basics of paragraphs and essays. In Chapters 2 through 10, the various techniques in developing the main idea—*narration, description, examples, classification and division, comparison and contrast, process, cause and effect, definition,* and

argumentation and persuasion—are taken up in individual chapters. These techniques are the traditional *rhetorical modes*—the strategies for development that have proven effective in providing starting points for many student writers. Chapter 11, "Extra Readings," contains essays that illustrate the ways writers combine various modes of development within a single essay.

Professional and student selections in *Patterns Plus* were specifically chosen to build students' confidence by showing them that writing a short, effective composition is within their reach. Selections range from simple, accessible paragraphs to longer, more challenging essays. The student writing included throughout the text will make students aware of the level of skill they can realistically expect to acquire.

The breadth of reading selections also allows the instructor a wide choice of topics—from serious and timely discussions about the morality of handguns and hidden racism to light-hearted pieces that reveal human foibles. As a stimulus to discussion, two sides of a controversial subject are sometimes provided; students will probably respond quite differently to the definitions of success offered by Ellen Goodman and Michael Korda and to views on capital punishment by Coretta Scott King and Mike Royko.

Apparatus

Patterns Plus offers a full range of study apparatus:

- *Headnotes* provide context for each reading selection, helping students to understand and enjoy the selection more easily.
- *"Words to Know"* defines unfamiliar words and clarifies allusions that might be unfamiliar or regional.
- *Exercises* elicit various levels of thinking from the student:

  Questions About the Reading are designed to stimulate thinking about the selection's meaning— expressed and implied—and help students gain fuller understanding of the writer's message.

  Questions About the Writer's Strategies ask students to discuss the writer's *thesis statement, mode of development, point of view, figurative language*—or whatever strategy is particularly appropriate to a given selection—and thereby promote analytical thinking.

  Writing Assignments are related to the topic or mode of the reading selection and are designed to encourage the student to generate ideas and develop these ideas into paragraphs and essays.

- The *thematic table of contents* groups the readings in the text by themes such as "The Individual and Society," "Life in America," and "Careers."
- The *Glossary* provides definitions of all rhetorical and literary terms boldfaced throughout the chapter introductions and end-of-selection questions.

Support for Instuctors

The Instructor's Manual for *Patterns Plus* offers instructors a wide variety of supplemental materials:

- Part I supplies teaching suggestions that will allow flexibility in determining course content and stucture.
- Part II provides suggested answers to the reading comprehension and Writer's Strategies questions appearing at the end of each reading selection in Chapters 2 through 10.
- Part III offers suggested questions and answers for the Extra Readings that are included in Chapter 11.
- Part IV includes a list of the reading levels according to the Fry and. Dale-Chall readability formulas. Reading levels are arranged by chapter.

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PATTERNS PLUS

A Short Prose Reader with Argumentation

The Basics of Paragraphs and Essays

WRITING IS A way of communicating, and of course you communicate all the time, mainly by talking to other people. Whenever you talk to anyone—a friend, a teacher, an employer—you want your listener to understand your ideas as clearly as possible. Usually you make your main point and then go on to provide some clear examples or to tell a lively story that clarifies your idea. In any case, you continue to explain or develop your main idea until you feel your listener grasps the point you are making.

In your writing, your purpose is similar. You want your reader to understand your idea—the main point you are making. Suppose you have an idea that people should participate in more sports themselves rather than just watch professional athletes on television. From your own experience, you think people would benefit from active exercise rather than passive watching. You will want to think of clear-cut examples to back up your statement, or you may want to tell a story about your own energy level since you began to play more sports and watch less television. Perhaps you may want to write a comparison of how you felt before and after you started playing more tennis. In whatever way you choose to clarify your idea—by an example, a story, or a comparison—you want to state your main idea in a clear and effective manner.

Effective writing, however, is not just your spoken words put on paper. In writing, you must pay special attention to making your ideas clear and convincing. This

•book tells you about the strategies and techniques that you can use to produce effective writing. It includes many paragraphs and essays by other writers—both students and professionals—that you can study as models for your own writing. By studying the techniques and strategies these writers use to communicate their ideas, and by practicing in paragraphs and essays of your own, you can develop the skill and confidence needed to write effectively on many different subjects.

It is important that you learn a variety of writing strategies because you will find yourself, in school and afterward, writing for different purposes, to different types of **audiences,** and for varied occasions. Your purpose might be to persuade (perhaps in a memo recommending a new procedure at work), to instruct (in a description of how you successfully handled a lab assignment), or to inform (in a letter to the editor explaining errors in a newspaper article). Your audience, or reader, and the occasion for your writing will vary too. In one situation, your audience might be fellow students or friends and the occasion an informal activity. Or your audience could be your economics or history professor and the occasion an assigned essay or term paper. In each case, you will need to make choices about the organization, content, and words you use in your paragraph or essay.

As a student, you will have assignments that require you to write either a **paragraph** or an essay. Although such compositions may differ in their length and content, a paragraph and an essay are alike in two important ways. First, each one should have a **main idea.** Second, the main idea should be fully explained or developed. In this text we will study the main idea and the explanation or **development** of the main idea.

The Main Idea

The main idea of a paragraph is called the **topic.** This topic is usually stated in a sentence, called a **topic sentence.** The topic sentence, usually a general rather than a specific idea, may be placed anywhere within the paragraph. As a student writer, however, you should try to state your main idea at the *beginning* of the paragraph.

In the sample paragraph that follows, the main idea (or topic) of the paragraph is stated in the first sentence.

Topic sentence

Americansareprobablythemostpain-consciouspeople on the face of the earth. For years we have had it drummed into us—in print, on radio, over television, in everyday conversation—that any hint of pain is to be banished as though it were the ultimate evil. As a result, we are becoming a nation of pill-grabbers and hypochondriacs, escalating the slightest ache into a searing ordeal.

Norman Cousins,
Anatomy of an Illness

In the paragraph that follows, the writer has stated the topic in the first and second sentences.

Topic sentences

Example 1 of main idea

Example 2 of main idea

For as far back as T can remember, people have been saying the youth of the nation [are] getting soft and losing [their] moral fiber. 1 just doubt it. They certainly aren't wearing as much underwear, but I doubt if there's any less moral fiber. I'll bet the very day Andy Robustelli put on his first jockstrap, some old athlete was saying athletes weren't what they used to be. I'll bet the day little Ike Eisenhower was planting that sweet corn, someone was saying kids wouldn't work anymore.

Andy Rooney,
"Youth"

As you become more experienced, you may sometimes find it effective to place the topic sentence at the *end* of the paragraph. In the following paragraph the writer has stated the topic in the last sentence.

Topic sentence

When a motorist, driving at 65 miles per hour, sights a sudden hazard, his foot moves sharply to the brake pedal. But, incredibly, the car has traversed another 70 feet between the sighting and contact with the brake. Another 250 feet will be covered before the car is brought to a halt. The total procedure [takesl a distance longer than a football field. So brakes are important and they deserve a checkup at least twice a year.

Saturday Evening Post,
January/February, 1975

As you study the student and professional writings that follow, you will find that experienced writers do not always state outright the main idea of their paragraphs and essays. Instead, they may prefer to suggest or to

imply the idea. Notice that the writer must provide enough clues to allow the careful reader to determine the main idea. In the following paragraph, for example, the writer implies rather than states the idea that the man saw the berries reflected rather than actually floating in the water. The writer provides the clues the reader needs by saying that the man struck the bottom of the river when he dived in and that he then looked up and saw the berries hanging over **him.**

> While walking along the river, he saw some berries in the water. He dived down for them, but was stunned when he unexpectedly struck the bottom. There he lay for quite a while, and when he recovered consciousness and looked up, he saw the berries hanging on a tree just above him.
>
> Paul Radin,
> "Manbozho and the Berries"

If you experiment with implying your main idea, be sure to give the reader enough clues to determine your meaning.

In a longer piece of writing, such as an essay, the main idea is called the **thesis** (rather than the topic). The thesis is usually stated in one or more sentences called the **thesis statement.** Like the topic sentence of a paragraph, the thesis statement is often placed near the beginning of an essay. In the sample essay that follows, the thesis **is** stated in the opening paragraph.

Thesis statement

Topic sentence of paragraph 2

Topic sentence of paragraph 3

Topic sentence of paragraph 4

Scientists all agree that packages are very necessary. They also agree that packages are a problem. But they do not agree on what to do about it.

There is the make-it-attractive group. These designers concentrate on making the package so interesting that the buyer cannot bring himself to part with it—thus keeping it out of the trash. . . .

Next there are the no-package-package groups. They have ideas like spraying a protein coating, derived from corn, on foods to protect them against loss of vitamins and spoilage.

In the no-package-package group is a new type of giass that may be the answer to the 26 billion bottles thrown away every year. The glass is coated on the inside as well as on the outside by a water-resistant film. When the bottle is smashed, the glass will dissolve in plain water. . . .

Topic sentence of paragraph 5

Another no-package is the plastic bag used to hold laundry bleach or bluing. Tossed into the laundry, it dissolves before the washing is finished. But the prize will go to the scientist who can come up with a container that is as successful as the ice cream cone.

Suzanne Hilton,
How Do They Get Rid of it?

In addition to the thesis statement, notice how each paragraph has its own individual topic sentence.

The thesis statement gives the essay its focus, and for the essay to stay focused, the thesis must be clear and manageable. When you formulate a thesis statement, you will probably begin at a general level—for instance, you might decide that your thesis will have something to do with vegetable gardening. The next step will be to narrow your focus to, perhaps, pests in vegetable gardens. But you cannot cover all garden pests in an essay of only a few pages or formulate an effective thesis statement on such a broad topic So you will have to continue to narrow your focus until you arrive at something you can handle. Perhaps, in the end, your thesis statement will be something like "Some garden pests are as cute as they are destructive." You will then have a manageable controlling idea—destructive garden pests that are cute, like chipmunks, rabbits, and squirrels—that you can develop clearly and fully.

Experienced writers may place the thesis statement in later paragraphs or at the end of the essay. They may indeed, only imply the thesis. For your own writing, the important point to remember is that an effective essay has **a** clear thesis statement, just as a well-made paragraph has a topic sentence. When you are reading, your task is to discover the writer's thesis. When you are writing, your task is to make your own thesis as clear as possible to your reader. And your best strategy, initially, is to *state your thesis at or near the beginning of your essay.*

Development of the Main Idea

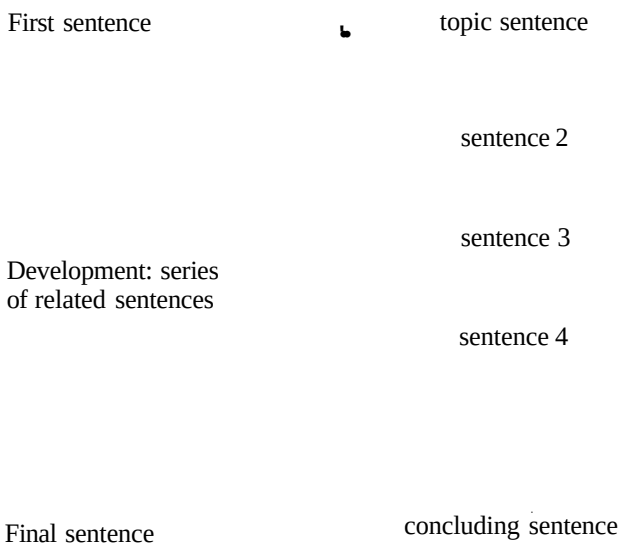
The second important way in which paragraphs and essays are alike is that their main ideas must be explained or developed by the writer. Among the methods of development most frequently used by writers are

narration
description
examples
classification and division
comparison and contrast
process
cause and effect
definition
argumentation and persuasion

These methods of developing the main idea are called **modes of development.** Although they have different characteristics, the modes of development have a common purpose in written compositions. That purpose is to provide the reader with the specific information needed to **support** or clarify the main idea. As stated earlier, the main idea is a general statement; the development provides the details to support or explain the main idea.

In developing a paragraph^ the writer usually (1) begins with a topic sentence, (2) develops the main idea by a series of related sentences that explain the idea fully, and (3) concludes with a sentence that restates or summarizes the main idea. Look at the diagram below and compare it with the development of an essay on page 7.

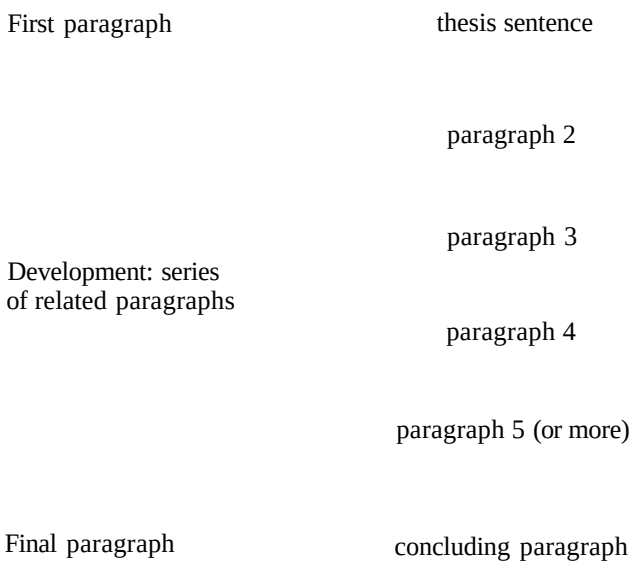
Paragraph



Keep in mind tnat a paragrapn is inoie man a group of sentences. A paragraph must be **unified,** meaning that it must deal with one single idea (the main idea) and that ^each sentence must be related to this idea. It must be **coherent**—that is, it must state the main idea clearly—and the sentences that develop the main idea must be arranged according to some logical **order** that will allow the reader to follow your thoughts through the paragraph without stumbling or backtracking. Finally, a paragraph must be **complete. It** should develop the main idea fully enough so that the reader will understand and appreciate what you are saying.

i An essay is a collection of paragraphs, but a composition of more than one paragraph is not necessarily an essay. In developing an essay, the writer starts with a thesis statement, which is generally part of the **introduction** and may make up the whole first paragraph. Then the writer develops the thesis in a series of related paragraphs, usually called the **body** of the essay. Often, each paragraph has its own individual topic sentence. The **conclusion,** which may restate the thesis or summarize the essay's important points, is usually found in the final paragraph.

Essay



Notice that in the paragraph the development is carried out in a series of sentences. In the essay, the development is carried out in a series of paragraphs. When you write an essay, keep in mind the concepts of unity, coherence, order, and completeness. Each paragraph should be related to the thesis. The thesis and the main idea of each paragraph should be expressed clearly. The paragraphs should be arranged in a logical order. And the thesis should be developed fully enough so that your reader understands the idea you are expressing.

A way to help maintain unity and logical flow in writing is the use of **transitions.** Obviously, when you write a paragraph or an essay, you will move from one point to another as you develop your main idea. The sentences and paragraphs will be related to one another through their relevance to the main idea, but the specific thoughts you express may differ, or you may change contexts or points of view or modes of development from paragraph to paragraph. Writers use transitions to help readers see the relationships among ideas in an essay or paragraph. At the sentence-to-sentence level, transitions are words or phrases that give the readers a signal about how ideas are related. Examples are *however, therefore, for example, first, second, finally,* and *next.* Sometimes, you might want to use a sentence to create a transition between paragraphs. An example is "Consider how these developments affected the Iowa farming community." In this case the writer is moving from a descriptive paragraph to a paragraph giving examples, and the guiding sentence will help the reader make the transition.

Although the modes of development are often combined in this and other ways, a single mode of development will usually be dominant in a composition. For instance, if you are writing a **descriptive** essay, that does not mean you cannot use examples to illustrate your description, but it means that the essay's purpose and most of the paragraphs will be descriptive. Of you might write a cause-and-effect essay in which you **narrate** a series of events that constitute a cause and another event that is the effect. In general, though, you will learn to be comfortable with the modes of development if you first study them individually, and this text is organized so you can do that. You will see that each chapter that follows deals with a single mode of development and brings together paragraphs and essays in which that mode dominates.

Directly before each paragraph or essay, you will find definitions of the words within the reading selection that might be unfamiliar to you. Following each selection, you will find (1) questions to help you understand the reading, (2) questions about the strategies used by the writer to develop his or her idea, and (3) suggestions for your own writing assignments. The glossary at the back of the book defines and explains the technical terms you will learn to use, and these terms are boldfaced throughout the text. If you encounter a boldfaced term and cannot recall what it means, turn to the glossary to refresh your memory.

The ability to state an idea and to develop it so that it is clear to your reader is essential to all forms of writing. Mastery of the writing principles covered in this text will help give you that ability. You can then apply it to the many kinds of writing projects you will encounter both now at school and later in your career or business.

2 Narration

AT ONE TIME or another, you may have rushed a friend to the hospital for 'emergency treatment or warned your sleeping neighbors that their apartment was full of fire and smoke—and they had to get out. If you later mention one of these **events** to friends, they will probably want to know more about it. What individual **incidents** made up the event? How did it happen? At what time? Where did it take place? On the spot, you become a narrator or storyteller and try to give a clear and lively account of the event. Thus you are already familiar with **narration,** one of the modes of development that writers frequently use to illustrate and explain their ideas. Using narration, the writer hopes to interest the reader in a good story while at the same time illustrating a particular idea clearly.

Narration is frequently used to tell about personal experiences. You have a variety of personal experiences every day. Your car won't start, you miss the bus, and then you are late for your interview. Such experiences, although important to you, will not necessarily make an effective narrative. For a narrative to be effective, the writer needs to have some goal in mind that will attract the reader's interest. The goal might be to portray a unique or exciting event that the reader has never experienced, or it might be to stir the reader's emotions—a sad story, or a funny story.

Most often,; the goal of narration is to describe an experience that has some unusual meaning or significance both for the writer and for the reader. Usually an

experience is significant because it taught you—and may teach your reader—something new, something you never realized before about life. For example, in the following paragraph, the writer tells about a personal experience that taught her about being responsible not only for making decisions but also for accepting the consequences of those decisions.

Topic sentence

Incident 1

Incident 2

Incident3

Topic restated: significance of narrative

As I was growing up, my father and I sometimes disagreed about how I should spend my time. He began telling me, "If you get yourself into it, you'll have to get yourself out." But I learned what it meant to be responsible for the consequences of my decisions only after I went to a weekend party when T should have studied for a chemistry exam. I needed a good grade on the exam to stay in the nursing program, and the consequences of my decision to go to the party were clear when I got my exam back with a notice that I was on academic probation. I spent two semesters of almost steady studying before I was back in good standing. Now, whenever I have a difficult decision to make, I remind myself, "If you get yourself into it, you'll have to get yourself out." I've learned that making a decision means taking the responsibility for its consequences.

Effective narrative writing, like all good writing, is carefully organized. Since a narrative describes events, its organization must be governed by some form of time **order.** The writer often tells about events in the order in which they took place. This method, called **chronological order,** ensures that the time and sequence of the incidents will be logical.

Sometimes, though, a writer may reorder events to achieve an effect that will increase the reader's interest. Experienced writers, using what is called *flashback style,* may start near the end of the narrative or even in the middle and then work their way back to the beginning. Or a writer may withhold a key event that preceded the incidents in the narrative. Doing so can add emphasis to the narrative's main idea. Consider, for instance, what the effect would have been if the writer of the above paragraph had first introduced her father's advice at the end of the paragraph instead of at the beginning.

Student writers should probably avoid complicated time schemes like these, at least at first. But no matter at what point the' writer chooses to start a narrative, the reader must be able to understand the order of the incidents and not feel confused or unclear about what happened. In many cases, you may want to jot down the incidents in a rough list to achieve the right order before you begin to write.

In the following sample paragraph, the writer uses narration to give a factual account of an event—the discovery of Wheaties. Notice that this writer has chosen to explain the different incidents in a simple chronological order.

Topic sentence

Incident 1

incident 2

Incident 3

Incident 4

Incidents

Conclusion

Like gravity and penicillin, Wheaties was discovered by accident. In 1921, a health clinician named Minnenrode, in Minneapolis, was mixing up a batch of bran gruel for his patients when he spilled some on a hot stove. He heard it crackle and sizzle, and had a taste. Delicious, he thought. He took his cooled gruel to the Washburn Crosby Company, which in 1928 would merge with three mills to become General Mills. Favorably impressed, Washburn Crosby gave Minnenrode use of a laboratory. Alas, his flakes crumbled too easily and turned to dust in a box. Exit Minnenrode, enter George Cormack, Washburn Crosby's head miller. Cormack tested 36 varieties of wheat. He cracked them, he steamed them, he mixed them with syrup, he cooked them, he dried them, he rolled them. Finally he found the perfect flakes.

Steve Wulf,
"The Breakfast of Champions"

Notice the **details** in this paragraph. In addition to recreating the incidents that are significant to his topic, the writer colors those incidents with details that help describe what happened. Minnenrode's spilled gruel *crackled* and *sizzled,* but his flakes "turned to dust in a box." By using words that provide descriptive detail, the writer adds variety and clarity to his narrative. **(Description,** a mode of development in its own right, is the subject of the next chapter.)

Notice, too, that this paragraph contains only the incidents or details that contribute directly to the story. Avoiding irrelevant incidents and details is essential to effective narrative writing. Perhaps you have had some long-winded person tell you a story and have found yourself wishing that person would skip some of the trivial details. You should keep this in mind when you are writing and limit yourself to the details that are *essential*

to the main idea of your narrative. In the following essay, for example, the writer does not include any incidents that happened before or after the robbery. He concentrates on those incidents and details that explain his actions and reactions only during key moments. As you read the essay, think about the details the writer provides and try to form an image of the scene in your mind.

Thesis statement

Recently I was unfortunate enough to be in a store when a robbery took place. I learned from that experience that a pointed gun makes people obey,

Incidents arranged as they occurred in time

I had stopped at the store on my way home from work to get a loaf of bread. I was at the check-out counter when a man standing nearby pulled out a gun and yelled, "Everyone on the floor and away from the cash register!"

Frozen in place

My first reaction was fear. Around me, people dropped to the floor. But 1 felt frozen where I stood.

Gun pointed

As I hesitated, the robber pointed his gun at me and yelled again, "On the floor!" Then T felt angry. I was bigger and stronger than he was. I was sure I could put *him* on the floor in a fair fight.

Sank to floor

But the gun, small enough to be cradled in the palm of my hand, was bigger and stronger than I was. I sank obediently to the floor.

Robbery took place

All of us watched silently as the robber scooped money out of the cash register into a paper bag. Then he ran out the door, jumped into a car that was waiting, and the car raced away.

After robbery

Everyone stood up and started talking. A clerk called the police, who asked if anyone could describe the robber or the car. No one could.

Dialogue

Then one man, blustering defensively, told the clerk just what T was thinking. "Listen. Tell them when a gun is pointed at me, it's all I'm looking at. One look and I'm going to do whatever I'm told."

Significance of narrative restated

Look at each paragraph in this essay. The first paragraph is an introduction in which the main idea or thesis of the essay is stated. Each successive paragraph deals with an incident or set of incidents in the narrative. Each incident contributes key information to the essay, and each incident moves the story forward in time. The final paragraph concludes the narrative by restating the main significance of the essay.

As you can see from the essay above, the narrative mode is used for more than just retelling what happened. In addition to reporting the action, narrative writing often explains the *reactions*—emotions and feelings—of the narrator and others involved. At other times, the writer may leave it to the reader to determine the narrator's feelings and reactions.

In this and other ways, the writer establishes a particular **point of view** for the essay. Point of view refers to the **person** the writer uses *(I/me, you, or hejshelitjthey),* the *time* (past, present, or future) in which the essay is set, and the **tone,** or attitude, the writer adopts. The writer's point of view thus establishes the setting for an essay and greatly influences the essay's meaning and how the reader will interpret it. In a narrative essay, the point of view creates the context for the incidents described.

In narration and the other modes of development, an important factor in point of view is whether the writer is being objective or subjective. An **objective** essay presents the facts—the basics of what occurred or what is being described—without including the writer's own interpretations or personal opinions of those facts. The writer tries to portray the subject of the essay as truly as possible and does not try to influence how the reader will react. A **subjective** essay, by contrast, expresses how the writer feels and may try to get the reader to feel a certain way. It may give an opinion or reveal the writer's emotions, or it may present facts in such a way that the reader will draw a conclusion favored by the writer. The Wheaties story above is an example of objective writing; it presents the facts without interpreting them. The other two examples above are written more subjectively, expressing the writers' own feelings about and interpretations of the events described.

Often, writers give clues that indicate that they are being subjective. Phrases like **"in** my opinion" or "I felt" or "I learned" obviously signal a subjective interpretation. (Just because an essay is written in the first person does not mean it is entirely subjective, however.) As you will see in some of the selections in this text, writers may not always tell you when they are being subjective. In fact, some writers may take an objective tone when they are actually being quite subjective—perhaps, for instance, by presenting certain facts about a subject but not others. No matter what mode of development is used in an essay,

you should try to make sure just how subjective or objective the writer is being.

Narrative writing is called nonfiction if the story or event is true and actually happened. All of the preceding examples are nonfiction accounts. This kind of factual narrative is found in biography, history, and newspaper writing. Narrative is also the mode used in short stories and novels. If a story is not true or did not actually occur, it is called fiction.

In fiction and nonfiction narrative writing, writers use dialogue to recreate what people or characters in the narrative said. In the essay on the store robbery, notice that the writer often tells you exactly what was said and encloses the statement using quotation marks to let you know he is quoting word-for-word conversation. Quoted dialogue can help the writer accurately express the incidents in a narrative and can add variety and color. To practice working with dialogue, listen to your friends talking to one another and see if you can reproduce dialogue something like their conversation in your own narratives.

Writers use narration to tell about personal experiences, about other people's lives and experiences, and about factual or historical events, such as the discovery of Wheaties. Narration adds interest, suspense, and clarity to writing, as you will find in the reading selections that follow. Consequently, it is a writing skill well worth mastering.

The questions and assignments at the ends of the readings in this chapter will help you recognize and apply the principles of narration. They will give you practice with the concepts of chronological order, narrative detail, fiction and nonfiction, subjective and objective writing, and dialogue.

Geography

Elizabeth Bishop

It is often obvious when a writer is using narration as a mode of development. But narration can also be subtle. In this paragraph, notice how Elizabeth Bishop uses sensory details—what she sees, *hears, and feels—to add appeal and color to an unspectacular event.*

***Words to** Know*

recitation a student's oral delivery of prepared materials

Only the third and fourth grades studied geography. On their side of the room, over the blackboard, were two rolled-up maps, one of Canada and one of the whole world. When they had a geography lesson, Miss Morash pulled down one or both of these maps, like window shades. They were on cloth, very limp, with a shiny surface, and in pale colors—tan, pink, yellow, and green—surrounded by the blue that was the ocean. The light coming in from their windows, falling on the glazed, crackly surface, made it hard for me to see them properly from where I sat. On the world map, all of Canada was pink; on the Canadian, the provinces were different colors. I was so taken with the pull-down maps that I wanted to snap them up, and pull them down again, and touch all the countries and provinces with my own hands. Only dimly did I hear the pupils' recitations of capital cities and islands and bays. But I got the general impression that Canada was the same size as the world, which somehow or other fitted into it, or the other way around, and that in the world and Canada the sun was always shining and everything was dry and glittering. At the same time, I knew perfectly well that this was not true.

Questions About the Reading

1. Was the writer herself in the third or fourth grade? How do you know?
2. Was the writer paying attention to the geography lesson? Explain your answer.
3. What type of essay do you think this paragraph comes from? What do you think the writer's purpose was in composing the essay?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph? Is there a topic sentence? If so, where is it located? If not, where is the main idea expressed?
2. What makes this a narration paragraph? What are the incidents? What.is the main event?
3. What else does the writer do besides narrate what happened?

Writing Assignments

1. Recall a situation from your childhood, or even from later years, in which you used your imagination to keep yourself interested during what might seem a boring event. Write a narrative paragraph describing the situation and your mental reaction.
2. Pick an event that you think *nobody* would be interested in. In a paragraph, try to narrate the event in a way that will hold your reader's interest. Try to think of active, colorful words to enhance your narrative, and feel free to use humor if you like.

Grandma's Last Day

Ivan Doig

*After his grandmother died, Ivan Doig set out to trace the events of her last day. He found that her day had been filled with activity, work, and—most of all—**life.** The paragraph below is from the last chapter* o/This House of Sky, ***Doig's*** *beautifully ivritten memoir of growing up on the sheep and cattle ranches of Montana. In the paragraph, Doig tells us the details of his grandmother's last day.*

Words to Know

thorned irritated, pained, aggravated

Wonder built in me as I traced out her last day. The morning, Grandma had spent working on a quilt, another of her rainbow-paneled splendors, for a helpful neighbor who looked in on her often. Sometime she had telephoned to a friend at a ranch out of Ringling, asking to be brought a fresh supply of eggs when the woman came to town. At noon she was phoned by her son, and as usual in those checking calls, they talked for several minutes. In the afternoon a funeral was held for a member of one of the last families of the Sixteen country: Grandma did not go to the rites, but at the coffee hour held afterward at the Senior Citizens Club she helped with the serving and chatted with friends for an hour or more. Someone had driven her home, where she had her supper alone. In the evening, there was to be the weekly card party back at the Senior Citizens Club, and she phoned to ask for a ride with her best friend in the group—a woman who had run one of the White Sulphur saloons that had so often thorned Grandma's earlier life. They had nearly arrived at the card party when, in the midst of something joked by one or the other of them, Grandma cut off in the middle of a chuckle and slumped, chin onto chest. The friend whirled the car to the hospital a block away. A doctor instantly was trying to thump a heartbeat-rhythm into Grandma, but could work no flicker of response from her. She had gone from life precisely as she had lived it, with abruptness and at full pace.

Questions About the Reading

1. If the writer had not called the woman "Grandma," you would still have some idea of her age. Which details indicate her age?
2. On the surface, this paragraph appears to tell about a series of incidents, but in the end it tells you a great deal about Grandma's character. Which sentences tell you that Grandma was helpful to and considerate of other people?
3. Did Grandma live in a town or in the country? Which details help you decide where she lived? Did she live alone? Which details tell you?
4. What are some conclusions you might draw about Grandma's character from the statements that "saloons . . . had so often thorned Grandma's earlier life" and that a woman who had run one of the saloons was Grandma's best friend in the Senior Citizens' card group?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** of the paragraph?
2. What are the specific **incidents** or events that the writer uses to support the main idea of the paragraph? What words and phrases does he use to let you know the **order** in which incidents occurred?
3. The writer left out some details about incidents and time. Which details are missing? Why do you think Doig did not include them?
4. The writer says the friend "whirled" her car to the hospital. Would *turned* be as effective a word? Why or why not?
5. The **point of** view used by the writer indicates that he was not with his grandmother on her last day. Using the first three sentences as an example, explain how you could change their wording to indicate that he was with her that day.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a narrative paragraph in which you tell about the daily activities of a person you admire or, if you prefer, of a person you dislike. Be sure the actions provide your reader with an understanding of the character of that person.
2. Think of someone who has influenced your life in some way. In a narrative paragraph, tell about several things that person did that influenced you. Narrate the incidents in **chronological** order.
3. Write a narrative paragraph in which you tell about one single event that was significant to a friend of yours.

Xhe Discovery of Coca-Cola

£. /. *Kahn, Jr.*

}(ahn has written about the American scene for The New Yorker *for over forty years. He has written about America at war, about Frank Sinatra, about Harvard, and about burlesque. He has also discussed that most American of drinks, Coca-Cola, in a book titled* The Big Drink. *In a paragraph from that book, he tells us of the invention of Coca-Cola as a medicine and the discovery that led to its becoming a soft drink.*

Words to Know

audit analyze, figure out, verify
composition contents, ingredients
concoction mixture of ingredients
dollop a large portion or serving
factotum employee
testimonially in honor of

I he man who invented Coca-Cola was not a native Atlantan, but on the day of his funeral every drugstore in town testimonially shut up shop. He was John Styth Pemberton, born in 1833 in Knoxville, Georgia, eighty miles away. Sometimes known as Doctor, Pemberton was a pharmacist who, during the Civil War, led a cavalry troop under General Joe Wheeler. He settled in Atlanta in 1869, and soon began brewing such patent medicines as Triplex Liver Pills and Globe of Flower Cough Syrup. In 1885, he registered a trademark for something called French Wine Coca—Ideal Nerve and Tonic Stimulant; a few months later he formed the Pemberton Chemical Company, and recruited the services of a bookkeeper named Frank M. Robinson, who not only had a good head for figures but, attached to it, so exceptional a nose that he could audit the composition of a batch of syrup merely by sniffing it. In 1886—a year in which, as contemporary Coca-Cola officials like to point out, Conan Doyle unveiled Sherlock Holmes and France unveiled the Statue of Liberty—Pemberton unveiled a syrup that he called Coca-Cola. It was a modification of his French Wine Coca. He had taken out the wine and added a pinch of caffeine, and, when the end product tasted awful, had thrown in some extract of cola (or kola) nut and a few other oils, blending the mixture in a three-legged iron pot in his back yard and swishing it around with an oar. He distributed it to soda fountains in used beer bottles, and Robinson, with his flowing bookkeeper's script, presently devised a

label, on which "Coca-Cola" was written in the fashion that is still employed. Pemberton looked upon his concoction less as a refreshment than as a headache cure, especially for people whose throbbing temples could be traced to overindulgence. On a morning late in 1886, one such victim of the night before dragged himself into an Atlanta drugstore and asked for a dollop of Coca-Cola. Druggists customarily stirred a teaspoonful of syrup into a glass of water, but in this instance the factotum on duty was too lazy to walk to the fresh-water tap, a couple of feet off. Instead, he mixed the syrup with some charged water, which was closer at hand. The suffering customer perked up almost at once, and word quickly spread that the best Coca-Cola was a fizzy one.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why did the drugstores in Atlanta honor Pemberton by closing on the day of his funeral?
2. How is Frank M. Robinson significant to the story of Coca-Cola's origins?
3. Sherlock Holmes, the fictional detective in a series of books written by A. Conan Doyle, and the Statue of Liberty appeared in the same year as Coca-Cola. Why would Coca-Cola officials like to point out these facts?
4. The writer describes the way Pemberton mixed Coca-Cola and distributed it. What does the writer's explanation tell you about the standards that existed in 1886 for the production and sale of patent medicines? Which words and phrases help describe the standards?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. **Is** the **main idea** of the paragraph directly stated? If so, in which sentence(s)? If not, state the idea in a sentence of your own.
2. What is the **point of view** in "The Discovery of Coca-Cola"? Could the writer have used another point of view, such as **first** person? Why or why not?
3. Does the writer include any **details** that are not essential to the idea of the narrative? If so, why did he include them?
4. What **tone** does the writer achieve by his description of how Frank M. Robinson checked a batch of syrup? What is the effect of using the word *nose?* Why is the word *audit* appropriate?

5. The writer uses the words *dollop* and *factotum* in telling about the customer being served Coca-Cola in the drugstore in 1886. Why are these words more effective than *large serving* and *employee* would be?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a narrative paragraph in which you tell about an experience or event that had an unexpected ending.
2. Write a **fictional** narrative paragraph describing the incidents that led to the discovery of fire or of the wheel.
3. Write a narrative paragraph in the first person telling about something you did to help a friend, relative, or organization. Try to show how your action was significant to *you.*

Through the Ice

Deborah Digges

Recalled later in life, memories of childhood experiences sometimes take on a special reality in which some details remain sharp while others have faded. In this paragraph, Deborah Digges uses individual details to recreate a nearly disastrous event from her early years.

Words to Know

glimpse to look briefly

1 he smell of the gasoline ruined the cold winter smell of the day, but the blaze was beautiful as it caught, weed by weed, until one half of the pond was surrounded by a hedge of fire through which you could glimpse the snowy hillside. It made a sound like wind or ocean surf so that I didn't at first hear my mother shouting for us to get off the ice. Then I heard only the panic in her voice as she watched me, the last one, who, in order to get to the shore not burning, had to come all the way across. When you walk on a wet beach watching the ground, you can see how the impact of your steps on the sand darkens a moment, sometimes leaving a puddle where your foot was. The ice gave under me in this way until it simply opened, like a door. I don't remember being afraid that I might die, but rather, the way the sun looked from under the ice, like a dirty paper lantern over a weak bulb, and the sound of my own voice under water, changed but familiar. Years later I would try that again in the tub or hear it in dreams of my children when I was away from them. And I remember one other thing, how each time I grabbed for a hold, it came off in my hands as though the ladder I was climbing were sinking, rung by rung.

Questions About the Reading

1. How do you think the fire started? Give reasons for your answer.
2. The writer says she doesn't remember "being afraid that I might die." Do you think she means that she wasn't afraid during the experience, or that she has forgotten that particular feeling? Explain your answer.
3. What gives this paragraph a dreamlike quality? Try to identify specific **details** that contribute to this quality.
4. The writer does not directly state the significance of her experience, but she makes it clear that the experience had a long-lasting and important impact on her. What statements **imply** the nature of this impact? Try to describe it in your own words.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What are some of the descriptive words the writer uses to recreate the scene she is describing? Is her word choice effective? Why or why not?
2. What **order** does the writer use for her narrative?
3. In what ways is this paragraph subjective? In what ways is it **objective?**

Writing Assignments

1. In a paragraph, narrate a memorable event from your childhood. If you can, use **dialogue** to help relate what happened.
2. Write a narrative paragraph telling of an experience you had in which you were in grave danger. Try to describe what happened and the feelings you remember having.
3. Think of a dream you had recently, or perhaps one that recurs from time to time. Write a narrative paragraph describing the incidents in your dream. Try to use descriptive words that express the unusual, even bizarre, qualities that dreams have.

Freedom

Iu-choi Chan (Student)

Sometimes a single event can tell us a great deal about a person, culture, or way of life. In the paragraph below a young Chinese man tells about his daring attempt to escape from a country where he felt oppressed to a place where he could be free. Although this attempt failed, Iu-choi Chan has since managed to come to the United States. He wrote this paragraph while he was a student at California State University in Bakersfield.

Words to Know

Hong Kong a British colony on the coast of China
sentries persons or soldiers posted to guard an area or position

A wo years ago, I attempted to escape from mainland China to Hong Kong. I planned and prepared well. I dressed up like a farmer and walked for two days from my village to the border between China and Hong Kong. That night, I was very excited and nervous, but I tried to keep calm. At the border there were a lot of sentries who tried to catch people like me, so I put some mud on myself to avoid being noticed. It was not easy for me to pass through the sentries, but I bit my tongue and climbed across the swampy area. Finally, I reached the river that runs across the border. I plunged into it. It was icy cold, and I used all my strength to swim as fast as I could. In about twenty minutes, I touched land. I had made it! My happiness was beyond description. But when I stood up, a Hong Kong policeman was immediately beside me. My dream was shattered. I was taken to a police station to wait for a truck that takes unsuccessful refugees back to China. The police put me in the truck with a great many other people, and we were driven like a herd of buffalo back to China. I had lost my freedom again.

Questions About the Reading

1. Which statement indicates the distance the young man lived from the Hong Kong border?
2. Describe the border area between China and Hong Kong.
3. Do many people try to leave mainland China and go to Hong Kong? Which details support your answer?
4. Why do you think the young man dressed like a farmer when he tried to escape?
5. The writer says, "I had lost my freedom again." What does the word *again* tell you about what has happened to him before? Do you think the sentence indicates his opinion of life in mainland China?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is the main **idea** of the paragraph directly stated? If so, in which sentence(s)? If not, state the main idea in a sentence of your own.
2. In what order are the major incidents of the story arranged? Could the order be changed? If so, in what way?
3. The writer compares the return of the refugees to China to being "driven like a herd of buffalo." Does this comparison help you see his situation?
4. What is the point of view in the narrative? Could another point of view be used? Using the first three sentences of the paragraph as an example, explain how you could change the point of view.

Writing Assignments

1. Think of a goal you have set for yourself but that you have not yet reached. Write a narrative paragraph in which you (1) state the goal, (2) explain what has happened to prevent you from reaching the goal, and (3) tell what you will do in the future to achieve the goal.
2. Write a narrative paragraph in which you tell what you or another person did to succeed in reaching a particular goal.
3. What career have you chosen for yourself? Write a narrative paragraph in which you tell what you have done or what experiences you have had that made you choose the career.

Learning To Write

Russell Baker

Russell Baker is a Pulitzer Prize winner noted for his humorous writing. However, although this passage from his autobiographical book Growing Up *is lighthearted, we learn in the end that Baker is earnestly describing an event of serious, almost touching, personal importance.*

Words to Know

antecedent the word to which a pronoun refers
listless without energy, boring
prim formal and neat, lacking humor
reminiscence memory of a past experience

When our class was assigned to Mr. Fleagle for third-year English I anticipated another grim year in that dreariest of subjects. Mr. Fleagle was notorious among City students for dullness and inability to inspire. He was said to be stuffy, dull, and hopelessly out of date. To me he looked to be sixty or seventy and prim to a fault. He wore primly severe eyeglasses, his wavy hair was primly cut and primly combed. He wore prim vested suits with neckties blocked primly against the collar buttons of his primly starched white shirts. He had a primly pointed jaw, a primly straight nose, and a prim manner of speaking that was so correct, so gentlemanly, that he seemed a comic antique. 1

I anticipated a listless, unfruitful year with Mr. Fleagle and for a long time was not disappointed. We read *Macbeth.* Mr. Fleagle loved *Macbeth* and wanted us to love it too, but he lacked the gift of infecting others with his own passion. He tried to convey the murderous ferocity of Lady Macbeth one day by reading aloud the passage that concludes 2

> . . . I have given suck, and know
> How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums. . . .

The idea of prim Mr. Fleagle plucking his nipple from boneless gums was too much for the class. We burst into gasps of irrepressible snickering. Mr. Fleagle stopped.

"There is nothing funny, boys, about giving suck to a babe. It is the— the very essence of motherhood, don't you see." 3

He constantly sprinkled his sentences with "don't you see." It wasn't a question but an exclamation of mild surprise at our ignorance. "Your pronoun needs an antecedent, don't you see," he would say, very primly. "The purpose of the Porter's scene, boys, is to provide comic relief from the horror, don't you see." 4

Y Late in the year we tackled the informal essay. "The essay, don't you see, is the . . ." My mind went numb. Of all forms of writing, none seemed so boring as the essay. Naturally we would have to write informal essays. Mr. Fleagle distributed a homework sheet offering us a choice of topics. None was quite so simpleminded as "What I Did on My Summer Vacation," but most seemed to be almost as dull. I took the list home and dawdled until the night before the essay was due. Sprawled on the sofa, I finally faced up to the grim task, took the list out of my notebook, and scanned it. The topic on which my eye stopped was "The Art of Eating Spaghetti." 5

This title produced an extraordinary sequence of mental images. Surging up out of the depths of memory came a vivid recollection of a night in Belleville when all of us were seated around the supper table—Uncle Allen, my mother, Uncle Charlie, Doris, Uncle Hal—and Aunt Pat served spaghetti for supper. Spaghetti was an exotic treat in those days. Neither Doris nor I had ever eaten spaghetti, and none of the adults had enough experience to be good at it. All the good humor of Uncle Allen's house reawoke in my mind as I recalled the laughing arguments we had that night about the socially respectable method for moving spaghetti from plate to mouth. 6

Suddenly I wanted to write about that, about the warmth and good feeling of it, but I wanted to put it down simply for my own joy, not for Mr. Fleagle. It was a moment I wanted to recapture and hold for myself. I wanted to relive the pleasure of an evening at New Street. To write it as I wanted, however, would violate all the rules of formal composition I'd learned in school, and Mr. Fleagle would surely give it a failing grade. Never mind. I would write something else for Mr. Fleagle after I had written this thing for myself. 7

When I finished it the night was half gone and there was no time left to compose a proper, respectable essay for Mr. Fleagle. There was no choice next morning but to turn in my private reminiscence of Belleville. Two days passed before Mr. Fleagle returned the graded papers, and he returned everyone's but mine. I was bracing myself for a command to report to Mr. Fleagle immediately after school for discipline when I saw him lift my paper from his desk and rap for the class's attention. 8

"Now, boys/' he said, "I want to read you an essay. This is titled 'The Art of Eating Spaghetti.' " 9

And he started to read. My words! He was reading *my words* out loud to the entire class. What's more, the entire class was listening. Listening attentively. Then somebody laughed, then the entire class was laughing, and not in contempt and ridicule, but with openhearted enjoyment. Even Mr. Fleagle stopped two or three times to repress a small prim smile. 10

I did my best to avoid showing pleasure, but what I was feeling was pure ecstasy at this startling demonstration that my words had the power to make people laugh. In the eleventh grade, at the eleventh hour as it were, I had discovered a calling. It was the happiest moment of my entire school career. When Mr. Fleagle finished he put the final seal on my happiness by saying, "Now that, boys, is an essay, don't you see. It's—don't you see—it's of the very essence of the essay, don't you see. Congratulations, Mr. Baker." 11

Questions About the Reading

1. Why did the writer not want to write an essay? What discovery changed his mind?
2. Why did eating spaghetti so delight the people at the supper table?
3. What comment does the writer make on the role of formal rules in writing?
4. What is your opinion of Mr. Fleagle? How did it change during the course of reading the essay?
5. What was the significance of the essay's main event for the writer?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** in this essay?
2. At what point in the essay did you begin to figure out what the main idea would be?
3. What **order** does the writer use in describing the **incidents** in his narrative?
4. Is this essay written objectively or subjectively? Cite examples from the essay to help explain your answer.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a narrative essay about the most important event you experienced in school. Use **chronological order** to describe the event and the incidents leading up to it.

2. Write a narrative essay on one of the following events in your own life: leaving high school, learning to read a novel, using a computer for the first time, learning to have confidence, learning not to jump to conclusions, or controlling your temper. Try to indicate the significance that the event has had for you since it took place.

A Very Basic Decision

Mary Mebane

Mary E. Mebane discovered that prejudice can exist within as well as between races when she attended a North Carolina college for blacks in the 1950s. The light-skinned, urban, middle-class blacks who made up the faculty and most of the student body could not believe that a dark-skinned black girl from a poor rural family could be a superior student. In "A Very Basic Decision," a passage from Mary: An Autobiography, *Mebane tells of two meetings she had with the wife of the English department's chairman, a light-skinned woman who was convinced that Mebane could not be as talented as her grades showed. But Mebane decided not to give up her quest for a college degree. She graduated at the top of her class and is now a college English professor.*

Words to Know

appalled dismayed
bolstered supported, propped up
criteria standards
defer submit, yield
indistinguishable not able to be recognized **or** seen as different
noncommittal to show no opinion or preference
nonplussed confused, perplexed, baffled
pinnacle peak, top
recourse choice, option

North Carolina College at Durham (it used to carry the words "for Negroes" in its official title—it said so on the sign right on the lawn) is located in the southern part of the town. Its immaculately groomed lawns and neat, squarish, redbrick classroom buildings and dormitories mark it as an oasis of privilege and ease. Looking at the postcard scenes through the low-hanging branches of the surrounding trees, one would not have believed that this was six minutes away from some of the worst slums in the South. The college hadn't forgotten their existence; it simply never acknowledged that they were there. The black dispossessed murmured against the "big dogs," and bided their time. I often thought that if and when "the revolution" came and the black masses in America awakened from their long sleep, their first target was going to be the black professional class and it would be a horrendous bloodbath. . . .

During my first week of classes as a freshman, 1 was stopped one day in the hall by the chairman's wife, who was indistinguishable in color from a white woman. She wanted to see me, she said. 2

This woman had no official position on the faculty, except that she was an instructor in English; nevertheless, her summons had to be obeyed. In the segregated world there were (and remain) gross abuses of authority because those at the pinnacle, and even their spouses, felt that the people "under" them had no recourse except to submit—and they were right, except that sometimes a black who got sick and tired of it would go to the whites and complain. This course of action was severely condemned by the blacks, but an interesting thing happened—such action always got positive results. Power was thought of in negative terms: I can deny someone something, I can strike at someone who can't strike back, I can ride someone down; that proves I am powerful. The concept of power as a force for good, for affirmative response to people or situations, was not in evidence. 3

When I went to her office, she greeted me with a big smile. "You know," she said, "you made the highest mark on the verbal part of the examination." She was referring to the examination that the entire freshman class took upon entering the college. I looked at her but I didn't feel warmth, for in spite of her smile her eyes and tone of voice were saying, "How could this black-skinned girl score higher on the verbal than some of the students who've had more advantages than she? It must be some sort of fluke. Let me talk to her." I felt it, but I managed to smile my thanks and back off. For here at North Carolina College at Durham, as it had been since the beginning, social class and color were the primary criteria used in determining status on the campus. 4

First came the children of doctors, lawyers, and college teachers. Next came the children of public-school teachers, businessmen, and anybody else who had access to more money than the poor black working class. After that came the bulk of the student population, the children of the working class, most of whom were the first in their families to go beyond high school. The attitude toward them was: You're here because we need the numbers, but in all other things defer to your betters. 5

The faculty assumed that light-skinned students were more intelligent, and they were always a bit nonplussed when a dark-skinned student did well, especially if she was a girl. They had reason to be appalled when they discovered that I planned to do not only well but better than my light-skinned peers. . . . 6

When the grades for that first quarter came out, I had the highest average in the freshman class. The chairman's wife called me into her office again. We did a replay of the same scene we had played during the first week of the term. She complimented me on my grades, but her eyes and voice were telling me something different. She asked me to sit down; then she reached into a drawer and pulled out a copy of the freshman English final examination. She asked me to take the exam over again. 7

At first I couldn't believe what she was saying. I had taken the course under another teacher, and it was so incredible to her that I should have made the highest score in the class that she was trying to test me again personally. For a few moments I knew rage so intense that I wanted to take my fists and start punching her. I have seldom hated anyone so deeply. I handed the examination back to her and walked out. 8

She had felt quite safe in doing that to me. After **all,** she was the chairman's wife, and so didn't that give her the right to treat the black farm girl as she chose? (Life is strange. When in the mid 1960s the department started hiring native-born whites, it was she who most bitterly resented their presence.) 9

It was that incident which caused me to make a very basic decision. I was in the world alone; no one bolstered my ambitions, fed my dreams. I could not quit now, for if I did I would have no future. . . . If I was going to get through college, I would have to be bland, noncommittal. I would simply hang on. I needed a degree and I would stay until I got it. 10

Questions About the Reading

1. The writer says she made "a very basic decision." In what way was the decision "basic" and also very significant for the writer?
2. The writer says that she would have to be "bland and noncommittal" to get through college. Did she act in a noncommittal way when she handed the exam paper back to the chairman's wife?
3. Does the writer reveal that she has any prejudices or strong opinions about any members of her own race? Explain and cite specific statements to support your answer.
4. We learn what kind of person "the chairman's wife" is through the writer's own **subjective** interpretation of events. Does Mebane create a negative impression by narrating incidents or by explaining them?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is the thesis of the essay directly stated? If so, in which sentence(s)? If not, state the thesis in a sentence of your own.
2. Of the ten paragraphs of the essay, six actually deal with the narrative incidents. Identify those paragraphs. Explain what happens in each of the paragraphs. What is the **order** in which the incidents occur?
3. The other four paragraphs of the essay provide background information and details that help you understand the narrative. Identify those four paragraphs. What is the **main idea** of each of the paragraphs?
4. What time does Mebane establish as her **point of** view? Which words in the first sentence of the essay tell you that North Carolina College at Durham still exists? Where does Mebane indicate the time for the incidents in the essay?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay describing an experience that caused you to make a major decision about your life. Write this description in the **first person** and explain how you felt about the incidents involved (that is, be subjective).
2. Write an essay in which you tell about an important decision made by a friend and explain the events that led to that decision. Write this description in the **third person (he,** she) and try to be **objective,** describing the incidents and how your friend felt. Do not include your own interpretations.
3. Write a narrative essay in which a person shows favoritism to another person and ends up harming that person as a result. For example, you might think of an incident in which a teacher favored one student over the others and made the favored student disliked as a consequence. Or you might know of a case in which parents favored one child in the family and harmed the child as a result.

The Jeaning of America—and the World

Carin C. Quinn

In "The Jeaning of America—and the World/' Carin Quinn tells about Levi Strauss's development of blue jeans, the_slur_dy and reliable American pants that are now famous worldwide. Quinn also explains some of the reasons for the popularity and success of blue jeans.

Words to Know

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) French aristocrat, traveler, and author; noted for his four-volume work, *Democracy in America* (1835-1840), which was based on his travels in the United States in 1831 to study the American penitentiary system and democracy.
appropriated took over
bureaucrats government officials, particularly those who follow rules and regulations rigidly
ensuing following, subsequent
idiosyncratic individual, unique
mother [ode rich, original vein of ore
proletarian working class
rigors hardships^ ct\j*^*e*[1]
ubiquitous seeming to be everywhere at the same time

A his is the story of a sturdy American symbol which has now spread throughout most of the world. The symbol is not the dollar. It is not even Coca-Cola. It is a simple pair of pants called blue jeans, and what the pants symbolize is what Alexis de Tocqueville called "a manly and legitimate passion for equality. . . ." Blue jeans are favored equally by bureaucrats and cowboys; bankers and deadbeats; fashion designers and beer drinkers. They draw no distinctions and recognize no classes; they are merely American. Yet they are sought after almost everywhere in the world—including Russia, where authorities recently broke up a teenaged gang that was selling them on the black market for two hundred dollars a pair. They have been around for a long time, and it seems likely that they will outlive even the necktie. 1

This ubiquitous American symbol was the invention of a Bavarian-born Jew. His name was Levi Strauss. 2

He was born in Bad Ocheim, Germany, in 1829, and during the European political turmoil of 1848 decided to take his chances in New York, to which his two brothers already had emigrated. Upon arrival, Levi soon found that his two brothers had exaggerated their tales of an easy life in the land of the main chance. They were landowners, they had told him; instead, he found them pushing needles, thread, pots, pans, ribbons, yarn, scissors, and buttons to housewives. For two years he was a lowly peddler, hauling some 180 pounds of sundries door-to-door to_eke out a marginal living. When a married sister in San Francisco offered to pay his way West in 1850, he jumped at the opportunity, taking with him bolts of canvas he hoped *to* sell for tenting. 3

It was the wrong kind of canvas for that purpose, but while talking with a miner down from the mother lode, he learned that pants—sturdy pants that would stand up to the rigors of the diggings—were almost impossible to find. Opportunity beckoned. On the spot, Strauss measured the man's girth and inseam with a piece of string and, for six dollars in gold dust, had [the canvas] tailored into a pair of stiff but rugged pants. The miner was delighted with the result, word got around about "those pants of Levi's," and Strauss was in business. The company has been in business ever since. 4

When Strauss ran out of canvas, he wrote his two brothers to send more. He received instead a tough, brown cotton cloth made in Nimes, France—called *serge de Nimes* and swiftly shortened to "denim" (the word "jeans" derives from *Genes,* the French word for Genoa, where a similar cloth was produced). Almost from the first, Strauss had his cloth dyed the distinctive indigo that gave blue jeans their name, but it was not until the 1870s that he added the copper rivets which have long since become a company trademark. The rivets were the idea of a Virginia City, Nevada, tailor, Jacob W. Davis, who added them to pacify a mean-tempered miner called Alkali Ike. Alkali, the story goes, complained that the pockets of his jeans always tore when he stuffed them with ore samples and demanded that Davis do something about it. As a kind of joke, Davis took the pants to a blacksmith and had the pockets riveted; once again, the idea worked so well that word got around; in 1873 Strauss appropriated and patented the gimmick—and hired Davis as a regional manager. 5

By this time, Strauss has taken both his brothers and two brothers-in-law into the company and was ready for his third San Francisco store. Over the ensuing years the company prospered locally and by the time of his death in 1902, Strauss had become a man of prominence in California. F»r three decades thereafter the business 6

profitable though small, with sales largely confined to the working people of the West—cowboys, lumberjacks, railroad workers, and the like. Levi's jeans were first introduced to the East, apparently, during the dude-ranch craze of the 1930s, when vacationing Easterners returned and spread the word about the wonderful pants with rivets. Another boost came in World War II, when blue jeans were declared an essential commodity and were sold only to people engaged in defense work. From a company with fifteen salespeople, two plants, and almost no business east of the Mississippi in 1946, the organization grew in thirty years to include a sales force of more than twenty-two thousand, with fifty plants and offices in thirty-five countries. Each year, more than 250,000,000 items of Levi's clothing are sold—including more than 83,000,000 pairs of riveted blue jeans. They have become, through marketing, word of mouth, and demonstrable reliability, the common pants of America. They can be purchased pre-washed, pre-faded, and pre-shrunk for the suitably proletarian look. They adapt themselves to any sort of idiosyncratic use; women slit them at the inseams and convert them into long skirts, men chop them off above the knees and turn them into something to be worn while challenging the surf. Decorations and ornamentations abound.

7 The pants have become a tradition, and along the way have acquired a history of their own—so much so that the company has opened a museum in San Francisco. There was, for example, the turn-of-the-century trainman who replaced a faulty coupling with a pair of jeans; the Wyoming man who used his jeans as a towropg to haul his car out of a ditch; the Californian who found several pairs in an abandoned mine, wore them, then discovered they were sixty-three years old and still as good as new and turned them over to the Smithsonian as a tribute to their toughness. And then there **is** the particularly terrifying story of the careless construction worker who dangled fifty-two stories above the street until rescued, his sole support the Levi's belt loop through which his rope was hooked.

Questions About the Reading

1. What reasons does Quinn give for the success of blue jeans? Identify the sentences that support your answer.
2. What are the main **incidents** in the development of blue jeans?
3. Speculate about why Levi's brothers lied to him about their position in America. Why do you think the writer included this detail?
4. What conclusions can you draw about Strauss's character?
5. How do you think Quinn feels about Levi's jeans and their popularity?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What order does the writer use for paragraphs 3-6? What is the purpose of the first paragraph of the essay? What is the purpose of the last paragraph?
2. Is the **thesis** of the essay stated? If so, in which sentence(s)? If not, state the thesis in a sentence of your own.
3. What are the **main ideas** in paragraphs 3, 4, 5, and 6? Are the main ideas directly stated?
4. What is the **point of view** in person, time, and tone in the essay?
5. Could the first sentence in paragraph 5 be more than one sentence? Why or why not? Could the third sentence in paragraph 5 be made into more than one sentence? If so, how? If not, why not?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a narrative essay in which you explain an achievement—either your own or that of another person—resulting from one of the following: working hard, being lucky, taking a risk, or being innovative. Describe the series of events that led to success.
2. Write a narrative essay about an important opportunity that you once had. Explain how the opportunity arose, how you did or did not take advantage of it, and what the results of your action were.

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds?

Paul Theroux

Paul Theroux is a novelist, essayist, and world traveler. In The Old Patagonian Express, *he wrote about his journey from the suburbs of Boston to the southern tip of South America—a journey that he took entirety by train. The essay below tells of an encounter he had during that journey with a young woman whose absorption with the health of her body has closed her mind to thinking about other viewpoints.*

Words to Know

betrothal promise to marry
Buddhism a form of religion practiced principally in eastern and central Asian countries
commissar official of the Communist party
devoid absent, lacking
effulgent splendid, glorious
Leopold Bloom character in Joyce's *Ulysses*
magnum about two-fifths of **a** gallon
Mahatma Gandhi Hindu spiritual leader
Marx Karl Marx, German-born founder of communism
pedantic boring and overlearned
savored enjoyed
wraithlike like a ghost, not like a living person
Zen form of Buddhism

L here would be no food until Albany, when the New York section, with its diner, was hooked to this train. So I went into the lounge car and had a beer. I packed my pipe and set it on fire and savored the effulgent blur of lazy reflection that pipe smoke induces in me. I blew myself a cocoon of it, and it hung in clouds around me, so comforting and thick that the girl who entered the car and sat down opposite seemed wraithlike, a child lost in fog. She put three bulging plastic bags on her table, then tucked her legs under her. She folded her hands in her lap and stared stonily down the car. Her intensity made me alert. At the next table a man was engrossed in a Matt Helm story, and near him, two linesmen—they wore their tools—were playing poker. There was a boy with a short-wave radio, but his racket was drowned by the greater racket of the train. A man in a uniform—a train man—was stirring coffee; there was an old greasy lantern at his feet. At the train

man's table, but not speaking, a fat woman sneaked bites at a candy bar. She did it guiltily, as if she feared that at any moment someone would shout, *Put that thing away!*

"You mind not smoking?" 2

It was the girl with the bags and the stony gaze. 3

I looked for a NO SMOKING sign. There was none. I said, "Is it bothering you?" 4

She said, "It kills my eyes." 5

I put my pipe down and took a swig of beer. 6

She said, "That stuff is poison." 7

Instead of looking at her I looked at her bags. I said, "They say peanuts cause cancer." 8

She grinned vengefully at me and said, "Pumpkin seeds." 9

I turned away. 10

"And these are almonds." 11

I considered relighting my pipe. 12

"And this is cashews." 13

Her name was Wendy. Her face was an oval of innocence, devoid of any expression of inquiry. Her prettiness was as remote from my idea of beauty as homeliness and consequently was not at all interesting. But I could not blame her for that: it is hard for anyone to be interesting at twenty. She was a student, she said, and on her way to Ohio. She wore an Indian skirt, and lumberjack boots, and the weight of her leather jacket made her appear round shouldered. 14

"What do you study, Wendy?" 15

"Eastern philosophy. I'm into Zen." 16

Oh, Christ, I thought. But she was still talking. She had been learning about the Hole, or perhaps the Whole—it still made no sense to me. She hadn't read all that much, she said, and her teachers were lousy. But she thought that once she got to Japan or Burma she would find out a lot more. She would be in Ohio for a few more years. The thing about Buddhism, she said, was that it involved your whole life. Like everything you did—it was Buddhism. And everything that happened in the world—that was Buddhism, too. 17

"Not politics," I said. "That's not Buddhism. It's just crooked." 18

"That's what everyone says, but they're wrong. I've been reading Marx. Marx is a kind of Buddhist." 19

Was she pulling my leg? I said, "Marx was about as Buddhist as this beer can. But anyway, I thought we were talking about politics. It's the opposite of thought—it's selfish, it's narrow, it's dishonest. It's all half truths and short cuts. Maybe a few Buddhist politicians would change things, but in Burma, where . . ." 20

"Take this," she said, and motioned to her bags of nuts. "I'm a raw- 21
foodist-nondairy vegetarian. You're probably right about politics being all wrong. I think people are doing things all wrong—I mean, completely. They eat junk. They *consume junk.* Look at them!" The fat lady was still eating her candy bar, or possibly another candy bar. "They're just destroying themselves and they don't even know it. They're smoking themselves to death. Look at the smoke in this car."

I said, "Some of that is my smoke." 22

"It kills my eyes." 23

" 'Nondairy/ " I said. "That means you don't drink milk." 24

"Right." 25

"What about cheese? Cheese is nice. And you've got to have cal- 26
cium."

"I get my calcium in cashews," she said. Was this true? "Anyway 27
milk gives me mucus. Milk is the biggest mucus-producer there is."

"I didn't know that." 28

"I used to go through a box of Kleenex a day." 29

"A box. That's quite a lot." 30

"It was the milk. It made mucus/' she said. "My nose used to run 31
like you wouldn't believe."

"Is that why people's noses run? Because of the milk?" 32

"Yes!" she cried. 33

I wondered if she had a point. Milk drinkers' noses run. Children 34
are milk drinkers. Therefore, children's noses run. And children's noses do run. But it still struck me as arguable. Everyone's nose runs—except hers, apparently.

"Dairy products give you headaches, too." 35

"You mean, they give *you* headaches." 36

"Right. Like the other night. My sister knows I'm a vegetarian. So 37
she gives me some eggplant parmyjan. She doesn't know I'm a non-dairy raw foodist. I looked at it. As soon as I saw it was cooked and had cheese on it, I knew that I was going to feel awful. But she spent all day making it, so what else could I do? The funny thing is that I liked the taste of it. God, was I sick afterwards! And my nose started to run."

I told her that, in his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi stated that 38
eating meat made people lustful. And yet at thirteen, an age at which most American children were frolicking with the Little League team or concentrating on making spit balls, Gandhi had got married—and he was a vegetarian.

"But it wasn't a real marriage," said Wendy. "It was a kind of Hindu 39
ceremony."

"The betrothal took place when he was seven years old. The mar- 40
riage sealed the bargain. They were both thirteen. . . ."

Wendy pondered this. I decided to try again. Had she, I asked, not- 41
iced a falling off of her sexual appetite since her conversion to raw vegetables?

"I used to get insomnia," she began. "And sick—I mean, really sick. 42
And I admit I lost my temper. I think meat *does* cause people to be hostile."

"But what about sexual desire? Lechery, cravings—I don't know 43
quite how to put it."

"You mean sex? It's not supposed to be violent. It should be gentle 44
and beautiful. Kind of a quiet thing."

Maybe if you're a vegetarian, I thought. She was still droning on 45
in her pedantic college student way

"I understand my body better now ... I've gotten to know my body 46
a whole lot better ... Hey, I can tell when there's just a little difference in my blood sugar level. I can sense it going up and down, my blood sugar level. When I eat certain things."

I asked her whether she ever got violently ill. She said absolutely 47
not. Did she ever feel a little bit sick?

Her reply was extraordinary: "I don't believe in germs." 48

Amazing. I said, "You mean, you don't believe that germs exist? 49
They're just an optical illusion under the microscope? Dust, little specks—that sort of thing."

"I don't think germs cause sickness. Germs are living things—small, 50
living things that don't do any harm."

"Like cockroaches and fleas," I said. "Friendly little critters, right?" 51

"Germs don't make you sick," she insisted. "Food does. If you eat 52
bad food it weakens your organs and you get sick. It's your organs that make you sick. Your heart, your bowels."

"But what makes your organs sick?" 53

"Bad food. It makes them weak. If you eat good food, like I do," 54
she said, gesturing at her pumpkin seeds, "you don't get sick. Like I never get sick. If I get a runny nose and a sore throat, I don't call it a cold."

"You don't?" 55

"No, it's because I ate something bad. So I eat something good." 56

I decided to shelve my inquiry about sickness being merely a ques- 57
tion of a runny nose, and not cancer or the bubonic plague. Let's get down to particulars, I thought. What had she had to eat that day?

"This. Pumpkin seeds, cashews, almonds. A banana. An apple. 58
Some raisins. A slice of wholemeal bread—toasted. If you don't toast it you get mucus."

"You're sort of declaring war on the gourmets, eh?" 59

"I know I have fairly radical views," she said. 60

"I wouldn't call them radical," I said, "They're smug views, self-im- 61
portant ones. Egocentric, you might say. The funny thing about being smug and egocentric and thinking about health and purity all the time is that it can turn you into a fascist. *My* diet, *my* bowels, *my* self—it's the way right-wing people talk. The next thing you know you'll be raving about the purity of the race."

"Okay," she conceded in a somersault, "I admit some of my views 62
are conservative. But so what?"

"Well, for one thing, apart from your bowels there's a big world out 63
there. The Middle East. The Panama Canal. Political prisoners having their toenails pulled out in Iran. Families starving in India."

This rant of mine had little effect, though it did get her onto the 64
subject of families—perhaps it was my mention of starving Indians. She hated families, she said. She couldn't help it; she just hated them.

I said, "What does a family make you think of?" 65

"A station wagon, a mother, a father. Four or five kids eating ham- 66
burgers. They're really awful, and they're everywhere—they're all over the place, driving around."

"So you think families are a blot on the landscape?" 67

She said, "Well, yes." 68

She had been at this college in Ohio for three years. She had never 69
in that time taken a literature course. Even more interesting, this was the first time in her life that she had ever been on a train. She liked the train, she said, but didn't elaborate.

I wondered what her ambitions were. 70

"I think I'd like to get involved in food. Teach people about food. 71
What they should eat. Tell them why they get sick." It was the voice of a commissar, and yet a moment later she said dreamily "Sometimes I look at a piece of cheese. I know it tastes good. I know I'll like it. But I also know that I'm going to feel awful the next day if I eat it."

I said, "That's what I think when I see a magnum of champagne, 72
a rabbit pie, and a bowl of cream puffs with hot chocolate sauce."

At the time, I did not think Wendy was crazy in any important 73
sense. But afterward, when I remembered our conversation, she seemed to me profoundly loony. And profoundly incurious. I had casually mentioned to her that I had been to Upper Burma and Africa. I had described Leopold Bloom's love of "the faint tang of urine" in

the kidneys he had for breakfast. I had shown a knowledge of Buddhism and the eating habits of Bushmen in the Kalahari and Gandhi's early married life. I was a fairly interesting person, was I not? But not once in the entire conversation had she asked me a single question. She never asked what I did, where I had come from, or where I was going. When it was not interrogation on my part, it was monologue on hers. Uttering rosy generalities in her sweetly tremulous voice, and tugging her legs back into the lotus position when they slipped free, she was an example of total self-absorption and desperate self-advertisement. She had mistaken egotism for Buddhism. I still have a great affection for the candor of American college students, but she reminded me of how many I have known who were unteachable.

Questions About the Reading

1. What is the writer's opinion of the girl? Does he state his opinion? If so, in which sentences particularly?
2. When the girl talks about wanting to teach other people about foods, the writer says, "It was the voice of a commissar." Explain what he means. Would you want to be taught by the girl? Why or why not?
3. Is there anything in the first paragraph to suggest that the writer had already formed an opinion of the girl before she began to speak? Do you think his opinion of her changed during their conversation?
4. Does the writer reveal himself as being almost as convinced of his own opinions as the girl is of hers? Support your answer by citing sentences and passages from the essay.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. The writer's principal strategy for creating an impression of the girl is dialogue. Compare this strategy to the one used by Mary Mebane in "A Very Basic Decision," page 32.
2. What is the purpose of the first paragraph of the essay?
3. Does the writer state the *thesis* of the essay? If so, in which sentence(s)? If not, state the thesis in a sentence of your own. What is the significant point the writer is making in this narrative?
4. The paragraphs of the essay are very short and often contain only one sentence. Why is the paragraphing appropriate to the principal writing strategy that the writer uses in the narrative?

5. This essay touches on a great many subjects, but the main topic of conversation is food. In this discussion, how is food used to represent a larger idea?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a narrative essay about an interesting conversation you had during a bus ride or a plane ride, while waiting in a long line, or in some similar situation. Use dialogue to recount what was said.
2. Write a narrative essay describing an argument between two people on some important issue, such as the death penalty, the nuclear freeze movement, acid rain, or teenage pregnancy. If you like, make this an imaginary argument.
3. At some time a person has probably talked you into doing something against your better judgment. Write a narrative essay about that event.

A Brother's Murder

Brent Staples

Brent Staples grew up in the bleak, threatening environment that confronts so many poor young blacks in America. Staples rejected that environment and became a successful journalist, but his younger brother was trapped and consumed by the inner-city culture around him. In this essay on his brother's death, Staples shows how narrative writing can express the powerful emotional background behind a single tragic event.

Words to Know

ensconced comfortably settled
machismo aggressive manliness
paranoia suspicion that others bear ill will

It has been more than two years since my telephone rang with the news that my younger brother Blake—just twenty-two years old—had been murdered. The young man who killed him was only twenty-four. Wearing a ski mask, he emerged from a car, fired six times at close range with a massive .44 Magnum, then fled. The two had once been inseparable friends. A senseless rivalry—beginning, I think, with an argument over a girlfriend—escalated from posturing, to threats, to violence, to murder. The way the two were living, death could have come to either of them from anywhere. In fact, the assailant had already survived multiple gunshot wounds from an accident much like the one in which my brother lost his life.

As I wept for Blake I felt wrenched backward into events and circumstances that had seemed light-years gone. Though a decade apart, we both were raised in Chester, Pennsylvania, an angry, heavily black, heavily poor, industrial city southwest of Philadelphia. There, in the 1960s, I was introduced to mortality, not by the old and failing, but by beautiful young men who lay wrecked after sudden explosions of violence. The first, I remembered from my fourteenth year—Johnny, brash lover of fast cars, stabbed to death two doors from my house in a fight over a pool game. The next year, my teenage cousin, Wesley, whom I loved very much, was shot dead. The summers blur. Milton, an angry young neighbor, shot a crosstown rival, wounding him badly. William, another teenage neighbor, took a shotgun blast to the shoulder in some urban drama and displayed his bandages proudly. His brother, Leonard, severely beaten, lost an eye and donned a black patch. It went on.

I recall not long before I left for college, two local Vietnam veterans—one from the Marines, one from the Army—arguing fiercely, nearly at blows about which outfit had done the most in the war. The most killing, they meant. Not much later, I read a magazine article that set that dispute in a context. In the story, a noncommissioned officer—a sergeant I believe—said he would pass up any number of affluent, suburban-born recruits to get hard-core soldiers from the inner city. They jumped into the rice paddies with "their manhood on their sleeves/' I believe he said. These two items—the veterans arguing and the sergeant's words—still characterize for me the circumstances under which black men in their teens and twenties kill one another with such frequency. With a touchy paranoia born of living battered lives, they are desperate to be *real* men. Killing is only machismo taken to the extreme. Incursions to be punished by death were many and minor, and they remain so: they include stepping on the wrong toe, literally; cheating in a drug deal; simply saying "I dare you" to someone holding a gun; crossing territorial lines in a gang dispute. My brother grew up to wear his manhood on his sleeve. And when he died, he was in that group—black, male and in its teens and early twenties—that is far and away the most likely to murder or be murdered. 3

I left the East Coast after college, spent the mid- and late 1970s in Chicago as a graduate student, taught for a time, then became a journalist. Within ten years of leaving my hometown, I was overeducated and "upwardly mobile," ensconced on a quiet, tree-lined street where voices raised in anger were scarcely ever heard. The telephone, like some grim umbilical, kept me connected to the old world with news of deaths, imprisonings and misfortune. I felt emotionally beaten up. Perhaps to protect myself, I added a psychological dimension to the physical distance I had already achieved. I rarely visited my hometown. I shut it out. 4

As I fled the past, so Blake embraced it. On Christmas of 1983, I traveled from Chicago to a black section of Roanoke, Virginia, where he then lived. The desolate public housing projects, the hopeless, idle young men crashing against one another—these reminded me of the embittered town we'd grown up in. It was a place where once I would have been comfortable, or at least sure of myself. Now, hearing of my brother's forays into crime, his scrapes with police and street thugs, I was scared, unsteady on foreign terrain. 5

I saw that Blake's romance with the street life and the hustler image had flowered dangerously. One evening that late December, standing in some Roanoke dive among drug dealers and grim, hair-trigger losers, I told him 1 feared for his life. He had affected the image of the 6

tough he wanted to be. But behind the dark glasses and the swagger, I glimpsed the baby-faced toddler I'd once watched over. I nearly wept. I wanted desperately for him to live. The young think themselves immortal, and a dangerous light shone in his eyes as he spoke laughingly of making fools of the policemen who had raided his apartment looking for drugs. He cried out as I took his right hand. A line of stitches lay between the thumb and index finger. Kickback from a shotgun, he explained, nothing serious. Gunplay had become part of his life.

I lacked the language simply to say: Thousands have lived this for you and died. I fought the urge to lift him bodily and shake him. This place and the way you are living smells of death to me, I said. Take some time away, I said. Let's go downtown tomorrow and buy a plane ticket anywhere, take a bus trip, anything to get away and cool things off. He took my alarm casually. We arranged to meet the following night—an appointment he would not keep. We embraced as though through glass. I drove away. 7

As I stood in my apartment in Chicago holding the receiver that evening in February 1984, I felt as though part of my soul had been cut away I questioned myself then, and I still do. Did I not reach back soon enough or earnestly enough for him? For weeks I awoke crying from a recurrent dream in which I chased him, urgently trying to get him to read a document I had, as though reading it would protect him from what had happened in waking life. His eyes shining like black diamonds, he smiled and danced just beyond my grasp. When I reached for him, I caught only the space where he had been. 8

Questions About the Reading

1. At what time is Staples writing? At what time did the events he describes occur?
2. The writer describes one main event by recounting several subordinate events. What is the main event? And how many subordinate events are described?
3. What reasons does the writer give for his brother's behavior?
4. In paragraph 3, what does the expression "with 'their manhood on their sleeves'" mean?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the main idea of the essay? Is the main idea directly stated or implied?
2. What order does the writer use for his narration? Is there more than one order?
3. How does the writer let you know that this essay is about more than his brother's death? What comment is he making on American society?
4. In paragraph 6, what details does the writer use to give the reader an idea of his brother's character?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay narrating an event in which someone important to you—a brother or sister, a friend, or a friend's child—did something foolish or dangerous. Try to show the reader how you reacted to the incident,
2. Write a narrative essay recounting an event that made you happy or proud. Use chronological order to describe the event itself, but feel free to write from a different point in time at the beginning or end of the essay.

The Deli

Carmen Machin (Student)

Carmen Machin was a student at East Los Angeles College when she wrote this account of running a small food store in New York. She is especially effective at letting us see what happened exactly as she saw it at the time. Her account gives us a good idea of her own refreshing character—a bit wide-eyed and innocent, but ready to discover things, to learn, and to take the world as it comes.

Words to Know

naivete innocence
purloined stolen
sorties entries, invasions

IVJLy husband and I were about a year into wedded bliss, when we were made an offer we couldn't refuse. There was a delicatessen whose owner was anxious to sell. He was moving to another state. We could have the store at payments we could afford. We accepted. There was an apartment behind and connected to it which was included in the deal. We had no idea what the neighborhood was like, but with youthful energy and optimism, we moved in. 1

The first week was tragic. As the days passed and the end of the month approached, we realized that if things continued as they were, we would not only be unable to make the payments, but would probably have to close the doors. In the midst of this anxiety was the surly attitude of the customers. One lady in particular seemed to relish my discomfort and attempts at self-control while she, on each of her sorties into the establishment, accused us, now of underweighing the cold cuts and salads, or then, of miscounting her change. For weeks I remained courteous and patient before her onslaught. I did not want to alienate the very few customers that we had. 2

Then suddenly, we began to see new faces. Our business started a definite upward swing. Even our first customers seemed more pleasant. All, that is, except HER. The day came when I felt I could no longer tolerate her attacks, and still smiling, I suggested that since we did not seem to be able to satisfy her, that it might be a good idea if she went elsewhere. She burst out laughing and in her thick Irish brogue, proclaimed to the other customers who were there at the time, that at last she had made me show some "backbone." Then she turned to me and said: "I wondered how long you'd be taking it." She went on to marvel 3

at the intestinal fortitude or innocence of two "spies" moving into an Irish neighborhood. I stood there in complete awe, as the other customers assured me that they had, at first, abandoned the store when they heard that "spies was buying/' but that, thanks to Madeline Hannon, for that was our tormentor's name, they had, one by one, come back.

New York is a great big city; most folks call it unfriendly, and yet, 4
I never found it so. This area, from 96th Street to 100 Street, between Amsterdam and Columbus avenues, was absolutely small townish. Everyone knew everybody else and most were related in some way. Outsiders who moved in had to prove themselves worthy of acceptance or remain forever strangers. We were fortunate. Even the local gang, called "The Dukes," on whose turf our place was located, accepted us wholeheartedly.

The "Dukes," unknown to us, had terrorized all the shopkeepers 5
in the area. In order to be able to stay in business without being harassed by vandalism, shoplifting, out and out robberies, and, in certain cases, beatings, the Dukes were paid whatever they felt the traffic could bear. In their opinion, we were to be no exception.

One day three of the young men swaggered into the store. At the 6
time, my husband was in the cellar arranging a shipment of merchandise that had just arrived, and I, expecting him momentarily, was preparing a sandwich which was to be my lunch. As I glanced up, I saw one of them quickly grab some Hostess Cupcakes and put them in his pocket; another leaned against the fruit bin which was immediately minus an apple. Such was my naivete that I firmly believed the only reason anyone stole food was hunger. My heart broke and at the same time opened and embraced them in the mother syndrome. They asked to speak to my husband. "He's not here at the moment, but if you don't mind waiting, he should be back in a jiffy." They nodded.

As they started to turn to walk around the customer area, I pro- 7
ceeded to introduce myself and, at the same time, commenced making three more sandwiches. While I made small talk (actually, it was a monologue), they stood silent, looking fiercely, albeit hungrily at the masterpieces I was concocting: Italian rolls, piled high with juicy roast pork and, on top, my husband's wonderful homemade cole slaw. I placed them on paper plates along with pickles and plenty of potato chips, then I said, "Come on, you'll have to eat in the kitchen, because we're not licensed to serve in the store. Do you want milk or soda?" "Don't you know who we are?" "I've seen you around, but I don't know your names," I replied. They looked at me in disbelief, then shrugging their shoulders, marched as one into the kitchen which was

the first room behind the store. They ate to their hearts' content and, before they left, emptied their pockets, depositing each purloined article in its appointed place. No apologies were given, none were expected. But from that day on, we were protected, and the only payment we ever made was that which we also received: friendship, trust, and acceptance.

Questions About the Reading

1. Explain how the writer proved she was "worthy of acceptance." Did she use the same method in each of the two incidents she tells about in the narrative?
2. What final conclusion can you draw about Madeline Hannon's character? Was she prejudiced? Were her friends prejudiced?
3. Why do you think Madeline and her neighbors behaved as they did?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. In paragraph 4, the writer says, "Outsiders who moved in had to prove themselves worthy of acceptance." What purpose does this statement serve in the essay?
2. What **order** does the writer use in explaining the incidents that took place? Are there any paragraphs in which the writer seems to change that order?
3. What is the point of view of the narrative? If the writer had known at the time of the incidents what she knew when she was writing, do you think the events would have proceeded in the same way with the same outcomes?
4. The writer does not use very much **dialogue** in her narrative. Rewrite paragraphs 6 and 7, changing some of the descriptive statements into quoted dialogue.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a narrative essay about an experience in which you did not fully understand what was happening until after the event—perhaps, for instance, when you were the target of a practical joke, or when you misinterpreted a friendly gesture as a romantic overture.
2. Write a narrative essay in which you tell about a person who achieves a goal only after standing up to another person.

3. Write a narrative essay about a situation in which you were at a serious disadvantage. Tell how you were able to work around that disadvantage.

Description

BY USING *DESCRIPTION*, the writer can provide the reader with a "word picture" of a specific person, the flavor of a special place, or the look of a particular object. To help the reader visualize the object, the writer chooses key details to develop the description: a certain liveliness in a person's eyes, the movement of ocean waves, the design of a favorite chair.

We saw in Chapter 2 that writers use descriptive words to add color and vividness to the details they describe. The specific descriptive words the writer chooses depend on the particular *impression* the writer wants to create. For example, the writer can create the impression of a person who is likeable by describing the person's face as "friendly" and "good-natured." The writer can create the opposite impression by using such descriptive words as "shifty" or "scowling." In the following paragraph, the writer develops an effective impression of a chair by the build-up of details and descriptive words that recreate the object for the reader.

Detail: Location

Detail: appearance

Detail: appearance

The chair was the one piece of furniture I wanted to take with me when I closed up my parents' house for the final time. To look at it, sitting in the same kitchen corner where it had been for fifty years, you'd wonder how it could be my favorite chair. It was nothing but a straight-backed wooden chair, its seat scratched here and there from the soles of a small boy's shoes. The only thing unusual about it was the intricate design carved into its back. But the carving was what made the chair meaningful to me. I had sat in that chair many times as punishment for errors in my ways. I suppose my mother thought it was defiance that led me to sit

cross-legged on the seat with my back to her in the kitchen. But it was not defiance. Rather, in that position my eyes and then my fingers could trace the intertwining leaves and flowers of the design carved in the back *of* the chair. Each time I sat there I seemed to see lines and shapes I hadn't seen before: a heart-shaped leaf, a budding rose, a blade of grass. Perhaps that chair had something to do with my lasting interest in well-made antique furniture. Who knows? I do know that when I drove away on that last day, the chair, carefully wrapped in several old quilts, lay tenderly cradled on the back seat of my car.

Details: decoration of chair

Notice that the chair is described only as being a straight-backed wooden chair with a scratched seat and a design carved into its back. However, the writer creates the dominant impression that the chair—in spite of being associated with childhood punishment—remained beautiful to him and probably influenced his lifelong interest in fine woods and antiques. The words *intricate, tracing, intertwining, heart-shaped,* and *budding* describe and help the reader picture the design in the back of the chair. And in the last sentence, the phrases *carefully wrapped* and *tenderly cradled* convey indirectly the writer's feelings about the chair. The reader must be given enough detail not only to picture an object but also to understand what touched or moved the writer to single it out.

In descriptive writing you will often find stylistic devices that help convey both the essential qualities of the subject and its significance to the writer. Consider the following paragraph.

Erethizon dorsatus, an antisocial character of the northern U.S. and Canadian forest, commonly called a porcupine, looks like an uncombed head, has a grumpy personality, fights with his tail, hides his head when he's in trouble, floats like a cork, attacks backing up, retreats going ahead, and eats toilet seats as if they were Post Toasties. It's a sad commentary on his personality that people are always trying to do him in.

Details: simile and irony

In this paragraph, the writer uses a figure of speech called a **simile** to help enhance the description of the porcupine. A simile takes items that are considered unlike and then compares them in a way that shows an unexpected similarity. Usually, a simile uses *like* or *as* to establish the connection between the items. Two similes in this paragraph, for example, are that a porcupine "looks like an uncombed head" and "floats like a cork." (Can you find another?) A figure of speech related, to the simile is the **metaphor,** which also compares unlike items, but does so without directly stating the connection with *like* or *as.* Metaphors may be used to express an idea that is rather abstract, as in "the *scales* of justice." But they can be used for other effects too, and they may only be **implied** by the use of a certain verb—"The swimmer waddled across the sand."

Another technique the writer of the above paragraph uses is irony. Irony introduces an effect or a relationship that is contradictory or unexpected. For instance, it is not normal to "attack backing up" or to "retreat going ahead," and it is certainly not normal to "eat toilet seats." But it is normal for the porcupine, and that is the irony. Writers frequently use irony to amuse the reader, but ironic situations can also be instructive, sad, or maddening.

The organization of a description also contributes to its effectiveness. The writer may arrange the details in order of importance, usually moving from the less important to the more important details. The details in the paragraph above are arranged so they build to the most significant point—the deeper meaning of the chair to the writer. The writer may choose to arrange the details according to space, called **spatial order.** When a description is organized according to space, the writer takes a physical position in a room or at a scene and then describes what can be seen from that position, using some consistent order such as moving from left to right, from foreground to background, or from top to bottom.

The following paragraph describes the quarters below deck in a mid-1800s passenger ship. It was to this area that early immigrants to the United States were confined during the long, slow crossing of the Atlantic. Notice that the writer describes the area as he sees it from its entryway, looking down the middle aisle.

In the fitful light, your eye will discover a middle aisle five feet wide. It will be a while before you can make out the

Ends of aisles
Furnishings, objects
Sides of aisles
Exact dimensions within partitions

separate shapes within it, the water closets at either end (for the women; the men must go above deck), one or several cooking stoves, the tables. The aisle itself, you will see, is formed by two rows of bunks that run to the side of the ship. Examine a bunk. One wooden partition reaches from floor to ceiling to divide it from the aisle, another stretches horizontally from wall to aisle to create two decks. Within the partitions are the boxlike spaces, ten feet wide, five long, less than three high. For the months of the voyage, each is home for six to ten beings.

Oscar Handlin,
The Uprooted

In a descriptive essay, the writer may devote a paragraph to each characteristic of the person or object being described. In the essay that follows, the writer describes (paragraphs 2 through 5) the way American tourists dress and behave when they are sightseeing, shopping, enjoying the beach, driving, and speaking to the natives of St. Thomas Island. Some of the descriptive details, both words and phrases, that are particularly useful in providing a picture of the tourists to the reader are underlined.

St. Thomas is considered one of the most beautiful islands in the Caribbean, and everyday we are visited by large numbers of that strange group of people called "tourists." Once you become familiar with some of their basic characteristics and activities, they are easy to recognize. For our sample we will use the average, middle-aged American couple.

Details of clothing
Behavior
Posture and gestures
Behavior

They are going on a guided tour of the island. The wife is dressed in her polyester pants suit, carrying her white purse. Her curled and sprayed-stiff hairdo is covered with what looks like a chiffon scarf. The husband wears a short-sleeved shirt, Bermuda shorts, socks, sneakers, and a straw hat, and, of course, he carries a pocket Instamatic camera. They go around the entire island, sitting up in a crowded safari bus, sightseeing and snapping away with the camera.

After the tour, the driver drops them off at Main Street. Once they have paid the fare and turned in circles trying to find which way to go, they begin to walk down Main Street. As they walk by the first store, they hesitantly peer inside and step in. For curiosity's sake, they look around the whole store, and then they proceed to the next. But after they become tired of just looking, they become more selective and begin to buy. Give them a few hours, and you will see them,

Behavior

hands full of shopping bags with souvenirs and boxes of liquor, weary and exhausted, looking for a taxi back to the ship or hotel.

Specific articles of clothing
Appearance and walk

The next day, take a look down the beach. The wife wears a very conservative one-piece bathing suit with a matching cover-up and hat. The husband wears flowered trunks and a matching shirt. They may just sit in folding chairs reading novels—with white cream covering their noses and cheeks. Then they may decide to stroll along the beach and collect shells. Because they didn't get to see much of the island on the safari bus, they rent a car to see it for themselves at their own creepingly slow pace, Not only do they want to take in all the sights, but they also think it is too dangerous to go more than 15 miles per hour on the roads.

Behavior

You are now familiar with some of the tourists' characteristics and activities. If you still fail to recognize one, they have one other outstanding characteristic: they are very naive. If you are ever approached by someone as if you were the most foreign creature he had ever seen, and he speaks to you as though you cannot understand English, it is very likely you are dealing with a tourist.

Elizabeth Grammer (Student)

In paragraph 2, you can picture to yourself the wife in her pants suit with her curls and scarf, the husband in his Bermuda shorts and camera. Notice how specific the descriptive words are.

Notice also that the descriptive details the writer provides work together to create an overall impression of tourists. Although the writer is presenting a series of facts about the sample tourists, she tells us at the start that tourists are a "strange group," and that is an **opinion.** In the introduction to Chapter 2 we talked about the difference between writing **objectively** or **subjectively,** and here we see that although the writer is writing in an objective style, her choice of specific descriptive details and words supports her own subjective opinion that tourists are "strange" and "naive."

In creating a description, then, the writer must identify the important characteristics of the object or scene being described and then find the words—nouns and verbs, as well as adjectives and adverbs—that best express these characteristics. One method that writers use to help discover the important details and the best words for a description is a prewriting technique called **brainstorming.**

In brainstorming for a description, the writer begins, before starting to write, by listing all the features of the subject that come to mind and all the words that seem related to those features. The words and features need not be listed in any particular order and probably not all will be used in the final composition.' The idea is just to get started thinking about the subject and to build up a supply of details and words from which to choose effective ones that can contribute to the description. Brainstorming is a useful technique for other modes of development as well, and will be discussed again in later chapters.

Descriptive details are often combined with other modes of development. The following paragraphs, for example, are from a narrative essay about a young man's visit to the Mexican town that he had left soon after he was born. Notice his descriptions of the people and the Spanish architecture of the town.

Description: Spanish architecture

On my arrival at Morelia airport, I was greeted by the , most attractive architecture I had ever seen. All the buildings L had a very strong Spanish influence. Was it possible I had taken the wrong plane and landed somewhere in Spain?

People and their clothing

No, indeed; it was Morelia, and what a town! Its people were very plain and small-townlike. I was amused by some very oddly dressed people who wore white cotton clothing. On their heads the men wore straw hats, and the women wore large Spanish scarves called mantillas. I asked a ticket agent about the oddly dressed people. He explained that they were the native people, known as Tarascos. They were the founders of the land, and even today they are very traditional in their beliefs and ways.

Architectural features

I took a taxi to El Hotel Virrey de Mendoza, located in the middle of the town square. The hotel was made of hewn stone that was cut and shaped into the most captivating three-story building I had ever seen. It was built in the traditional Spanish style, with a central open patio completely surrounded by the building. My room had a spacious view of the town square and its cathedral. The cathedral was built in the seventeenth century in a baroque style that was popular in Europe. Beside the cathedral was the municipal palace and other government buildings, all in Colonial Spanish style. The feeling I had from the view was that I was back in the days when Spanish viceroys ruled the land, and the Catholic priests taught religion to the native inhabitants.

Arturo E. Ramirez (Student)
"Back to Where the Seed Was Planted"

^Descriptive words and phrases are an essential tool for effective writing. They can make an object concrete for the reader by describing how it looks, sounds, tastes, smells, or feels. They can create a distinct impression of that which is described and thus help the reader visualize the writer's ideas. You will find specific descriptive words and details in all the paragraphs and essays that follow. As you read, notice how experienced writers select revealing details because, as with the incidents in narrative writing, it is important to limit the details in descriptive writing to those that really contribute to the effectiveness of the description. In your own writing, select—as the following writers do—the most essential qualities of whatever you describe.

The questions and assignments at the end of each reading in this chapter will help you learn to recognize what qualities really are essential, and they will give you practice in choosing the best words to express those qualities.

A Baseball

Annie Dillard

Annie Dillard has written many perceptive observations about things that most people fail to notice or that they take for granted. In this paragraph from An American Childhood, *she uses descriptive writing to express the special significance that a baseball can have for a youngster.*

Words to Know

lashed **secured or bound as with a rope**

/ \ . baseball weighted your hand just so, and fit it. Its red stitches, its good leather and hardness like skin over bone, seemed to call forth a skill both easy and precise. On the catch—the grounder, the fly, the line drive—you could snag a baseball in your mitt, where it stayed, snap, like a mouse locked in its trap, not like some pumpkin of a softball you merely halted, with a terrible sound like a splat. You could curl your fingers around a baseball, and throw it in a straight line. When you hit it with a bat it cracked—and your heart cracked, too, at the sound. It took a grass stain nicely, stayed round, smelled good, and lived lashed in your mitt all winter, hibernating.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why does the writer object to softballs? How is a baseball superior?
2. What does the writer mean when she says the baseball's features "seemed to call forth a skill both easy and precise"?
3. Which features of the baseball made it simple? Which ones made it reliable?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Can you identify a topic sentence in this paragraph? Is the main idea implied?
2. The writer says that "your heart cracked" at the sound of a batted ball. Does she make you remember the feeling she describes? If not, can you imagine it?
3. In the last sentence, the writer implies that the baseball is a living thing. Which word makes this implication?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph describing an object you encounter nearly every day but rarely think much about. For instance, you could write about your sunglasses, your favorite mug, your pillow, your key ring, or your dog's tail.
2. Look out the window nearest you. Picking your subject quickly, without thinking about how you will describe it, write a descriptive paragraph about one of the things you see.

The Stinging Cell

John Hersey

John Hersey—renowned as a journalist and as an author of books and essays—has been •writing fiction and nonfidion for more than five decades. In this paragraph, he uses intricate details, expressed in simple language, to describe one of nature's tiniest marvels.

Words to Know

hypodermic needle a syringe—with a needle, a hollow barrel, and a plunger—that is used to give injections

syringe a hollow bulb or tube from which liquid is squirted out or drawn in through a small opening

've talked about marvels out here. Here's one for you: the stinging cell of the kind embedded by the hundreds in the tentacle of a jellyfish. It's really almost unbelievable that such a tricky device could grow in a single cell. It has a mouth, beside which is a tiny hair, the trigger of the cell's explosive weapon. The latter consists of a kind of bladder, like a rubber syringe, filled with a poisonous fluid, running back from the mouth, with a pair of blades folded like scissors near the mouth and a long, flexible needle coiled inside. When the hair trigger comes into contact with anything edible, there is a sudden increase of pressure inside the bulb, and out from the mouth first pop the scissors, opening out to cut an incision in the victim's skin, then the long needle uncoils and shoots itself through it into the victim. When the needle is fully extended and rigid, its tip bursts and the bladder shoots a paralyzing drug into the victim. It's a hypodermic needle and its barrel, all built into a single cell.

Questions About the Reading

1. What causes pressure to increase in the bladder of the cell?
2. How big is a cell?
3. Why is the stinging cell a marvel?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify the **topic** sentence in this paragraph.
2. Besides description, what other **mode of development** does the writer use?
3. What is the main **metaphor** the writer uses to clarify his description?
4. Although the writer is describing something extraordinarily small, he uses terms from our everyday, human-sized world to do so. But in the end, he reminds us that he is describing something tiny. How does he remind us, and what is the purpose of this strategy.

Writing Assignments

1. Think of a plant or animal that you find fascinating, funny, or grotesque. Using a topic sentence like "The eye of a frog is a fascinating mechanism" or "The mosquito is perfectly designed for its gruesome job," write a paragraph describing your chosen subject. Try to think of colorful verbs to describe what your subject does. (Remember that you can brainstorm to search for specific words as well as for larger ideas.)
2. Using a spatial **order,** write a paragraph describing an enclosed space, such as the inside of your car, your kitchen at home, one of your closets, the locker room at your school gym, or a snack bar where you go sometimes. Concentrate on specific details of the place, and try to find adjectives that will help make your description accurate.

The Coffee Plantation

Isak Dinesen

Isak Dinesen was the pen name adopted by the Danish baroness Karen BHxen. The baroness lived in British East Africa from 1914 to 1931, managing a coffee plantation that she and her husband had purchased. Her stories of African life, published in Out of Africa *and* Shadows on the Grass, *with their wealth of exotic detail, appealed to many readers and more recently, with the appearance of a movie based on* Out of Africa, *to moviegoers. In the paragraph that follows, she describes the beauty and toil of running the coffee plantation.*

Word to Know

Ethiope someone from the African country of Ethiopia

X here are times of great beauty on a coffee-farm. When the plantation flowered in the beginning of the rains, it was a radiant sight, like a cloud of chalk, in the mist and the drizzling rain, over six hundred acres of land. The coffee-blossom has a delicate slightly bitter scent, like the blackthorn blossom. When the field reddened with the ripe berries, all the women and the children, whom they call the Totos, were called out to pick the coffee off the trees, together with the men; then the wagons and carts brought it down to the factory near the river. Our machinery was never quite what it should have been, but we had planned and built the factory ourselves and thought highly of it. Once the whole factory burned down and had to be built up again. The big coffee-dryer turned and turned, rumbling the coffee in its iron belly with a sound like pebbles that are washed about on the sea-shore. Sometimes the coffee would be dry, and ready to take out of the dryer, in the middle of the night. That was a picturesque moment, with many hurricane lamps in the huge dark room of the factory, that was hung everywhere with cobwebs and coffee-husks, and with eager glowing dark faces, in the light of the lamps, round the dryer; the factory, you felt, hung in the great African night like a bright jewel in an Ethiope's ear. Later on the coffee was hulled, graded and sorted, by hand, and packed in sacks sewn up with a saddler's needle.

Questions About the Reading

1. Was the coffee factory efficient and smooth-running? Why did it appeal to the writer?
2. What had to be done when the coffee in the dryer was dry?
3. Do you think the writer herself did much work on the plantation? What sort of work do you think she did?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify at least two **similes** in the paragraph. Are they effective? Why or why not?
2. What **order** does the writer use to describe the plantation?
3. In what respects is this paragraph a **narrative** as well as a description?
4. Try to pick out some particularly effective **details** in the paragraph, and analyze why they are effective. How do they help you visualize what the writer is describing?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph describing a job in which your whole family pitched in to help. Try to include details that show how you felt about the job.
2. Think about an outdoor location that is important to you. Pick one season of the year and write a paragraph describing what this place looks like during that time. Try to use order of importance. That is, begin with the details that seem most important to how this place looks and feels. Then move on to lesser details.

The Subway Station

Gilbert Highet

For many years a professor at Columbia University in New York, Gilbert Highet was born in Scotland and became a U.S. citizen in 1951. The following paragraph, taken from his book Talents and Geniuses, *demonstrates the writer's appreciation of a place that many of us simply ignore.*

Words to Know

abominable hateful
congealed thickened, made solid
defilement made dirty
dubious doubtful, suspect
encrusted covered with a thick crust
meager scanty, not enough
perfunctory carelessly indifferent
vaulting an arched structure
zest keen enjoyment

Standing in a subway station, I began to appreciate the place—almost to enjoy it. First of all, I looked at the lighting: a row of meager electric bulbs, unscreened, yellow, and coated with filth, stretched toward the black mouth of the tunnel, as though it were a bolt hole in an abandoned coal mine. Then I lingered, with zest, on the walls and ceiling: lavatory tiles which had been white about fifty years ago, and were now encrusted with soot, coated with the remains of a dirty liquid which might be either atmospheric humidity mingled with smog or the result of a perfunctory attempt to clean them with cold water; and, above them, gloomy^yaulting from which dingy paint was peeling off like scabs from an old wound, sick black paint leaving a leprous white undersurface. Beneath my feet, the floor was a nauseating dark brown with black stains upon it which might be stale oil or dry chewing gum or some worse defilement; it looked like the hallway of a condemned slum building. Then my eye traveled to the tracks, where two lines of glittering steel—the only positively clean objects in the whole place—ran out of darkness into darkness above an unspeakable mass of congealed oil, puddles of dubious liquid, and a mishmash of old cigarette packets, mutilated and filthy newspapers, and the debris that filtered down from the street above through a barred grating in the

roof. As I looked up toward the sunlight, 1 could see more debris sifting slowly downward, and making an abominable pattern in the slanting beam of dirt-laden sunlight. I was going on to relish more features of this unique scene: such as the advertisement posters on the walls—here a text from the Bible, there a half-naked girl, here a woman wearing a hat consisting of a hen sitting on a nest full of eggs, and there a pair of girl's legs walking up the keys of a cash register—all scribbled over with unknown names and well-known obscenities in black crayon and red lipstick; but then my train came in at last, I boarded it, and began to read. The experience was over for the time.

Questions About the Reading

1. What words does Highet use to demonstrate his growing appreciation of the subway?
2. Highet seems to be appreciating the subway station for the first time. Is this his first wait in a subway station, or does he ride the subway often? How can you tell?
3. At several points in the description, the writer creates the impression of squalor and disease. What are some of the words and phrases that he uses to do so?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. In the second sentence, the writer uses a **simile**—"as though it were a bolt hole in an abandoned coal mine"—to describe the tunnel. Find two other similes in the paragraph. Are they effective?
2. In what **order** does the writer present the description?
3. What is the **topic** sentence of this paragraph? Where is it located?
4. The paragraph is written in the past tense. Might it be more effective in the present? Rewrite the first three sentences in the present to see how they sound.
5. Why does the writer compare the floor of the subway station to the hallway of a condemned slum building?

Writing Assignments

1. Imagine that you are riding on the subway car the writer boarded at the end of the paragraph. Describe the people you might meet.
2. Write a paragraph describing a public place, such as a shopping mall, a parking lot, or a gas station. Use **spatial order** to organize your description.

3. Describe an object, place, or event that frightened you but that you were still drawn to (for instance, a horror movie, a ride in an amusement park, or a deserted road). What frightened you? What kept you interested? Use specific details.

The Sperm Whale

Barry Holstun Lopez

Sometimes a writer can be most effective by describing what cannot be seen, as well as what can. In this paragraph from Crossing Open Ground, *Barry Lopez helps us understand his subject by creating a picture that includes more than meets the eye.*

Words to Know

ambergris a waxy goo formed in the sperm whale's intestine and collected from the ocean surface or shore for use in making perfumes
aorta the main artery coming out of the heart
cacophony loud, harsh sound; racket
carnivore a meat-eating animal
corrugated shaped into folds or ridges
knots nautical miles per hour (one knot = **1.15** statute miles per **hour)**
rivulets small streams
subterranean underground
writhing twisting or struggling as in pain

X he sperm whale, for many, is the most awesome creature of the open seas. Imagine a forty-five-year-old male fifty feet long, a slim, shiny black animal with a white jaw and marbled belly cutting the surface of green ocean water at twenty knots. Its flat forehead protects a sealed chamber of exceedingly fine oil; sunlight sparkles in rivulets running off folds in its corrugated back. At fifty tons it is the largest carnivore on earth. Its massive head, a third of its body length, is scarred with the beak, sucker, and claw marks of giant squid, snatched out of subterranean canyons a mile below, in a region without light, and brought writhing to the surface. Imagine a four-hundred-pound heart the size of a chest of drawers driving five gallons of blood at a stroke through its aorta: a meal of forty salmon moving slowly down twelve-hundred feet of intestine; the blinding, acrid fragrance of a two-hundred-pound wad of gray ambergris lodged somewhere along the way; producing sounds more shrill than we can hear—like children shouting on a distant playground—and able to sort a cacophony of noise: electric crackling of shrimp, groaning of undersea quakes, roar of upwellings, whining of porpoise, hum of oceanic cables. With skin as sensitive as the inside of your wrist.

Questions About the Reading

1. Where do giant squid live?
2. Describe the type of audience you think Lopez is writing for.
3. How do you feel about the sperm whale after reading the paragraph? Sperm whales are endangered by several human activities. Based on this paragraph, do you think we should try to alter our activities to protect them? Why or why not?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the topic sentence of the paragraph?
2. What metaphor does the writer use for the whale's heart? What is the simile in the final sentence?
3. It is more than just its size and power that makes the sperm whale "awesome." How does the writer convince you that there is another side to the whale's awesomeness?

Writing Assignments

1. In a paragraph, describe something from the inside out, say, a roast turkey, a good book, an orange or a tomato, or some part of the human anatomy.
2. Imagine that you are in your room or some other place with which you are very familiar, and that it is pitch dark. Write a paragraph describing what you would experience as you felt your way around the room in the dark. You will have to use sensory details other than those gained through sight.

The Carnival

Edward Hoagland

Here, Edward Hoagland paints a picture with words. In the material that appears just ***prior to*** *this paragraph; he describes the intricate interactions of the crowd at the carnival This paragraph goes on to describe the motion of the carnival itself, in which the details presented show us an active and complex scene.*

Words to Know

aura the sense of a thing; how something feels
centripetal holding objects in a spin around a central axis
convulsive marked by convulsions; agitated
jibing shaking back and forth
roil a state of agitation or turbulence

X he carnival, operating with almost equal intricacy, had the same aura about it of participation in a grand design. The Octopus—six angular arms with buckets on the ends—reeled in a circle round and round, each bucket revolving on its own axis. The Round-up, a centripetal device, started flat, like a potter's wheel, and then stood up on edge, with the riders pressed hard against the rim. The Scrambler was a thicket of buckets mixing and jibing at great speed. There were Bumper-cars; a carousel with a small but effective organ—tin-tin, tub-tub—and bleached but convulsive horses; a Tilt-a-whirl, which was a rattling dizzy ride supervised by a broken-nosed movie star from Texas; and my favorite, the Tip Top, a Humpty-Dumpty-like creation which bounced on cushions and blasts of air while playing goofy wheezy nursery music as it turned. The mechanical activity—big Allis-Chalmers engines pistoning under a subtler, wider roil—gave the carnival some of the sweeping majesty of a steamship which makes shuttle crossings and doesn't register its significance by where it's going so much as by what's going on within its hub of lights. The roaring rides, the string of pitch games and shooting galleries with feathery prizes, the local Legionnaires offering their version of craps and roulette, all amounted to a vast river-boat that was traveling slowly through town. Sometimes the machines ran the men and sometimes the men enjoyed their dominion over the machines, but though the announcer for the hell drivers apologized to the crowd many times

for the fact that they weren't astronauts and seemed dejected on account of the Moonshot, nobody who worked in the carnival felt in the least eclipsed by this event.

Questions About the Reading

1. What do you think the writer is referring to when he mentions "the Moonshot"? What does he mean when he says none of the carnival workers felt "eclipsed" by it?
2. Try to draw a rough sketch of the Round-up based on the writer's description.
3. What impression do you have of the people who work in the carnival? Cite specific **details** that contribute to your impression.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What two similar **metaphors** does the writer use to refer to the carnival?
2. What is the writer's **point** of view? From the paragraph, where does it feel like he is located?
3. In the way it conveys the controlled chaos of the carnival, this paragraph is more than the sum of its parts. How does the writer achieve this effect?

Writing Assignments

1. In a paragraph, describe a scene you know well—possibilities might be your family at the breakfast or dinner table or the hallways when you come to class. Try to use **dialogue** to enhance your description.
2. Write a paragraph describing a scene that is full of sights and activities—for instance, a busy city street, the stands at an athletic event, a cafeteria at lunch time, a parade, or a rock concert. Try to give a sense of the variety of details in the scene. (Before doing this assignment, you might want to observe such a scene and take notes listing everything you see and hear.)

Tumalo

From **The** New **Yorker**

•-tvjAfX

Sometimes a writer may need to describe something that is not *significant, or at least does not appear so at first glance. In this paragraph, the writer makes it seem that all the details about the topic can be fit into a single paragraph.*

Word to Know

consequence Significance; importance

umalo is a town of little consequence. Actually, Tumalo isn't even an incorporated" town, and there is no post office. There's the eas station, along with a mini-market; the Tumalo Irrigation District Office; a Presbyterian church; an animal hospital; the Tumalo Trading Post, where a variety of hubcaps are for sale; and the Dames and Dudes Hair Design Studio. Behind the gas station is a mobile-home lot where maybe five families live. If you were driving from one of the big cities in the Willamette Valley—say, from Eugene—to go skiing at Mt. Bachelor or fly-fishing in the Deschutes River, you would pass Tumalo's gas station, off Highway 20, and, down the road, you would pass the Tumalo Emporium, a restaurant with Old West decor, but unless you were Hungry or needed gas the chances are you would pass through Tumalo without really noticing it.

Questions About the Reading

1. The writer gives only one detail about the Tumalo Trading Post. What do you think some other details might be? What other things might be for sale there?
2. Do people other than vacationers visit Tumalo? Judging from the types of places located there, what sorts of people do you think live around the town?
3. Is the writer making fun of Tumalo? Support your answer by citing details in the paragraph.
4. This paragraph is from a longer essay. Why do you think the writer is describing Tumalo the way he does? From what place in the essay do you think this paragraph is taken?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Why does the writer just give the names of several of the places in Tumalo, rather than using more details to describe them? What impression do the names have on you?
2. Is there a **topic** sentence in this paragraph? If so, where is it? Is the **main idea** of the paragraph stated more than once? Where?
3. What **order** does the writer use to describe the town? Does the paragraph make you feel as if you were driving through Tumalo? How?
4. Is the writer's description subjective or objective? Can you think of any people who might view Tumalo differently from the way the writer does?

Writing Assignments

1. Go out and go for a ride. Ride a bus, or drive a car, or ride your bicycle. From all the things you see, select just a few details, and then use them to describe your ride. Try to describe the details in **a** way that will give your reader an idea of your feelings on your ride. (If your ride was boring, don't be afraid to try to convey that.)
2. In a paragraph, describe what it means to be lonely—whether lonely in a crowd or in a place like Tumalo.

Dawn Watch

John Ciardi

How many things do we fail to see because we do not look? in this essay, poet and critic John Ciardi describes in rich detail exactly what happens when the sun comes up in the morning.

Words to Know

bedraggled wet and limp
braggarts persons given to talking boastfully
buffet a meal at which guests serve themselves
grackles blackbirds
grate to make a rasping sound
inured to become used to something undesirable
mulched covered with a protective covering of leaves, manure, and so on
phenomenon an unusual or unaccountable fact or occurrence
pincer to work together like a clawlike grasping tool
spectrum a broad sequence or range of colors
sprawl to spread out awkwardly
thickets dense growths of scrubs or underbrush

Unless a man is up for the dawn and for the half hour or so of first light, he has missed the best of the day. 1

The traffic has just started, not yet a roar and a stink. One car at a time goes by, the tires humming almost like the sound of a brook a half mile down in the crease of a mountain I know—a sound that carries not because it is loud but because everything else is still. 2

It isn't exactly a mist that hangs in the thickets but more nearly the ghost of a mist—a phenomenon like side vision. Look hard and it isn't there, but glance without focusing and something registers, an exhalation that will be gone three minutes after the sun comes over the treetops. 3

The lawns shine with **a** dew not exactly dew. There is a rabbit bobbing about on the lawn and then freezing. If it were truly a dew, his tracks would shine black on the grass, and he leaves no visible track. 4

Yet, there is something on the grass that makes it glow a depth of green it will not show again all day. Or is that something in the dawn air?

Our cardinals know what time it is. They drop pure tones from the 5
hemlock tops. The black gang of grackles that makes a slum of the pin oak also knows the time but can only grate at it. They sound like a convention of broken universal joints grating uphill. The grackles creak and squeak, and the cardinals form tones that only occasionally sound through the noise. I scatter sunflower seeds by the birdbath for the cardinals and hope the grackles won't find them.

My neighbor's tomcat comes across the lawn, probably on his way 6
home from passion, or only acting as if he had had a big night. I suspect him of being one of those poolroom braggarts who can't get next to a girl but who likes to let on that he is a hot stud. This one is too can-fed and too lazy to hunt for anything. Here he comes now, ignoring the rabbit. And there he goes.

As soon as he has hopped the fence, I let my dog out. The dog 7
charges the rabbit, watches it jump the fence, shakes himself in a self-satisfied way, then trots dutifully into the thicket for his morning service, stopping to sniff everything on the way back.

There is an old mountain laurel on the island of the driveway turna- 8
round. From somewhere on the wind a white morning-glory rooted next to it and has climbed it. Now the laurel is woven full of white bells tinged pink by the first rays through the not quite mist. Only in earliest morning can they be seen. Come out two hours from now and there will be no morning-glories.

Dawn, too, is the hour of a weed I know only as day flower—a 9
bright blue button that closes in full sunlight. I have weeded bales of it out of my flower beds, its one daytime virtue being the shallowness of its root system that allows it to be pulled out effortlessly in great handfuls. Yet, now it shines. Had it a few more hours of such shining in its cycle, I would cultivate it as a ground cover, but dawn is its one hour, and a garden is for whole days.

There is another blue morning weed whose name I do not know. 10
This one grows from a bulb to pulpy stems and a bedraggled daytime sprawl. Only a shovel will dig it out. Try weeding it by hand and the stems will break off to be replaced by new ones and to sprawl over the chosen plants in the flower bed. Yet, now and for another hour it outshines its betters, its flowers about the size of a quarter and paler than those of the day flower but somehow more brilliant, perhaps because of the contrast of its paler foliage.

And now the sun is slanting in full. It is bright enough to make the 11
leaves of the Japanese red maple seem a transparent red bronze when the tree is between me and the light. There must be others, but this is the only tree I know whose leaves let the sun through in this way—except, that is, when the fall colors start. Aspen leaves, when they first yellow and before they dry, are transparent in this way. I tell myself it must have something to do with the red-yellow range of the spectrum. Green takes sunlight and holds it, but red and yellow let it through.

The damned crabgrass is wrestling with the zinnias, and I stop to 12
weed it out. The stuff weaves too close to the zinnias to make the iron claw usable. And it won't do to pull at the stalks. Crabgrass (at least in a mulched bed) can be weeded only with dirty fingers. Thumb and forefinger have to pincer into the dirt and grab the root-center, Weeding, of course, is an illusion of hope. Pulling out the root only stirs the soil and brings new crabgrass seeds into germinating position. Take a walk around the block and a new clump will have sprouted by the time you get back. But I am not ready to walk around the block. I fill a small basket with the plucked clumps, and for the instant I look at them, the zinnias are weedless.

Don't look back. I dump the weeds in the thicket where they will 13
be smothered by the grass clippings I will pile on at the next cutting. On the way back I see the cardinals come down for the sunflower seeds, and the jays join them, and then the grackles start ganging in, gatecrashing the buffet and clattering all over it. The dog stops chewing his rawhide and makes a dash into the puddle of birds, which splashes away from him.

I hear a brake-squeak I have been waiting for and know the paper 14
has arrived. As usual, the news turns out to be another disaster count. The function of the wire services is to bring us tragedies faster than we can pity. In the end we shall all be inured, numb, and ready for emotionless programming. I sit on the patio and read until the sun grows too bright on the page. The cardinals have stopped singing, and the grackles have flown off. It's the end of birdsong again.

Then suddenly—better than song for its instant—a hummingbird 15
the color of green crushed velvet hovers in the throat of my favorite lily, a lovely high-bloomer I got the bulbs for but not the name. The lily is a crest of white horns with red dots and red velvet tongues along the insides of the petals and with an odor that drowns the patio. The hummingbird darts in and out of each horn in turn, then hovers an instant, and disappears.

Even without the sun, I have had enough of the paper. I'll take that 16
hummingbird as my news for this dawn. It is over now. I smoke one more cigarette too many and decide that, if I go to bed now, no one

in the family need know I have stayed up for it again. Why do they insist on shaking their heads when they find me still up for breakfast, after having scribbled through the dark hours? They always do. They seem compelled to express pity for an old loony who can't find his own way to bed. Why won't they understand that this is the one hour of any day that must not be missed, as it is the one hour I couldn't imagine getting up for, though I can still get to it by staying up? It makes sense to me. There comes a time when the windows lighten and the twittering starts. I look up and know it's time to leave the papers in their mess. I could slip quietly into bed and avoid the family's head-shakes, but this stroll-around first hour is too good to miss. Even my dog, still sniffing and circling, knows what hour this is.

Come on, boy. It's time to go in. The rabbit won't come back till 17 tomorrow, and the birds have work to do. The dawn's over. It's time to call it a day.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why does the writer prefer the dawn to other hours of the day?
2. Why does the writer choose not to look back after he finishes weeding?
3. Although the writer is describing one specific day, which words indicate that every day is like this day?
4. How will his family react to finding out that he has stayed up to watch the sunrise again? Why?
5. In the last paragraph, why won't the rabbit come back until the next day?
6. What does the writer mean when he says, "It's time to call it a day"?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Which sentence states the thesis of the essay?
2. Even though the essay appears to ramble from one description to another, there is a very deliberate **order** in the essay. What is the order the writer uses?
3. What **tone** does the writer use in his description? Is it formal or informal?
4. What are the topics of paragraphs 8, 9, and 10? Could the paragraphing be changed?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay describing a sunrise or sunset you have seen. Order your description **chronologically.**
2. Spend some time looking out a window and write an essay describing what you see, hear, and smell. Concentrate on concrete details, and try to order your description spatially.
3. Describe in great detail five minutes of your routine day and what you see during those five minutes. For example, describe what you see when you are waking up, leaving for work or school, finishing your lunch, or arriving home at the end of the day.

I Love Washington

David McCullough

Do you ever feel as though you like a place without knowing why? When you experience that feeling, try to think of this essay and the way David McCullough picks out individual details that explain his affection for the city of Washington as a whole.

Words to Know

adjourns breaks for recess

the Mall a large parklike area running from the Capitol building toward the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, lined with impressive buildings including the National Gallery and the Smithsonian Institution

Monet a French Impressionist painter

W ashington is a wonderful city. The scale seems right, more humane than other places. I like all the white^marble/arid green trees, the ideals celebrated by the great monuments and memorials. I like the climate, the slow shift of the seasons here. Spring, so Southern in feeling, comes early and the long, sweet autumns can last into December. Summers are murder, equatorial—-no question; the compensation is that Congress adjourns, the city empties out, eases off. Winter evenings in Georgetown with the snow falling and the lights just coming on are as beautiful as any I've known. i

I like the elegant old landmark hotels—the Willard, now restored to its former glory, the Mayflower, with its long, glittering, palm-lined lobby, the Hay-Adams on Lafayette Square, overlooking the White House. And Massachusetts Avenue, as you drive down past the British Embassy and over Rock Creek Park, past the Mosque and around Sheridan Circle. This is an avenue in the grand tradition, befitting a world capital. 2

The presence of the National Gallery, it seems to me, would be reason enough in itself to wish to live here. 3

In many ways it is our most civilized city. It accommodates its river, accommodates trees and grass, makes room for nature as other cities don't. There are parks everywhere and two great, unspoiled, green corridors running beside the Potomac and out Rock Creek where Theodore Roosevelt liked to take his rough cross-country walks. There 4

is no more beautiful entrance to any of our cities than the George Washington Parkway which comes sweeping down the Virginia side of the Potomac. The views of the river gorge are hardly changed from Jefferson's time. Across the river, on the towpath of the old C&O Canal, you can start at Georgetown and walk for miles with never a sense of being in a city. You can walk right out of town, ten, twenty fifty miles if you like, more, all the way to Harpers Ferry where you can 'pick up the Appalachian Trail going north or south.

Some mornings along thg towpath it is as if you are walking through a Monet. Blue herons sfatlTthe water. You see deer prints. Once, in Glover Park, in the heart of the city, I saw a red fox. He stopped right in front of me, not more than thirty feet down the path, and waited a count or two before vanishing into the woods, as if giving me time to look him over, as if he wanted me never to wonder whether my eyes had played tricks. 5

Even the famous National Zoo is a "zoological park," a place to walk, as specifically intended in the original plan by Frederick Law Olmsted. 6

It was Olmsted also who did the magnificent Capitol grounds and who had the nice idea of putting identifying tags on the trees, giving their places of origin and Latin names. I like particularly the tulip trees *(Liriodendron tulipifera);* the tulip is one of the common trees of Washington, and it lines the main drive to the east front of the Capitol. There are red oak, white oak, silver linden, a tremendous spreading white ash, sugar maples, five kinds of American magnolias, a huge Japanese pagoda tree. A spectacular willow oak on the west side has a trunk three men couldn't put their arms around. In spring the dogwood in bloom all around the Capitol are enough to take your breath away. 7

There are trees and there is sky, the immense, blessed overarching sky of the Mall. What city has anything to compare to the Mall? At first light on a summer morning, before the rush hour, before the first jets come roaring out of National, the dominant sound is of crows and the crunch of your own feet along the gravel pathways. The air, still cool from the night, smells of trees and damp grass, like a country town. Floodlights are still on at the old red Smithsonian castle, bathing it in a soft theatrical glow, like the backdrop for some nineteenth century Gothic fantasy. The moon is up still, hanging in a pale, clear sky beyond the Monument, which for the moment is a very pale pink.

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean when he says Washington "accommodates" its river, grass, and trees (paragraph 4)?
2. Who was Frederick Law Olmsted?
3. What makes Washington unlike other cities, according to the writer?
4. What type of audience do you think the essay is directed toward? People who know Washington? People who do not? Both? Cite examples from the essay to support your answer.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Why do you think the writer saved the description of the Mall for last? What purpose does it serve in the essay?
2. What is the **main idea** of the essay? Is there a thesis statement? If so, where is it located?
3. Besides the dominant mode, description, what other **modes of development** does the writer use in the essay? Cite one or two paragraphs in which other modes are used.
4. How do you suppose the writer went about choosing the **details** for his description? What criteria do you think he might have used? Cite examples from the essay to help explain your answer.

Writing Assignments

1. This writer identifies many details, but he really doesn't give very many "details about the details." Write an essay in which you describe an object of smaller scale, say one of the types of trees the writer identifies, or a park or river that you know about. Describe your subject thoroughly, including some of its specific characteristics.
2. Write an essay describing your thoughts and feelings when you think of Washington. For example, does patriotism come to mind? Or perhaps you think of corruption, architecture, or fancy clothes and limousines? Describe incidents and pictures that you have read about or seen in magazines or on TV that make you feel as you do.

The Monster

Deems Taylor

In this essay, Deems Taylor describes a totally unpleasant man. In each paragraph, he piles detail upon detail until we find ourselves wondering, "How bad can one man be?" Then we read the next paragraph and we find out—he gets worse. Near the end, though, Taylor identifies his subject and offers some possible explanations—some surprising ones—for the "monster's" bad nature.

Words to Know

arrogance overbearing pride
Beethoven a German composer
burlesquing mocking
callous unfeeling
delusions false beliefs
harangue a long, pompous speech
infidelities unfaithful acts
libretto the text of an opera
mania an intense enthusiasm, **craze**
monologue a long speech by one person
Plato a Greek philosopher
rajah a prince in India
royalties money paid to a composer out of the proceeds from a performance
scrupulous conscientious, principled
synopsis outline of **a** story
trilogy a group of three works
volubility ready, fluent speech

H e was an undersized little man, with a head too big for his body—a sickly little man. His nerves were bad. He had skin trouble. It was agony for him to wear anything next to his skin coarser than silk. And he had delusions of grandeur.

He was a monster of conceit. Never for one minute did he look at the world or at people, except in relation to himself. He was not only the most important person in the world, for himself; in his own eyes he was the only person who existed. He believed himself to be one of the greatest dramatists in the world, one of the greatest thinkers, and one of the greatest composers. To hear him talk, he was Shakespeare, and Beethoven, and Plato, rolled into one. And you would have

had no difficulty in hearing him talk. He was one of the most exhausting conversationalists that ever lived. An evening with him was an evening spent in listening to a monologue. Sometimes he was brilliant; sometimes he was maddeningly tiresome. But whether he was being brilliant or dull, he had one sole topic of conversation: himself. What *he* thought and what *he* did.

He had a mania for being in the right. The slightest hint of disagree- 3
ment, from anyone, on the most trivial point, was enough to set him off on a harangue that might last for hours, in which he proved himself right in so many ways, and with such exhausting volubility, that in the end his hearer, stunned and deafened, would agree with him, for the sake of peace.

It never occurred to him that he and his doing were not of the most 4
intense and fascinating interest to anyone with whom he came in contact. He had theories about almost any subject under the sun, including vegetarianism, the drama, politics, and music; and in support of these theories he wrote pamphlets, letters, books . . . thousands upon thousands of words, hundreds and hundreds of pages. He not only wrote these things, and published them—usually at somebody else's expense—but he would sit and read them aloud, for hours, to his friends, and his family.

He wrote operas; and no sooner did he have the synopsis of a story, 5
but he would invite—or rather summon—a crowd of his friends to his house and read it aloud to them. Not for criticism. For applause. When the complete poem was written, the friends had to come again, and hear *that* read aloud. Then he would publish the poem, sometimes years before the music that went with it was written. He played the piano like a composer, in the worst sense of what that implies, and he would sit at the piano before parties that included some of the finest pianists of his time, and play for them, by the hour, his own music, needless to say. He had a composer's voice. And he would invite eminent vocalists to his house, and sing them his operas, taking all the parts.

He had the emotional stability of a six-year-old child. When he felt 6
out of sorts, he would rave and stamp, or sink into suicidal gloom and talk darkly of going to the East to end his days as a Buddhist monk. Ten minutes later, when something pleased him, he would rush out of doors and run around the garden, or jump up and down on the sofa, or stand on his head. He could be grief-stricken over the death of a pet dog, and he could be callous and heartless to a degree that would have made a Roman emperor shudder.

He was almost innocent of any sense of responsibility. Not only did 7
he seem incapable of supporting himself, but it never occurred to him that he was under any obligation to do so. He was convinced that the world owed him a living. In support to this belief, he borrowed money from everybody who was good for a loan—men, women, friends, or strangers. He wrote begging letters by the score, sometimes groveling without shame, at others loftily offering his intended benefactor the privilege of contributing to his support, and being mortally offended if the recipient declined the honor. I have found no record of his ever paying or repaying money to anyone who did not have a legal claim upon it.

What money he could lay his hand on he spent like an Indian rajah. 8
The mere prospect of a performance of one of his operas was enough to set him running up bills amounting to ten times the amount of his prospective royalties. On an income that would reduce a more scrupulous man to doing his own laundry, he would keep two servants. Without enough money in his pocket to pay his rent, he would have the walls and ceiling of his study lined with pink silk. No one will ever know—certainly he never knew—how much money he owed. We do know that his greatest benefactor gave him $6,000 to pay the most pressing of his debts in one city, and a year later had to give him $16,000 to enable him to live in another city without being thrown into jail for debt.

He was equally unscrupulous in other ways. An endless procession 9
of women marched through his life. His first wife spent twenty years enduring and forgiving his infidelities. His second wife had been the wife of his most devoted friend and admirer, from whom he stole her. And even while he was trying to persuade her to leave her first husband he was writing to a friend to inquire whether he could suggest some wealthy woman—*any* wealthy woman—whom he could marry for her money.

He was completely selfish in his other personal relationships. His 10
liking for his friends was measured solely by the completeness of their devotion to him, or by their usefulness to him, whether financial or artistic. The minute they failed him—even by so much as refusing a dinner invitation—or began to lessen in usefulness, he cast them off without a second thought. At the end of his life he had exactly one friend left whom he had known even in middle age.

He had a genius for making enemies. He would insult a man who 11
disagreed with him about the weather. He would pull endless wires in order to meet some man who admired his work and was able and

anxious to be of use to him—and would proceed to make a mortal enemy of him with some idiotic and wholly uncalled-for exhibition of arrogance and bad manners. A character in one of his operas was a caricature of one of the most powerful music critics of his day. Not content with burlesquing him, he invited the critic to his house and read him the libretto aloud in front of his friends.

The name of this monster was Richard Wagner. Everything I have 12
said about him you can find on record—in newspapers, in police reports, in the testimony of people who knew him, in his own letters, between the lines of his autobiography. And the curious thing about this record is that it doesn't matter in the least.

Because this undersized, sickly, disagreeable, fascinating little man 13
was right all the time. The joke was on us. He *was* one of the world's greatest dramatists; he *was* a great thinker; he *was* one of the most stupendous musical geniuses that, up to now, the world has ever seen. The world did owe him a living. People couldn't know those things at the time, 1 suppose; and yet to us, who know his music, it does seem as though they should have known. What if he did talk about himself all the time? If he talked about himself for twenty-four hours every day for the span of his life he would not have uttered half the number of words that other men have spoken and written about him since his death.

When you consider what he wrote—thirteen operas and music 14
dramas,, eleven of them still holding the stage, eight of them unquestionably worth ranking among the world's great musico-dramatic masterpieces—when you listen to what he wrote, the debts and heartaches that people had to endure from him don't seem much of a price. Edward Hanslick, the critic whom he caricatured in *Die Meistersinger* and who hated him ever after, now lives only because he was caricatured in *Die Meistersinger*. The women whose hearts he broke are long since dead; and the man who could never love anyone but himself has made them deathless atonement, I think, with *Tristan und Isolde*. Think of the luxury with which for a time, at least, fate rewarded Napoleon, the man who ruined France and looted Europe; and then perhaps you will agree that a few thousand dollars' worth of debts were not too heavy a price to pay for the *Ring* trilogy.

What if he was faithless to his friends and to his wives? He had one 15
mistress to whom he was faithful to the day of his death: Music. Not for a single moment did he ever compromise with what he believed, with what he dreamed. There is not a line of his music that could have been conceived by a little mind. Even when he is dull, or downright bad, he is dull in the grand manner. There is a greatness about his

worst mistakes. Listening to his music, one does not forgive **him** for what he may or may not have been. It is not a matter of forgiveness It is a **matter of** being dumb with wonder that his poor **brain** and body didn't burst under the torment of the demon of creative energy that lived inside him, struggling, clawing, scratching to be released, tear ing shrieking at him to write the music that was m him The miracle is that what he did in the little space of seventy years could have been done at all, even by a great genius. Is it any wonder he had no time to be a man?

Questions About the Reading

1. Was Wagner ever considerate of others? Give **examples.**
2. Why does the writer say that "the joke was on us"?
3. Does Wagner's great talent justify his behavior?
4. Would you like to have known Wagner? Would you like to have attended one of his parties?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the dramatic purpose for concealing the name of the composer until paragraph 12?
2. Is there any deliberate order to the presentation of examples?
3. What effect do the detailed, numerous examples have on the way the reader views Wagner? Is the reader led to think there is anything positive about his behavior?
4. In paragraphs 3 and 6, the writer uses colorful words to enliven his descriptive examples. Identify five particularly effective adjectives in those paragraphs, and five effective verbs.
5. Napoleon was a tyrant but also a military genius who changed the course of Western history Why do you think the writer mentions him in paragraph 14?

Writing Assignments

1. Do you know someone who is extremely good at what he or she does but is impossible to live with? Describe that person in an essay.
2. Using **order** of **importance** to organize your essay describe one of the following: your best friend, your worst enemy, your favorite (or most boring) professor, or the best pet you ever had.
3. Think of a movie, television, or sports personality whose personal behavior is disagreeable or in some way unacceptable. Write an essay using detailed examples to describe how that person's behavior influences your opinion of his or her professional achievements.

Rock of Ages

Joan Didion

A huge, barren rock surrounded by the icy waters of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz Island was the site of a maximum security federal prison until 1963. Novelist and essayist Joan Didion visited "the Rock" several years after the prison was dosed. She wrote this description of the nearly empty island and included it in her book Slouching Towards Bethlehem.

Words to Know

ambivalent having conflicting feelings
barge to bring by a long, flat-bottomed freighter
impediment hindrance, obstruction
moat a wide, deep ditch filled with water, surrounding a medieval town or fortress
perfunctory routinely done without interest or care
penology the study of prison management
pro forma as a matter of form
scrimshaw carving on ivory
surveillance close observation of something suspicious

irxlcatraz Island is covered with flowers now: orange and yellow 1
nasturtiums, geraniums, sweet grass, blue iris, black-eyed Susans. Candytuft springs up through the cracked concrete in the exercise yard. **Ice** plant carpets the rusting catwalks. "WARNING! KEEP OFF! U.S. PROPERTY," the sign still reads, big and yellow and visible for perhaps a quarter of a mile, but since March 21, 1963, the day they took the last thirty or so men off the island and sent them to prisons less expensive to maintain, the warning has been only *pro forma,* the gun turrets empty, the cell blocks abandoned. It is not an unpleasant place to be, out there on Alcatraz with only the flowers and the wind and a bell buoy moaning and the tide surging through the Golden Gate, but to like a place like that you have to want a moat.

I sometimes do, which is what I am talking about here. Three people 2
live on Alcatraz Island now. John and Marie Hart live in the same apartment they had for the sixteen years that he was **a** prison guard; they raised five children on the island, back when their neighbors were the Birdman and Mickey Cohen, but the Birdman and Mickey Cohen

are gone now and so are the Harts' children, moved away, the last married in a ceremony on the island in June 1966. One other person lives on Alcatraz, a retired merchant seaman named Bill Doherty, and, between them, John Hart and Bill Doherty are responsible to the General Services Administration for maintaining a twenty-four-hour watch over the twenty-two-acre island. John Hart has a dog named Duffy, and Bill Doherty has a dog named Duke, and although the dogs are primarily good company they are also the first line of defense on Alcatraz Island. Marie Hart has a corner window which looks out to the San Francisco skyline, across a mile and a half of bay, and she sits there and paints, "views" or plays her organ, songs like "Old Black Joe" and "Please Go 'Way and Let Me Sleep." Once a week the Harts take their boat to San Francisco to pick up their mail and shop at the big Safeway in the Marina, and occasionally Marie Hart gets off the island to visit her children. She likes to keep in touch with them by telephone, but for ten months recently, after a Japanese freighter cut the cable, there was no telephone service to or from Alcatraz. Every morning the KGO traffic reporter drops the San Francisco *Chronicle* from his helicopter, and when he has time he stops for coffee. No one else comes out there except a man from the General Services Administration named Thomas Scott, who brings out an occasional congressman or somebody who wants to buy the island or, once in a while, his wife and small son, for a picnic. Quite a few people would like to buy the island, and Mr. Scott reckons that it would bring about five million dollars in a sealed-bid auction, but the General Services Administration is powerless to sell it until Congress acts on a standing proposal to turn the island into a "peace park." Mr. Scott says that he will be glad to get Alcatraz off his hands, but the charge of a fortress island could not be something a man gives up without ambivalent thoughts.

I went out there with him a while ago. Any child could imagine a 3
prison more like a prison than Alcatraz looks, for what bars and wires there are seem perfunctory, beside the point; the island itself was the prison, and the cold tide its wall. It is precisely what they called it: the Rock. Bill Doherty and Duke lowered the dock for us, and in the station wagon on the way up the cliff Bill Doherty told Mr. Scott about small repairs he had made or planned to make. Whatever repairs get made on Alcatraz are made to pass the time, a kind of caretaker's scrimshaw, because the government pays for no upkeep at all on the prison; in 1963 it would have cost five million dollars to repair, which is why it was abandoned, and the $24,000 a year that it costs to maintain Alcatraz now is mostly for surveillance, partly to barge in the 400,000 gallons of water that Bill Doherty and the Harts use every year

(there is no water at all on Alcatraz, one impediment to development), and the rest to heat two apartments and keep some lights burning. The buildings seem quite literally abandoned. The key locks have been ripped from the cell doors and the big electrical locking mechanisms disconnected. The tear-gas vents in the cafeteria are empty and the paint is buckling everywhere, corroded by the sea air, peeling off in great scales of pale green and ocher. I stood for a while in Al Capone's cell, five by nine feet, number 200 on the second tier of B Block, not one of the view cells, which were awarded on seniority, and I walked through the solitary block, totally black when the doors were closed. "Snail Mitchel," read a pencil scrawl on the wall of Solitary 14. "The only man that ever got shot for walking too slow." Beside it was a calendar, the months penciled on the wall with the days scratched off, May, June, July, August of some unnumbered year.

Mr. Scott, whose interest in penology dates from the day his office 4
acquired Alcatraz as a potential property, talked about escapes and security routines and pointed out the beach where Ma Barker's son Doc was killed trying to escape. (They told him to come back up, and he said he would rather be shot, and he was.) I saw the shower room with the soap still in the dishes. I picked up a yellowed program from an Easter service *(Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.)* and I struck a few notes on an upright piano with the ivory all rotted from the keys and 1 tried to imagine the prison as it had been, with the big lights playing over the windows all night long and the guards patrolling the gun galleries and the silverware clattering into a bag as it was checked in after meals, tried dutifully to summon up some distaste, some night terror of the doors locking and the boat pulling away. But the fact of it was that I liked it out there, a ruin devoid of human vanities, clean of human illusions, an empty place reclaimed by the weather where a woman plays an organ to stop the wind's whining and an old man plays ball with a dog named Duke. I could tell you that I came back because I had promises to keep, but maybe it was because nobody asked me to stay.

Questions About the Reading

1. What details does the writer give about Bill Doherty and the Harts? Judging from these details, how would you describe these people and their lives on the island?
2. In paragraph 3, the writer implies that Alcatraz is not very much "like a prison." What does she mean? Does she really think the Rock was not like a prison?
3. What is it about the island that the writer liked? What do you think she means by the final sentence?
4. Why is it necessary to keep a twenty-four-hour watch on the island? What is the **irony** in this necessity?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. The first paragraph is made up almost entirely of descriptive details. What is the effect of those details and what words help achieve that effect? What is the purpose of the paragraph?
2. What is it that the writer wants us to remember most from her description of Alcatraz Island? Where does she state this idea?
3. Throughout the description, Didion **contrasts** what the prison was like in the past with what the island is like today, concluding that it is "an empty place reclaimed by the weather." List some of these contrasts.
4. The writer uses not only description, but also **narration** and **examples** to fill out the picture of Alcatraz. Give some examples of her use of these other modes.

Writing Assignments

1. Describe what you imagine Alcatraz to have been like when it was an occupied prison. Try to use descriptive details and examples to make your essay effective.
2. What would your daily routine be like if you were the only person living on Alcatraz Island? Write an essay describing the things you would do. Use **chronological order, spatial order,** or **order of importance** to organize your essay.
3. Pick out an old or abandoned property you see often. Describe what it might have been like when it was new. Such a place might be an old factory, hotel, or farm.

This Man Has Expired

Robert Johnson

Do you favor the death penalty or oppose it? Do you think about it very much? Be warned that once you have read this sensitive and disturbing description of the final minutes before an execution, you may find it hard to stop thinking about it. You will encounter readings on the death penalty again in the chapter on argumentation and persuasion. Try to wait until you have read the selections there before forming a final opinion about the issue.

Words to Know

En route on the way **to**
malice ill will toward others
paradoxically surprisingly contrary **to common** sense

VV e entered the witness area, a room within the death chamber, and took our seats. A picture window covering the front wall of the witness room offered a clear view of the electric chair, which was about twelve feet away from us and well illuminated. The chair, a large, high-back solid oak structure with imposing black straps, dominated the death chamber. Behind it, on the back wall, was an open panel full of coils and lights. Peeling paint hung from the ceiling and walls; water stains from persistent leaks were everywhere in evidence. 1

Two officers, one a hulking figure weighing some 400 pounds, stood alongside the electric chair. Each had his hands crossed at the lap and wore a forbidding, blank expression on his face. The witnesses gazed at them and the chair, most of us scribbling notes furiously. We did this, I suppose, as much to record the experience as to have a distraction from the growing tension. A correctional officer entered the witness room and announced that a trial run of the machinery would be undertaken. Seconds later, lights flashed on the control panel behind the chair indicating that the chair was in working order. A white curtain, opened for the test, separated the chair and the witness area. After the test, the curtain was drawn. More tests were performed behind the curtain. Afterwards, the curtain was reopened, and would be left open until the execution was over. Then it would be closed to allow the officers to remove the body. 2

A handful of high-level correctional officers were present in the death chamber, standing just outside the witness area. There were two regional administrators, the director of the Department of Corrections, 3

and the prison warden. The prisoner's chaplain and lawyer were also present. Other than the chaplain's black religious garb, subdued grey pinstripes and bland correctional uniforms prevailed. All parties were quite solemn.

At 10:58 the prisoner entered the death chamber. He was, I knew 4
from my research, a man with a checkered, tragic past. He had been grossly abused as a child, and went on to become grossly abusive of others. I was told he could not describe his life, from childhood on, without talking about confrontations in defense of a precarious sense of self—at home, in school, on the streets, in the prison yard. Belittled by life and choking with rage, he was hungry to be noticed. Paradoxically, he had found his moment in the spotlight, but it was a dim and unflattering light cast before a small and unappreciative audience. "He'd pose for cameras in the chair—for the attention," his counselor had told me earlier in the day. But the truth was that the prisoner wasn't smiling, and there were no cameras.

The prisoner walked quickly and silently toward the chair, an escort 5
of officers in tow. His eyes were turned downward, his expression a bit glazed. Like many before him, the prisoner had threatened to stage a last stand. But that was lifetimes ago, on death row. In the death house, he joined the humble bunch and kept to the executioner's schedule. He appeared to have given up on life before he died in the chair.

En route to the chair, the prisoner stumbled slightly, as if the mo- 6
mentum of the event had overtaken him. Were he not held securely by two officers, one at each elbow, he might have fallen. Were the routine to be broken in this or indeed any other way, the officers believe, the prisoner might faint or panic or become violent, and have to be forcibly placed in the chair. Perhaps as a precaution, when the prisoner reached the chair he did not turn on his own but rather was turned, firmly but without malice, by the officers in his escort. These included the two men at his elbows, and four others who followed behind him. Once the prisoner was seated, again with help, the officers strapped him into the chair.

The execution team worked with machine precision. Like a disci- 7
plined swarm, they enveloped him. Arms, legs, stomach, chest, and head were secured in a matter of seconds. Electrodes were attached to a cap holding his head and to the strap holding his exposed right leg. A leather mask was placed over his face. The last officer mopped the prisoner's brow, then touched his hand in a gesture of farewell.

During the brief procession to the electric chair, the prisoner was 8
attended by a chaplain. As the execution team worked feverishly to secure the condemned man's body, the chaplain, who appeared to be upset, leaned over him and placed his forehead in contact with the prisoner's, whispering urgently. The priest might have been praying, but I had the impression he was consoling the man, perhaps assuring him that a forgiving God awaited him in the next life. If he heard the chaplain, I doubt the man comprehended his message. He didn't seem comforted. Rather, he looked stricken and appeared to be in shock. Perhaps the priest's urgent ministrations betrayed his doubts that the prisoner could hold himself together. The chaplain then withdrew at the warden's request, allowing the officers to affix the death mask.

The strapped and masked figure sat before us, utterly alone, wait- 9
ing to be killed. The cap and mask dominated his face. The cap was nothing more than a sponge encased in a leather shell with a metal piece at the top to accent an electrode. It looked decrepit and resembled a cheap, ill-fitting toupee. The mask, made entirely of leather, appeared soiled and worn. It had two parts. The bottom part covered the chin and mouth, the top the eyes and lower forehead. Only the nose was exposed. The effect of the rigidly restrained body, together with the bizarre cap and the protruding nose, was nothing short of grotesque. A faceless man breathed before us in a tragicomic trance, waiting for a blast of electricity that would extinguish his life. Endless seconds passed. His last act was to swallow, nervously, pathetically, with his Adam's apple bobbing. I was struck by that simple movement then, and can't forget it even now. It told me, as nothing else did, that in the prisoner's restrained body, behind that mask, lurked a fellow human being who, at some level, however primitive, knew or sensed himself to be moments from death.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why was the writer attending the execution?
2. If the curtain was open during the execution, why would it be closed "to allow the officers to remove the body"? Is there any **irony** in this situation?
3. Explain the routine described in paragraph 6. What was the purpose of the officers' actions?
4. Do you think the writer is fully opposed to the death penalty or just did not like attending the execution? Or is he unsure? Cite examples from the essay to support your answer.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the writer's purpose in this essay? When you read the later essays on the death penalty, you will see that the writers use the direct methods of **argumentation** and **persuasion** to try to sway the reader. What method does this writer use? What **details** contribute to his purpose?
2. Which statements in the essay most clearly express the **main** idea? Why do you think the writer located them where they are?
3. What **order** does the writer use for his description?
4. Besides description, what is the main **mode of development** the writer uses?
5. This essay is of course very subjective. But it also has **objective** elements. What techniques and details add objectivity to the description?

Writing Assignments

1. In an essay, describe an extremely unpleasant experience you have had. Use specific details to help your reader understand what was so disturbing about the situation.
2. Write an essay describing what you imagine jail to be like. Try to describe the actual effects you think being confined would have on you.

Winter

Donald Hall

In New England, winter is a time of stark beauty that often breeds much pride of place. In this essay, Donald Hall describes his relationship with the frigid world of January and February in New Hampshire.

Words to Know

delirium frenzied irrationality
facets the flat, polished surfaces cut on a gem
respite break; reprieve

I anuary thaw is dazzling, but it is a moment's respite. If this **were** January in England we would soon expect snowdrops; here we know enough to expect replacement battalions of snow's troopers following on coldness that freezes the melt, covering it with foot upon foot of furry whiteness and moon-coldness. We return to the satisfactions of winter, maybe even to the deliverance and delirium of a full moon.

In New Hampshire the full moon is remarkable all year long, be- 2
cause we suffer relatively little from garbage-air and even less from background light. The great cloudless night of the full moon is werewolf time, glory of silver-pale hauntedness whenever it happens—but in winter it is most beautiful. I set the internal alarm, maybe three or four nights in a row, and wander, self-made ghost, through pale rooms in the pewter light while the moon magnifies itself in bright hayfields and reflects upward, a sun from middle earth, onto shadowy low ceilings. High sailing above, higher than it has a right to, bigger, the February full moon, huge disc of cold, rides and slides among tatters of cloud. My breathing speeds, my pulse quickens; for half an hour I wander, pulled like a tide through the still house in the salty half-light, more asleep than awake, asleep not in house or nightshirt in 1985 but in moon, moon, moon . . . What old animal awakens and stretches inside the marrow of the bones? What howls? What circles, sniffing for prey?

It's no winter without an ice storm. When Robert Frost gazed at 3
bent-over birch trees and tried to think that boys had bent them playing, he knew better: "Ice storms do that." They do that, and a lot more, trimming disease and weakness out of the tree—the old tree's friend, as pneumonia used to be the old man's. Some of us provide life-sup-

port systems for our precious shrubs, boarding them over against the ice; for the ice storm takes the young or unlucky branch or birch as well as the rotten or feeble. One February morning we look out our windows over yards and fields littered with kindling, small twigs and great branches. We look out at a world turned into one diamond, ten thousand karats in the line of sight, twice as many facets. What a dazzle of spinning refracted light, spider webs of cold brilliance attacking our eyeballs! All winter we wear sunglasses to drive, more than we do in summer, and never so much as after an ice storm with its painful glaze reflecting from maple and birch, granite boulder and stonewall, turning electric wires into bright silver filaments. The snow itself takes on a crust of ice, like the finish of a clay pot, that carries our weight and sends us swooping and sliding. It is worth your life to go for the mail. Until sand and salt redeem the highway, Route 4 is quiet; we cancel the appointment with the dentist, stay home, and marvel at the altered universe, knowing that midday sun will strip ice from tree and roof and restore our ordinary white winter world.

Questions About the Reading

1. Explain what the writer means by "garbage-air" and "background light" in the first sentence of paragraph 2.
2. What happens to the writer during a full moon? What is he referring to in the final sentences of paragraph 2?
3. Why is it "worth your life to go for the mail" (paragraph 3)?
4. Describe in your own words how the writer feels about winter. Use examples from the essay to support your description.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** in this essay? Is it directly stated in a **thesis statement?** If so, where? If not, how does the writer express it?
2. What is the purpose of this essay? Do you think the writer wrote it for people inside or outside New England? Support your answer by citing features of the essay.
3. What **tone** does the writer use for his description?
4. In what tense is the essay written? Why do you suppose the writer used that tense?
5. What is the **metaphor** in paragraph 1? Interpret what it means. What is the double meaning of "foot upon foot"?

Writing Assignments

1. **Write** an essay describing the sky under different weather conditions. Brainstorm for **details** and ideas, and try to think of **metaphors** and **similes** to enhance your description. For instance, is there a cloud that looks like it has a snake in it? Do the colors you see remind you of anything?
2. In a fictional essay, describe what it would be like to be caught out in the wild in a blizzard. Use your imagination, and don't worry if you have never seen snow. Just try to imagine what the conditions would be like. You might want to combine your description with **narration** and tell how you would find your way to safety.

Limbo

Rhonda S. Lucas (Student)

A new experience, a change in our lives, can make us see familiar objects in a new light. And a new location can make an old possession—a piece of furniture, an article of clothing—look strange. Rhonda S. Lucas, a student at East Los Angeles College, discovered both these things one day as she sat in a garage full of packing boxes and old furniture. She describes what she saw in this essay.

Words to Know

cryptic secret, mystifying
dilapidated fallen into a state of disrepair
elegy a mournful poem, often lamenting the dead
futility having no useful result, ineffectual
irony the use of words to convey the opposite of their meaning
limbo an intermediate place or state; a region or condition of oblivion or neglect
tubular having the form of a tube

My parents' divorce was final. The house had been sold and the day had come to move. Thirty years of the family's life was now crammed into the garage. The two-by-fours that ran the length of the walls were the only uniformity among the clutter of boxes, furniture, and memories. All was frozen in limbo between the life just passed and the one to come. 1

The sunlight pushing its way through the window splattered against a barricade of boxes. Like a fluorescent river, it streamed down the sides and flooded the cracks of the cold, cement floor. I stood in the doorway between the house and garage and wondered if the sunlight would ever again penetrate the memories packed inside those boxes. For an instant, the cardboard boxes appeared as tombstones, monuments to those memories. 2

The furnace in the corner, with its huge tubular fingers reaching out and disappearing into the wall, was unaware of the futility of trying to warm the empty house. The rhythmical whir of its effort hummed the elegy for the memories boxed in front of me. I closed the door, sat down on the step, and listened reverently. The feeling of loss transformed the bad memories into not-so-bad, the not-so-bad memories into good, and committed the good ones to my mind. Still, I felt as vacant as the house inside. 3

A workbench to my right stood disgustingly empty. Not so much as a nail had been left behind. I noticed, for the first time, what a dull, lifeless green it was. Lacking the disarray of tools that used to cover it, now it seemed as out of place as a bathtub in the kitchen. In fact, as I scanned the room, the only things that did seem to belong were the cobwebs in the corners. 4

A group of boxes had been set aside from the others and stacked in front of the workbench. Scrawled like graffiti on the walls of dilapidated buildings were the words "Salvation Army." Those words caught my eyes as effectively as a flashing neon sign. They reeked of irony. "Salvation—was a bit too late for this family," I mumbled sarcastically to myself. 5

The houseful of furniture that had once been so carefully chosen to complement and blend with the color schemes of the various rooms was indiscriminately crammed together against a single wall. The uncoordinated colors combined in turmoil and lashed out in the greyness of the room. 6

I suddenly became aware of the coldness of the garage, but I didn't want to go back inside the house, so I made my way through the boxes to the couch. I cleared a space to lie down and curled up, covering myself with my jacket. I hoped my father would return soon with the truck so we could empty the garage and leave the cryptic silence of parting lives behind. 7

Questions About the Reading

1. Why is the title of this essay "Limbo"? Between which two stages of life is the writer?
2. How does the writer feel about moving out of the house?
3. Why does the writer view the empty workbench as disgusting?
4. Why didn't she want to go back inside the house?
5. What does Lucas mean in the last line by the "cryptic silence" of the house?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Although she never actually says it, the writer is saddened by her parents' divorce and the subsequent need to move. What details does she use to convey this feeling?
2. In what ways is this an extremely **subjective** essay?
3. Give your impression of the writer's life before her parents' divorce. What methods does she use to suggest this impression?
4. What is the **thesis statement** in the essay? Which paragraphs are used to develop the thesis statement? Is there a concluding paragraph?
5. What is the purpose of the metaphor in the last sentence of paragraph 2? In which sentence of paragraph 3 is the metaphor repeated?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay describing your favorite room in the house where you live now or the one where you grew up. Try to use examples from your life to give meaning to the objects you describe.
2. Write an essay describing a walk through your neighborhood or another one with which you are familiar. Describe the things that most interest you or that you think you will remember best in the future.

Examples

WRITERS OFTEN USE one or more **examples** to explain or illustrate their main idea.

> In this century, the president is much more cut off from contact with the people than in earlier times. Ordinary citizens, *for example,* could get to see Abraham Lincoln directly in the White House and make their requests to him in person.

Some writers announce their strategy outright by the words "for example," or "for instance." Other writers may include several examples without announcing them so directly and thereby expect the reader to notice that they are indeed specific examples.

To make a clear case, the writer usually wants to give several examples, often to show several sides of an idea. The writer of the example above might want to add an example about Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan and how they visited private citizens in their homes or invited them to special ceremonies. Or perhaps the writer might want to add an example of another type of president—how Nixon was hard to reach, even by his own staff.

As you learned in Chapter 1, the **topic sentence** states the main idea of a paragraph and the **thesis statement** states the main idea of an essay. Both are usually general statements that must be clarified through the writer's **mode of development.** Sometimes, without concrete examples, the reader will have only a vague idea of what the writer's topic sentence or thesis statement means. In the following paragraphs, notice how the examples illustrate and clarify the topic sentences.

Topic sentence

Examples

Examples

The American colonists used a variety of goods in place of money. These goods included beaver pelts, grain, musket balls, and nails. Some colonists, especially in the tobacco-growing colonies of Maryland and Virginia, circulated receipts for tobacco stored in warehouses. Indian wampum, which consisted of beads made from shells, was mainly used for keeping records. But Indians and colonists also accepted it as money.

Topic sentence

Examples

Examples of Spanish dollars

The colonists also used any foreign coins they could get. English shillings, Spanish dollars, and French and Dutch coins all circulated in the colonies. Probably the most common coins were large silver Spanish dollars called *pieces of eight.* To make change, a person could chop the coin into eight pie-shaped pieces called *bits.* Two bits were worth a quarter of a dollar, four bits a half dollar, and so on. We still use the expression *two bits* to mean a quarter of a dollar.

World Book Encyclopedia, 1982

In essays, an example sometimes appears at the very beginning of the essay to introduce the thesis. The selection that follows illustrates the use of an introductory example—chosen to spark the reader's interest.

Examples used to introduce essay

In many ways, Dick Quillen appears to have it made. Still in his thirties, he heads his own data-processing company, housed in an attractive five-room suite with wall-to-wall carpeting and modern equipment, including a $500,000 computer. When I talked with him recently across a gleaming directors' table in his book-lined conference room, he exuded confidence, know-how, and success.

Thesis statement

What is not enviable about Quillen is his legal status. He is a convicted murderer, serving a life sentence. And his offices are in the state prison at Framingham, Massachusetts. Quillen's company highlights a significant trend: the arrival of free enterprise in our correctional system....

Reader's Digest, June 1979

Examples in an essay can both illustrate and **support** the thesis. That is, if a writer makes a claim or a point in the thesis statement and then provides evidence in the form of actual situations that illustrate the thesis, it will help convince the reader that the thesis is valid. When you write, you should also search for examples as a way to test your thesis. For example, if you formulate a thesis but cannot think of a single example that supports it, it is likely you will want to rethink your main idea. Or if you can think of several examples that support your thesis, but also of several that work against it, you might want to revise your thesis and develop an **objective** essay presenting both sides of the issue.

In addition to providing concrete support for the thesis, examples can be used in other ways to enliven and clarify writing. In a description, for instance, examples can give concrete details in a way that adds variety and interest. A single example may also be extended throughout an essay to illustrate the thesis, as in the following essay about the Kickapoo Indian Medicine Company. Notice, too, that minor examples are also used within the essay, as in paragraphs 2 and 3, for instance, to explain the topic sentences of some paragraphs.

Thesis

Major extended example—from here to end of essay

By 1880 several hundred medicine shows were traveling in the United States, giving performances varying from simple magic acts to elaborate "med-presentations." Among the largest of such operations from 1880 to 1910 was the Kickapoo Indian Medicine Company, "The King of Road Shows." Founded by two veteran troupers, John E. "Doc" Healy and Charles H. "Texas Charlie" Bigelow, the Kickapoo Company maintained a large headquarters building, "The Principal Wigwam," in New Haven, Connecticut, and from there sent out shows, as many as twenty-five at a time, to cities and villages throughout the country.

Minor examples of *performers* who were hired

Doc Healy hired performers, both Indian and white—dancers, singers, jugglers, fire-eaters, acrobats, comedians, fiddlers—and Texas Charlie managed the medicine business and trained the "Doctors" and "Professors" who gave "Medical Lectures."

Minor examples of *distinctively garbed* troupe members

All troupe members were distinctively garbed. The Indians—including Mohawks, Iroquois, Crees, Sioux, and Blackfeet—billed as "all pure-blooded Kickapoos, the most noted of all Indian Medical People," were adorned with colored beads and feathers and loaded down with primitive weapons; they trailed great strings of unidentified hairy objects. Some lecturers wore western-style leather clothes and boots with silver-capped toes, others fancy silk shirts, frock coats, and high silk hats. One of the most colorful Kickapoo figures was smooth-talking Ned T. Oliver—"Nevada Ned, the King of Gold"—who wore an enormous sombrero from the brim of which dangled 100 gold coins, and a fancy suit loaded with buttons made of gold pieces.

The Kickapoo shows were presented under canvas at "Kickapoo Camps" during the summer and in opera houses and town halls in winter. On many nights the show was free

to all, on others each adult was charged 10tf. The money poured in from medicine sales.

The wonder-working Kickapoo concoctions were "compounded according to secret ancient Kickapoo Indian tribal formulas" from "blood root, feverwort, spirit gum, wild poke berries, sassafras, slippery elm, wintergreen, white oak bark, yellow birch bark, dock root, sarsaparilla, and other Natural Products." The medicines were made in the Connecticut factory in vats so huge the "mixers" had to perch on ladders and wield long paddles. The leader of the Kickapoo line was Sagwa, which sold at *50<t* and $1 per bottle—"Sagwa, the wonderful remedy for catarrh, pulmonary consumption, and all ills that afflict the human body. It is made from roots, barks, gums, leaves, oils, and berries gathered by little Kickapoo children from God's great laboratory, the fertile fields and vast forests. Sagwa, Nature's own great secret cure, now available to all mankind!"

Long after the Kickapoo Company was dissolved, a woman who had worked in the medicine factory recalled that one of the ingredients of Kickapoo Cough Syrup was Jamaica rum. Could this "cure" have been the inspiration for the "Kickapoo Joy Juice" Al Capp featured in his popular comic strip?

Peggy Robbins,
"The Kickapoo Indian Medicine Company"

In this essay, the writer's use of concrete examples gives us a clear picture of the Kickapoo medicine show. In addition, the great number and variety of minor examples give us a good idea of the crazy-quilt nature of medicine shows in general.

When using examples in your own writing, brainstorm for possibilities (as described in Chapter 3) and select those that illustrate your idea most accurately. In choosing among possibilities, favor those that you sense your *reader* will respond to as convincing and colorful. Several well-chosen examples will often hold your reader's interest and add credibility to your main idea.

In the readings that follow, you will see the many ways in which experienced writers use examples to illustrate and develop their ideas. Try to watch for the effects that individual examples have on you and analyze why they affect you as they do. The questions and writing assignments at the ends of the readings will help you in this analysis and will give you practice in choosing effective examples to incorporate them in paragraphs and essays.

The Pencil Rack

John Ciardi

In this paragraph, by poet John Ciardi, we see how an experienced writer can push himself to begin writing. This inventory of Ciardi's pencil rack, the little trough at the front of his desk drawer, gives the reader a colorful and amusing portrait of the ordinary litter of day-to-day living.

Words to Know

obscure not easily seen or understood
unsubstantiated unproven

IVloved by what might be called an obscure impulse (to obscure my average reluctance to get to work), I recently fell to taking inventory of my average pencil rack and came up with the following itemization: two red pencils (unsharpened), one black grease pencil, one ball point and one fountain pen (both broken), one mailing sticker that had curled up into a small tube and which I unrolled to find that I had once printed on it with some care my social security number (032-10-1225), one purchaser's receipt for a money order in the amount of $7.15, one theater ticket stub (R 108) for the opening night of *The Rise ofArturo Ui,* one second-best (and therefore unused) letter opener, one spool of J. & P. Coats black thread (15£, 125 yards, number 60, origin and purpose unknown), one dentist's tool (broken, but obviously useful for picking things out of things if I had anything of that sort to pick related things out of), two nail files, one pair of cuff links, one metal pill box (empty, origin and purpose unknown), one glass marble (probably a souvenir of a visit from Benn), one four-for-a-quarter-while-you-wait-press-the-button photo taken, as I recall, at, then, Idlewild Airport and showing Jonnel and me looking at one another in some sort of fond but unsubstantiated pride, one twenty-cent stamp (1938 Presidential issue, James A. Garfield), two rubber bands, one pocket comb, a litter of paper clips, one 1889 quarter (to give to the kids for their collection as soon as I am sure that they will not spend it on candy), one Canadian dime and one British halfpenny (to be given to them any time), one air-mail sticker, two six-penny nails, three thumb tacks, two match folders, one broken tie clip (probably repairable), one small screw driver (in case any small screws show up to be driven?), one pocket pack of Kleenex, one pair of paper scissors, one staple remover, assorted grit.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why do you think the writer saved all of these things? Is a reason implied?
2. Who do you think Benn and Jonnel are? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Does the writer ever use the dentist's tool? How do you know?
4. What thoughts did you have when you finished reading this paragraph? What do you think the writer wants you to conclude about the contents of his pencil rack?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Examine the arrangement of examples in this paragraph. See if you can detect any obvious or implied **order** in their arrangement.
2. Besides being a paragraph of examples, in what sense is this a **descriptive** paragraph?
3. One could say that this paragraph is just a list of junk. How does the writer hold your interest and keep you reading?

Writing Assignments

1. We all save some things we do not need or use, sometimes without even knowing why. Write a paragraph giv'mg examples of such things—your own possessions or those of your friends—and try to describe some of the reasons for keeping them.
2. In a paragraph, use examples to describe the contents of the average refrigerator, garage, attic, or some other place where things tend to collect and be forgotten. Try to include examples that will interest or amuse your reader.

The Shoe as a Strategic Weapon

Alison Lurie

Clothing doesn't simply keep us warm and dry. What we wear and how we wear it can tell people a lot about who we are. In this selection taken from The Language of Clothes, ***Alison*** *Lurie gives examples of another use of clothing: to stop women from moving about quickly.*

Words to Know

gait a way of moving on foot
hampering making something difficult
lotus foot Chinese practice of binding women's **feet** to make them smaller

Attempts to limit female mobility by hampering locomotion are ancient and almost universal. The foot-binding of upper-class Chinese girls and the Nigerian custom of loading women's legs with pounds of heavy brass wire are extreme examples, but all over the world similar stratagems have been employed to make sure that once you have caught a woman she cannot run away, and even if she stays around she cannot keep up with you. What seems odd is that all these devices have been perceived as beautiful, not only by men but by women. The lotus foot, which seems to us a deformity, was passionately admired in China for centuries, and today most people in Western society see nothing ugly in the severely compressed toes produced by modern footwear. The high-heeled, narrow-toed shoes that for most of this century have been an essential part of woman's costume are considered sexually attractive, partly because they make the legs look longer—an extended leg is the biological sign of sexual availability in several animal species—and because they produce what anthropologists call a "courtship strut." They also make standing for any length of time painful, walking exhausting and running impossible. The halting, tiptoe gait they produce is thought provocative—perhaps because it guarantees that no woman wearing them can outrun a man who is chasing her. Worst of all, if they are worn continually from adolescence on, they deform the muscles of the feet and legs so that it becomes even more painful and difficult to walk in flat soles.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why have cultures attempted to limit female mobility?
2. What is the writer **implying** about modern Western society?
3. Do you agree with what Lurie says about high-heeled shoes? Why or why not?

Questions About the VVriter's Strategies

1. What is the **topic sentence** of the paragraph? Where is it located?
2. Does the writer use many examples, one extended example, or a combination of the two strategies?
3. What **mode of development** does the writer use? Does she use more than one mode?

Writing Assignments

1. Do you own any clothing that limits mobility or is uncomfortable but that you wear anyway, like a formal suit or dress, a snug pair of jeans, or, as in Lurie's paragraph, an uncomfortable pair of shoes? In a paragraph, use examples to show how the article of clothing restricts you, and other examples to show why you wear it.
2. Write a paragraph giving several examples of customs or habits that are familiar to you but that someone from another country might find odd.

A Cowboy's Courage

Gretel Erlich

The popular image of the cowboy has been a constant feature in American life since the 1800s. Yet over the decades that image has undergone several changes. In this paragraph, Grete! Erlich portrays the cowboy as someone whose strength comes from gentleness, compassion, and commitment to hard work. In the process she points to inaccuracies in the popular stereotype.

Words to Know

iconic characterized by symbolic objects and emblems
maternalism mothering, taking care of like a mother
perverted twisted, misinterpreted

cowboy is someone who loves his work. Since the hours are long—ten to fifteen hours a day—and the pay is $30 he has to. What's required of him is an odd mixture of physical vigor and maternalism. His part of the beef-raising industry is to birth and nurture calves and take care of their mothers. For the most part his work is done on horseback and in a lifetime he sees and comes to know more animals than people. The iconic myth surrounding him is built on American notions of heroism: the index of a man's value as measured in physical courage. Such ideas have perverted manliness into a self-absorbed race for cheap thrills. In a rancher's world, courage has less to do with facing danger than with acting spontaneously—usually on behalf of an animal or another rider. If a cow is stuck in a boghole he throws a loop around her neck, takes his dally (a half hitch around the saddle horn), and pulls her out with horsepower. If a calf is born sick, he may take her home, warm her in front of the kitchen fire, and massage her legs until dawn. One friend, whose favorite horse was trying to swim a lake with hobbles on, dove under water and cut her legs loose with a knife, then swam her to shore, his arm around her neck lifeguard-style, and saved her from drowning. Because these incidents are usually linked to someone or something outside himself, the westerner's courage is selfless, a form of compassion.

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean by "acting spontaneously"?
2. Why do cowboys help animals and other people? Speculate based on the examples in the paragraph.
3. What is the writer's idea of courage? Do hard work and self-sacrifice take courage?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** of this paragraph? Is it stated in a **topic sentence** or is **it implied?**
2. In the third sentence the writer reminds us that the cowboy is part of an "industry." Why do you think she mentions it?
3. In what ways does the writer's portrait contradict the popular image of the cowboy? What specific statements and examples does she give to support this contradiction?
4. Analyze the .examples in the paragraph. How do they reveal the grueling nature of the cowboy's work? How do they make you feel about the cowboy? What kind of person does it take to be a cowboy?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph using examples from the popular media to show how Americans usually visualize the cowboy.
2. In a paragraph, show what hard work is by using an extended example of some profession or task with which you are familiar.
3. Write a paragraph in which you use examples to explain the term *compassion.*

Wrappings

Andy Rooney

Andy Rooney, who appears on the television show "Sixty Minutes," is known for his opinions. Rooney has his own ideas—and gives them freely—on just about every topic, from women's handbags to the air force's use of glue. Here, he speaks his mind on our national mania for wrappings.

Words to Know

antimacassars chair covers
silicone a kind of water-resistant plastic

Depending on what mood I'm in, I find it either irritating, funny or civilized when I think about how we protect protective coverings in this country. 1

When I come home from the grocery store and start to unpack, I am always unfavorably impressed with the layers of protective or decorative wrappings we cover our food with. 2

There is hardly anything we buy that doesn't come in at least two wrappings, and then several of them are assembled by the cashier at the checkout counter and put into a small bag. Then several of the small bags are grouped together and put into a big bag. If you have several big bags with small bags in them, they give you a cardboard box to put the packages-in-the-little-bags-in-the-big-bags in. 3

A lot of things we buy wouldn't really need any protective wrapping at all. The skin of an orange protects an orange pretty well for most of its natural life, but we aren't satisfied with what nature has given it. We wrap ten of them in plastic or put them in a net bag, and we put the plastic bag in a paper bag. The orange inside the skin, inside the plastic which is in a paper bag, must wonder where it is. 4

A box of cookies or crackers often has waxed paper next to the cookies, a cardboard box holding the cookies and then waxed paper and a decorative wrapping around the cardboard box. What seems to be called for here is some stiff, decorative waxed paper. 5

We have always wrapped our cars in an incredible number of protective layers. We put fenders over the wheels to protect ourselves from flying dirt. Then we put bumpers front and back to protect the fenders. We proceed from there to put chrome on the bumpers to protect them from rust, and we undercoat the fenders to protect *them* from the dirt they're protecting us from. 6

We paint the car to protect the metal, wax the paint to protect that and then we build a two-car garage to protect the whole thing. If it was a child, it would be spoiled. 7

I'm laughing, but I'm a protector of things myself. I use wood preserver before I paint lumber, and when I buy a raincoat I always spray it with Scotchgard or some other silicone water resister. Over the years, **I'll** bet I've spent more on Scotchgard than I have on raincoats. 8

A good book is designed with a hard cover to protect its contents. The hard cover is protected from dirt and abuse by a dust jacket. A lot of people who are very careful with books cover the dust jacket with a plastic cover of its own. 9

A relative of ours bought a new couch recently because she liked the fabric it was covered with. She liked it so much she didn't want it to get dirty, so she bought a slipcover to put over it and she laid little oblong pieces of cloth over the arms where the wear is heaviest to protect the slipcover. She called them antimacassars. 10

We may never again see the fabric she's protecting. 11

Questions About the Reading

1. **In** the first sentence the writer uses the word *civilized.* What types of protective wrappings might seem civilized? Does Rooney give any examples in the essay on wrappings that might be viewed that way?
2. Do you think the writer approves of all the wrappings and protective coverings Americans use? Support your answer with an example.
3. What does the writer mean by stating that if a car "was a child, it would be spoiled"?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the tone of this essay?
2. Is the **thesis** stated or implied? If it is stated, where is it stated? If it is implied, state it in your own words.
3. The writer uses a number of examples to make his point. Would the essay have been as effective if he had used one extended example?
4. How does Rooney use language to amuse the reader?

Writing Assignments

1. Are protective wrappings ever useful? Write an essay that gives examples of protective wrappings that are necessary.
2. Although Rooney presents it humorously, his topic also has a serious side: The use of too many protective wrappings can be wasteful and uses up scarce natural resources. Write an essay that gives examples of other ways in which our society is wasteful. Use a serious tone.
3. Think of another aspect of our society that is good or bad, right or wrong. Form a thesis statement to express your opinion and then write an essay using examples to support your thesis.

Down with the Forests

Charles Kuralt

Charles Kuralt roams the highways and byways of America in a mobile home, covering (and discovering) offbeat stories for his Dateline America *series on CBS-TV and radio. In this one, he laments the disappearance of our great forests, all the while sneakily offering us examples of what we have done, what we have used, what we* demand, *that make the trees come down.*

Word to Know

habitat the place where something normally lives

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND. I was waiting for breakfast in a coffee shop the other morning and reading the paper. The paper had sixty-six pages. The waitress brought a paper place mat and a paper napkin and took my order, and I paged through the paper.

The headline said, "House Panel Studies a Bill Allowing Clear-Cutting in U.S. Forests."

I put the paper napkin in my lap, spread the paper out on the paper place mat, and read on: "The House Agriculture Committee," it said, "is looking over legislation that would once again open national forests to the clear-cutting of trees by private companies under government permits."

The waitress brought the coffee. I opened a paper sugar envelope and tore open a little paper cup of cream and went on reading the paper: "The Senate voted without dissent yesterday to allow clear-cutting," the paper said. "Critics have said clear-cutting in the national forests can lead to erosion and destruction of wildlife habitats. Forest Service and industry spokesmen said a flat ban on clear-cutting would bring paralysis to the lumber industry." And to the paper industry, I thought. Clear-cutting a forest is one way to get a lot of paper, and we sure seem to need a lot of paper.

The waitress brought the toast. I looked for the butter. It came on a little paper tray with a covering of paper. I opened a paper package of marmalade and read on: "Senator Jennings Randolph, Democrat of West Virginia, urged his colleagues to take a more restrictive view and permit clear-cutting only under specific guidelines for certain types of forest. But neither he nor anyone else voted against the bill, which was sent to the House on a 90 to 0 vote."

The eggs came, with little paper packages of salt and pepper. I finished breakfast, put the paper under my arm, and left the table with its used and useless paper napkin, paper place mat, paper salt and pepper packages, paper butter and marmalade wrappings, paper sugar envelope, and paper cream holder, and I walked out into the morning wondering how our national forests can ever survive our breakfasts. 6

Questions About the Reading

1. Why does the writer describe his breakfast in so much detail?
2. Suggest some possible reasons why no one voted against the clear-cutting bill.
3. What does the writer want us to realize about our part in the destruction of the forests?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is there a specific sentence in the essay that states the **thesis,** or is the thesis implied?
2. How do the quotes from the newspaper develop Kuralt's **main** idea?
3. Why does the writer use the word *paper* twenty-six times?
4. What is the **tone** of the essay? What would the tone have been if the lumber industry had written the article?

Writing Assignments

1. Each of us is to blame for the destruction of our forests. Write an essay illustrating with examples what individuals can do to reduce their consumption of paper.
2. Our society has become obsessed with the idea of throwaway packaging. Write an essay developing this idea through the use of examples.
3. Plastic has become a substitute for paper in many throwaway products, but we now know that the manufacture of many plastics is harmful to the earth's ozone layer. Write an essay using examples to illustrate other drawbacks to using disposable plastic products.

August

Andrei Codrescu

Some people look forward with dread to the sweltering dog days of summer. Andrei Codrescu is one of them. In this essay, he uses examples to show how heat and humidity can alter his outlook and behavior.

***Words to** Know*

complacent unconcerned with improving itself
delirious crazed, in a frenzy and out of touch with reality
indolent unmotivated, lazy
primeval belonging to the earliest of ages
prostrate incapacitated, collapsed

.ugust is a dramatic month. Humidity is a form of madness. Writing is a form of suicide. The temptation to talk like this, in short clips, is overwhelming. Short sentences are like raindrops: loud, splashy, and desirable. 1

August, the most complacent month. Laziness, humidity, and utter lack of thought are its chief characteristics. Sluggish and indolent, we drag our bodies through its sweaty middle like primeval crawlers. 2

I saw a guy, prostrate from heat, staring at an empty parking lot downtown. "There are more leaves on the trees this year," he said. I looked at the expanse of steaming cement before us and agreed. That was an August encounter and that man an August character. An ambassador of Humidity. The reason why so many people die in August is that nobody is really awake. All Death has to do is pluck the unalert from the planet like overripe peaches. 3

If you are poor and hot like me, one way to escape August is to visit showrooms. Not only are they airconditioned, they are educational. I went to an IBM computer showplace and a dear lady paraded me before the friendly pastels of a thousand keyboards. It was like ice cream. 4

Looking over the Augusts of my life, I find all sorts of delirious phenomena. Once I was mugged in a hallway. I was too irritated by the heat to pay. I screamed at the guy and he only took half the money. A few years ago, my wife produced a wonderful calendar full of useful and wonderful facts, a^ well as the birthdays of all our friends. I tried to talk her into leaving August out. When she wouldn't listen, I went 5

through her files and had several people I didn't like moved to August. She caught me. I pleaded humidity. I don't think she's forgiven me yet.

Questions About the Reading

1. In what way is August "dramatic"?
2. What sense can you make of paragraph 3? How do the ideas there relate to each other?
3. Why does the writer hang around town in August? Why doesn't he take a vacation in the country?
4. Why did the writer want his wife to leave August out? What good would it do?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** in this essay? Where is it most clearly expressed?
2. What is the **tone** of the essay? Speculate about whether the writer composed it in summer or during the cooler months.
3. Identify the **simile** in paragraph 1. Is it effective? Why or why not?
4. In paragraphs 4 and 5, besides examples, what **mode of development** does the writer use?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a **fictional** account of some situation that is maddening, uncomfortable, funny, or all three, using examples as your main mode of development. For instance, you might want to make up a day when everything went wrong for a police officer, a veterinarian, a cab driver, or an elementary schoolteacher.
2. In an essay, use examples to explain what you like or dislike about attending college.

Back to the Dump

Russell Baker

When our society changes, we often have to change our personal beliefs and habits as well. In this humorous essay, noted essayist Russell Baker gives examples of beliefs he has had to discard.

Words to Know

contemplated considered
interrogator questioner
Svengalis people with irresistible hypnotic powers (from a character in the novel *Trilby* by George du Maurier)
swinish like a pig

When I was a boy everybody urged me to get plenty of sunshine, so I got plenty of sunshine for a long time. One day while I was absorbing July sun as fast as I could, a doctor asked what I thought I was doing. 1

"Getting plenty of sunshine," I said. 2

"Are you mad?" he replied. 3

No, I was not mad, just slow to catch up with life's revisions. Getting plenty of sunshine had been declared dangerous while I was out to lunch. I revised my store of knowledge. Now I get only small droppers of sunshine extracted from the half hour just before sunset. 4

When I was old enough to notice that girls were pleasantly different from boys, my mother told me the fact of life. "You must always treat a woman like a lady," she said. So for a long time I went through life treating women like ladies. 5

One day while I was helping a woman into her coat, another woman asked me what I thought I was doing. 6

"Treating a woman like a lady," I said.

"Are you mad?" she replied.

No, I was not mad, but my interrogator was furious. I had been out to lunch during one of life's revisions and missed the announcement that it was swinish to treat a woman like a lady. I discarded another piece of my childhood education. Now I treat women like ticking bombs. 9

When I was 17 and for many years afterward, I admired Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt as the ideal couple. One evening I had an encounter with a ticking bomb, and contemplated behaving like a fool, but rejected the impulse because we weren't married. 10

"What do you think you're doing?" she asked as I fled. I told her that someday I wanted to be half of a couple as ideal as Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. 11

"Are you mad?" she replied. 12

No, not mad. I had been out to lunch during another of life's revisions and, so, had missed the disclosure that Eleanor didn't get along well with Franklin and that Franklin fooled around when she was out of town. Another part of my youthful education went to the dump, but too late. By then, age had brought its inevitable energy crisis and I had begun to prefer napping to behaving like a fool. 13

Perhaps it was not age that defeated me, though. Maybe it was fatigue caused by the constant trips to the dump to discard everything I'd learned in the first half of my life. Life seemed to be an educator's practical joke in which you spent the first half learning and the second half learning that everything you learned in the first half was wrong. 14

The trips to the dump became more and more frequent. There I lugged the old precept that a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs was good for me. 15

I also hauled away the old lesson that it was racist to refer to people of African ancestry as "black." One windy night, I hoisted up the cherished teaching that every American had a duty to drive a two-ton, eight-cylinder automobile with room enough inside for a steamer trunk and the whole darn family, and staggered off to the dump. That was a heavy night's work and left me bent in spine and spirit. 16

At about this time, movie actors began running for President, astronauts began flying around the planet to get from one desert to another, and people began renting one-bedroom apartments for $2,000 a month. Out to the dump went important fragments of my education which had made me believe that movie actors existed to be browbeaten by Congressional investigators, that if you've seen one cactus you've seen them all, and that $2,000 a month ought to buy you a controlling interest in the Gritti Palace Hotel. 17

No wonder I was tired. And then, a terrible fear seized me. If everything I'd learned in life's first half had to go to the dump, wasn't it inevitable that everything I was learning in the second half would also have to go? 18

A crushing thought. I'm not getting any younger. I've had the stamina so far to heave out everything I learned in youth, but if everything I've learned since has to go in the next 25 years I'll be too feeble for the job. 19

I'm sitting here right now wondering what present certainties might 20
have to be junked before the century is out. My conviction that President Reagan is a nice guy for instance. Will some whippersnapper someday say, "If you hadn't been out to lunch again, old-timer, you'd have read the recent book reporting that Reagan had to be dosed on jolly pills to control his passion for kicking orphans"?

And there's my present fear that the nuclear weapons race could 21
kill us all. Some people already say I wouldn't have that fear if the Russians hadn't manipulated my brain. I think that's silly right now. Considering all the other people I know are manipulating my brain, I don't see how the Russians could get a crack at it. But you never know. Someday I might have to learn that I wasn't really afraid of nuclear war at all, but only under the sway of Moscow Svengalis.

It wouldn't surprise me. Live long enough and you'll eventually be 22
wrong about everything.

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean when he states, "I had an encounter with a ticking bomb"?
2. What was Baker afraid would eventually happen?
3. In what way is the writer's brain being "manipulated"?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **tone** of this essay?
2. Is there a direct thesis **statement** in this essay? If not, state the thesis in your own words. How well do the examples support the thesis?
3. "The dump" is a metaphor. Interpret what it refers to.
4. In the first half of the essay, the writer uses **repetition** extensively. What is the effect of this strategy?

Writing Assignments

Think of a popular or highly publicized idea that you do not agree with—say, that success is more important than being considerate, that hunting is inhumane, that nuclear power plants are (or are not) dangerous, or that students entering college today are (or are not) poorly educated. Write an essay in which you use examples to persuade your readers that you are right.

2. Imagine what your city will be like in the year 2010, and write an essay that describes it, using examples to show how it will differ from the way it is now.
3. Write an essay giving examples of beliefs you have had to discard as you have grown older.

Television and Work

Peggy Charren and Martin Sandier

The television is on for more than seven hours each day in most American homes. But what are people really seeing when they watch TV? According to Peggy Charren and Martin Sandier, what they are **not** *seeing—people who work at real-life jobs—is even more important.*

***Words to** Know*

amorous passionate
annals a record of events
misconceptions mistaken ideas
mundane routine, daily
resolutions solutions
unprecedented not done before

J. he world of television is one in which, according to a study by George Gerbner, policemen, doctors, lawyers, judges and law-breakers outnumber all other working people combined. On TV there are almost no clerical workers, salespeople, artists, or engineers. And blue collar workers, the largest segment of the working force in the real world, are nearly invisible. The result is that heavy TV-watchers and children come to know more about spies, coroners, and small-town sheriffs than they do about those who carry out the basic tasks in American society. 1

Television relies heavily on authority figures. Policemen, doctors, lawyers, and judges fill the bill. TV doctors are wise, fatherly (women on TV are not doctors; they are nurses), and right most of the time. 2

In the world of television, police and private detectives alike fill , a their days with devil-may-care car chases, shoot-ups, and amorous adventures. The real world is far less glamorous: police handle plenty of traffic violations and domestic problems, and private detectives chase debtors, look for missing people, and shadow straying husbands and wives. Television's private eyes regularly solve crimes and bring criminals to justice; most real private detectives have little to do with the actual solving of major crimes.

And, of course, TV's men in blue always get their man, with a speed unprecedented in the annals of real life, since loose ends must be neatly tied by the close of the thirty- or sixty-minute segment. What of the long hours, mundane tasks, and many frustrations that plague real-life 4

law enforcers, what of the bad guys who never get caught? Where are they on TV? (You can find them on "Hill Street Blues," which may account for its growing popularity.)

The typical action-adventure shows that feature private detectives, police, or other law enforcement agencies are put together by highly skilled writers, producers, and technicians. Actual police or FBI buildings are shown. Locales around the world are used and identifiable landmarks are featured. Official badges and uniforms are commonplace. Often we are told that the episode is based on some actual case (only the names have been changed to protect the innocent), and at the end of some of these programs we are even informed as to what sentence was given to the "actual criminals." All of this gives an air of authenticity to these series, increasing problems for viewers who have difficulty distinguishing between the truth and the fantasy world of TV. 5

These misconceptions cause trouble in the real world of lawyers' offices and courtrooms. Lawyers around the country report increased difficulty conveying to clients just what they as lawyers can and cannot accomplish. If Perry Mason can wrap up a case successfully in an hour, why can't they? And many legal officials are concerned that jurors will expect clearcut resolutions of cases as a result of TV lawyers' freeing their clients by breaking down witnesses on the stand and then pointing to the actual criminal before the startled eyes of judge and jury. 6

Questions About the Reading

1. What details make television shows seem more realistic?
2. What problems are caused by the realism of police-adventure shows?
3. What *can* real lawyers accomplish? Why do the misconceptions caused by television give lawyers trouble?
4. What kinds of workers are rarely seen on TV?
5. What do the writers claim is true about television? Give specific examples.

Questions About the Writers' Strategies

1. Do the writers use other modes of development in addition to examples? If so, in which paragraphs are the other modes used?
2. Is the thesis directly stated or implied? If directly stated, in which sentence or sentences is it found?
3. The writers cite a study in the first paragraph of the essay. What effect on the reader does this have?
4. In paragraph 2 the writers mention doctors, but most of the essay concerns law enforcers and lawyers. Why do the writers concentrate on these professions?

Writing Assignments

1. This essay was written in 1983. Has television changed since then? Write an essay on this topic, using examples of past and current television shows to support your thesis.
2. Are there any benefits to watching TV? Answer this question in an essay, using examples to support your answer.
3. Spend a Saturday morning watching children's cartoons on TV. Then write an essay explaining that cartoons are either good or bad for children. Use examples from the shows you watched to support/' your explanation.

The Family / Career Priority Problem

Ellen Goodman

How do today's successful people find time for both family and career? Pulitizer prize-winning columnist Ellen Goodman's answer: They may sacrifice one for the other. Goodman looks at many hard-working, fast-rising, successful people she knows—women and men—and is surprised, and a little frightened, by what she finds.

Words to Know

capitulated gave up, gave in
inherent natural, inevitable, basic
merged combined
precludes prevents, does not allow
prototypical model, standard to be used or followed

w n e day last week Ed Koch left his Greenwich Village apartment 1
to take the M-6 bus downtown. About the same time he was being sworn in as mayor of New York City, my friend Carol was turning down a job as a top executive of a New York corporation.

On the surface, these two events seem to be totally unrelated, except 2
for the fact that they took place in the same city. But I don't think they are. You see, Ed Koch is a bachelor, and my friend Carol is married and a parent, and there's a difference.

No, this isn't a story that ends with a one-line complaint from Carol: 3
"If it hadn't been for you, I would have been a star." (Or a mayor, for that matter.) Nor is it a story of discrimination. Her husband didn't put his.foot down. Her parents didn't form a circle around her shouting, *"Bad* mother, *badl"* until she capitulated.

Carol chose. She wanted the promotion so much she could taste it. 4
But the job came with weekends and evenings and traveling attached, and she didn't want to miss that time with her husband and sons. She couldn't do both. Knowing that didn't make it any easier.

Carol isn't the only one I know making these decisions. Another 5
friend refused to move up a rung on the professional ladder because it would have meant uprooting his family and transferring his wife out of a career of her own. A third couple consciously put their careers on the back burner in order to spend time with the family they'd merged out of two previous marriages.

These were not bitter choices, but tough ones. As Carol said, it isn't possible to give overtime at work and decent time at home. 6

Once it was normal for a man to devote his energy entirely to his work, while his family was taken care of by his wife. Once men led the public lives and women the private lives. Now that gap is closing, and another one is growing between family people and single people. Everywhere it seems that men and women who care the most about their private lives are living them that way, while the single people have become the new upwardly mobile. 7

In Washington you can see the difference. There, a twenty-eight-year-old bachelor such as White House aide David Rubinstein works more than sixteen hours a day and eats vending-machine meals, while a guy like Representative Lloyd Meeds (D-Washington) decides not to take his family through another congressional election fight, and drops out. There, despite the attempts of the Carters to encourage family time, the government still runs on excess. As one observer puts it, the only way to get the work done is to be single or to have a lousy marriage. 8

In New York the successful politicians (aside from Koch) now include Carol Bellamy, the single head of the city council, and Andrew Stein, the divorced borough president. The governor is a widower, the lieutenant governor is legally separated. 9

All around us the prototypical workaholics are single, with Ralph Nader leading the Eastern division, and Jerry Brown bringing up the West. And in the U.S. Senate last year there were enough divorces to justify legal insurance. 10

I don't think that this is something "movements" or legislation can solve. I am reminded of the moment in the movie *The Turning Point* when Anne Bancroft and Shirley MacLaine realize that they both wanted it all. These two women hadn't chosen in their lives between work and family in the classic sense, but between workaholism and family: between the sort of success that demands single-minded devotion to a goal and the sort of "balanced" life that includes family and work, but precludes overachieving. In the end the star was a bachelor. 11

The decisions they faced are the rock-bottom ones, the toughies. How do you divide the pie of your life—your own time and energy? 12

Today, the cast of characters is changing. It isn't only men in high-powered work lives and women at home. But the choices have remained the same. There seems to be an inherent contradiction between the commitment to become number one, the best, the first, and the commitment to a rich family life. A contradiction between family-first people and work-first people. 13

The irony is that we need decisionmakers who care and understand about children and private lives. And I wonder how we will find them if the room at the top becomes a bachelor pad. 14

Questions About the Reading

1. In paragraph II, the writer speaks of "movements" and legislation. What is she referring to?
2. Politics figures in most of the essay's examples, even though Carol worked for a corporation. Why do you think the writer focuses on politics?
3. Do you think Goodman favors family-first people or work-first people? Who does she think is stronger? Is she neutral? Cite examples from the essay to support your answer.
4. Does Goodman believe all work must lead to a choice between work and family? Support your answer with statements from the essay.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the purpose of the first five paragraphs? Why does the writer present the example of her friend first rather than elsewhere in the essay?
2. Could the first sentence in paragraph 7 be made into two sentences? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. In paragraph 12, Goodman asks, "How do you divide the pie of your life . . . ?" In terms of the essay, what does she mean by the "pie of your life"?
4. What is the **main idea** of the essay? Pick out three sentences, each of which expresses all or part of the main idea.

Writing Assignments

1. Do you agree with the writer's opinion about the family/career problem? Write an essay in which you state how you view the family/career problem. Use examples to develop and explain your view.
2. Consider the last two sentences of the essay. Rewrite the idea they express in your own words and, using that idea as your thesis, write an essay that uses examples to show how having a family might influence the decisions of someone in high political office. You may want to use examples based on a real political figure or hypothetical **(fictional)** examples.

3. You probably know people who successfully balance careers and family life. Write an essay in which you use such persons as examples to support the idea that people can manage both careers and family life.

My Mother Never Worked

Bonnie Smith-Yackel

*Bonnie **Smith-Yackel's** family survived on a farm during the Depression, a time when both the weather and the economy made the hardships of farm life nearly **overwhelming.** In this personal essay, Smith-Yackel uses the example of her mother's life to reveal the unfairness in American society's attitudes toward women and the work they do to keep their families going.*

Words to Know

cholera a contagious, often fatal disease, usually restricted to farm animals in this country
reciprocated returned
sustenance nourishment, support for life
widow's pension the Social Security payments given to a widow, based on her deceased husband's eligibility, who is not eligible herself for Social Security

"Q
\J ocial Security Office." (The voice answering the telephone sounds very self-assured.) 1

"I'm calling about ... I ... my mother just died ... I was told to call you and see about a ... death-benefit check, I think they call it. 2

"I see. Was your mother on Social Security? How old was she?" 3

"Yes . . . she was seventy-eight. ..." 4

"Do you know her number?" 5

"No ... I, ah ... don't you have a record?" 6

"Certainly. I'll look it up. Her name?" 7

"Smith. Martha Smith. Or maybe she used Martha Ruth Smith. 8
. .. Sometimes she used her maiden name .. . Martha Jerabek Smith."

"If you'd care to hold on, I'll check our records—it'll be a few 9
minutes."

"Yes____" 10

Her love letters—to and from Daddy—were in an old box, tied with 11
ribbons and stiff, rigid-w.ith-age leather thongs: 1918 through 1920; hers written on stationery from the general store she had worked in full-time and managed, single-handed, after her graduation from high school in 1913; and his, at first, on YMCA or Soldiers and Sailors Club stationery dispensed to the fighting men of World War I. He wooed

her thoroughly and persistently by mail, and though she reciprocated all his feelings for her, she dreaded marriage. . . .

"It's so hard for me to decide when to have my wedding day—that's 12
all I've thought about these last two days. I have told you dozens of times that I won't be afraid of married life, **but when it comes down to** getting the date and then picturing myself a married woman with half a dozen or more kids to look after, it just makes me sick. . . . I am weeping right now—I hope that some day I can look back and say how foolish I was to dread it all."

They married in February, 1921, and began farming. Their first baby, 13
a daughter, was born in January, 1922, when my mother was 26 years old. The second baby, a son, was born in March, 1923. They were renting farms; my father, besides working his own fields, also was a hired man for two other farmers. They had no. capital initially, and had to gain it slowly, working from dawn until midnight every day. My town-bred mother learned to set hens and raise chickens, feed pigs, milk cows, plant and harvest a garden, and can every fruit and vegetable she could scrounge. She carried water nearly a quarter of a mile from the well to fill her wash boilers in order to do her laundry on a scrub board. She learned to shuck grain, feedjhreshers, shock and husk corn, feed corn pickers. In September, 1925, the third baby came, and in June, 1927, the fourth child—both daughters. In 1930, my parents had enough money to buy their own farm, and that March they moved all their livestock and belongings themselves, 55 miles over rutted, muddy roads.

In the summer of 1930 my mother and her two eldest children re- 14
claimed a 40-acre field from Canadian thistles, by chopping them all out with a hoe. In the other fields, when the oats and flax began to head out, the green and blue of the crops were hidden by the bright yellow of wild mustard. My mother walked the fields day after day, pulling each mustard plant. She raised a new flock of ba^" chicks—500—and she spaded up, planted, hoed, and harvested a half-acre garden.

During the next spring their hogs caught cholera and died. No cash 15
that fall.

And in the next year the drought hit. My mother and father trudged 16
from the well to the chickens, the well to the calf pasture, the well to the barn, and from the well to the garden. The sun came out hot and bright, endlessly, day after day. The crops shriveled and died. They harvested half the corn, and ground the other half, stalks and all, and fed it to the cattle as fodder. With the price at four ceTits a bushel for

the harvested crop, they couldn't afford to haul it into town. They burned it in the furnace for fuel that winter.

In 1934, in February, when the dust was still so thick in the Minnesota air that my parents couldn't always see from the house to the barn, their fifth child—a fourth daughter—was born. My father hunted rabbits daily, and my mother ste_wed them, fried them, canned them, and wished out loud that she could taste hamburger once more. In the fall the shotgun brought prairie chickens, ducks, pheasant, and grouse. My mothepplucked each bird, carefully reserving the breast feathers for pillows.

In the winter she sewed night after night, endlessly, begging cast-off 18
clothing from relatives, ripping apart coats, dresses, blouses, and trousers to remake them to fit her four daughters and son. Every morning and every evening she milked cows, fed pigs and calves, cared for chickens, picked eggs, cooked meals, washed dishes, scrubbed floors, and tended and loved her children. In the spring she planted a garden once more, dragging pails of water to nourish and sustain the vegetables for the family. In 1936 she lost a baby in her sixth month.

In 1937 her fifth daughter was born. She was 42 years old. In 1939 19
a second son, and in 1941 her eighth child—and third son.

But the war had come, and prosperity of a sort. The herd of cattle 20
had grown to 30 head; she still milked morning and evenirlg. Her garden was more than a half acre—the rains had come, and by now the Rural Electricity Administration and indoor plumbing. Still she sewed—dresses and jackets for the children, housedresses and aprons for herself, weekly patching of jeans, overalls, and denim shirts. Still she made pillows, using the feathers she had plucked, and quilts every year—intricate patterns as well as patchwork, stitched as well as tied—all necessary bedding for her family. Every scrap of cloth too small to be used in quilts was carefully saved and painstakingly sewed together in strips to make rugs. She still went out in the fields to help with the haying whenever there was a threat of rain.

In 1959 my mother's last child graduated from high school. A year 21
later the cows were sold. She still raised chickens and ducks, plucked feathers, made pillows, baked her own bread, and every year made a new quilt—now for a married child or for a grandchild. And her garden, that huge, undying symbol of sustenance, was as large and cared for as in all the years before. The canning, and now freezing, continued.

In 1969, on a June afternoon, mother and father started out for town 22
so that she could buy sugar to make rhubarb jam for a daughter who

lived in Texas. The car crashed into a ditch. She was paralyzed from the waist down.

In 1970 her husband, my father, died. My mother struggled to re- 23
gain some competence and dignity and order in her life. At the rehabilitation institute, where they gave her physical therapy and trained her to live usefully in a wheelchair, the therapist told me: "She did fifteen pushups today—fifteen! She's almost seventy-five years old! I've never known a woman so strong!"

From her wheelchair she canned pickles, baked bread, ironed 24
clothes, wrote dozens of letters weekly to her friends and her "half dozen or more kids," and made three patchwork housecoats and one quilt. She made balls and balls of carpet rags—enough for five rugs. And kept all her love letters.

"I think I've found your mother's records—Martha Ruth Smith; 25
married to Ben F. Smith?"

"Yes, that's right." 26

"Well, I see that she was getting a widow's pension. . . ." 27

"Yes, that's right." 28

"Well, your mother isn't entitled to our $255 death benefit." 29

"Not entitled! But why?" 30

The voice on the telephone explains patiently: 31

"Well, you see—your mother never worked." 32

Questions About the Reading

1. Why didn't the writer's mother want to get married?
2. How old was the writer's mother when she had her eighth child? How old was she when she was paralyzed?
3. In her later years, how do you think Mrs. Smith's attitude had changed from the one she expressed in the letter quoted in paragraph 12. What had become of her fears of marriage?
4. Why did Mrs. Smith do the pushups, and why did she continue her work in her final years, when she really didn't have to?
5. Speculate about why Mrs. Smith kept her love letters. Why do you think the writer mentions the fact in paragraph 24?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the thesis in this essay? Where is it expressed?
2. How well do the writer's examples support her thesis?
3. Aside from the extended example of her mother's life, what other mode of development does the writer use in the essay?

4. Describe the writer's point of view in the essay. How does she use time? Does her tone change during the essay?
5. Why does the writer give so few details about her father and the family's children?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay giving examples of the obstacles women have to overcome in today's society.
2. Think of an extraordinary person you know, and write an essay using examples to show what makes that person extraordinary and why he or she is important to others.
3. Write an essay using examples, or one extended example, to show what the term *sacrifice* means.

Classification and Division

SUPPOSE YOU ARE looking over the clothing in your closet, trying to sort out the confusion. You decide to classify your clothing into several categories: good clothes for looking your best on the job; older clothes for weekends and informal occasions; and very old clothes that have some stains and holes (but that you can still use when you wash the car or the dog). You have now classified all your clothes into three orderly categories, according to their various uses. You may even want to expand your classification by adding a fourth category, clothes that are no longer useful and should be thrown away. You may have washed the dog in them once too often.

The purpose of **classification** is to take many of the same type of thing—clothing, school papers, presidents, recipes, music—and organize this large, unsorted group into categories. You may decide to classify your group of similar things, such as food processors, into such categories as

- most useful, moderately useful, not useful
- reliable, less reliable, least reliable, unreliable
- best quality, good quality, fair quality, poor quality

You should organize your categories by some quality or characteristic that the items share in common. In each case, you will have to search for the categories that will help you classify an unsorted group of items.

In the following example, which is from a textbook, the writer classifies mothers of handicapped children according to categories marked by three attitudes.

Classification

Researchers note three frequent attitudes among mothers of handicapped children. The first attitude is reflected by those mothers who reject their child or are unable to accept the child as a handicapped person. Complex love-hate and acceptance-rejection relationships are found within this group. Rejected children not only have problems in adjusting to themselves and their disabilities, but they also have to contend with disturbed family relationships and emotional insecurity. Unfortunately, such children receive even less encouragement than the normal child and have to absorb more criticism of their behavior.

Category 1: rejection

A second relationship involves mothers who overcompensate in their reactions to their child and the disorder. They tend to be unrealistic, rigid, and overprotective. Often, such parents try to compensate by being overzealous and giving continuous instruction and training in the hope of establishing superior ability.

Category 2: overcompensation

The third group consists of mothers who accept their children along with their disorders. These mothers have gained the ability to provide for the special needs of their handicapped children while continuing to live a normal life and tending to family and home as well as civic and social obligations. The child's chances are best with parents who have accepted both their child and the defects.

Category 3: acceptance

Janet W. Lerner,
Learning Disabilities, Fifth Edition

Classification and division are very common in textbooks because they offer the writer a convenient way to separate a complex idea or group of facts into simpler, more manageable units. Watch for classification and division in the reading you do for your other courses. You will find this mode of development is useful in writing reports and essays assigned as course work.

Whereas you sort many things in classification, the purpose of division is to take *one* thing and divide it iriio its component parts. In division, you would deal with one particular car and separate it into its components (motor, transmission, power brakes, tires, seat belts, and so forth). In classification, you would take many cars and separate them into categories (economy cars, moderately priced cars, and expensive cars). You might add truly expensive custom-built cars if you are knowledgeable about them. You would not want to add to this classification a category called battery-operated cars because your categories are based on cost—not on power.

Often classification and division are used together. For example, you might want to divide a group into its subgroups and then evaluate the subgroups. You might take your neighborhood and first *divide* it into sections (north, south, west). You might then *classify* the sections by how much noise and traffic are present in each—noisy, relatively quiet, and quiet. The purpose of classification and division is to categorize a complex whole into simple, useful categories or subdivisions.

In the following example, the writer establishes two general types of wood sill construction and then divides each class into its components.

Classification

The two general types of wood sill construction used over the foundation wall conform either to platform or balloon framing. The box sill is commonly used in platform construction. It consists of a 2-inch or thicker wooden board, called a plate, anchored to the top of the foundation wall over a sill sealer. The plate provides support and fastening for the joists, the large boards that support the floor, and the header at the ends of the joists into which they are nailed. . . .

Category 1: components

Balloon-frame construction uses a 2-inch or thicker wood sill upon which the joists rest. The studs, which form the interior of the walls, also rest on this sill and are nailed both into the floor joists and the sill. The subfloor is laid diagonally or at right angles to the joists, and a firestop, a wood block that restricts air flow within the wall, is added between the studs at the floorline. When diagonal subfloor is used, an extra board for nailing is normally required between joists and studs at the wall lines.

Category 2: components

Adapted from L. O. Anderson,
Wood-Frame House Construction

Whether using classification or division the writer has to give some thought to making the categories logical and appropriate, with as little overlap between categories as possible. If you are classifying chocolate desserts, you do not want to add vanilla custard to your list. You will also want to make your categories reasonably complete. You would not want to leave out chocolate cake in your classification of chocolate desserts.

If you are groping for a method of classification, you first may want to think of *several* ways of categorizing the same information. In this situation, you want to be careful to find the most efficient or productive category. In

our first example of organizing the closet, you may have preferred to classify your clothes according to color (red clothes, brown clothes, blue clothes). Or you may have decided to arrange them by type: all pants together; all jackets together; all shirts together—and so forth.

Experienced writers often use classification or division or both to organize a composition. In the paragraph below, the writer uses classification to discuss the different kinds (categories) of book owners.

Topic sentence: classification

Category 1: nonreaders

Category 2: occasional readers

Category 3: devoted readers

There are three kinds of book owners. The first has all the standard sets and best-sellers—unread, untouched. (This deluded individual owns woodpulp and ink, not books.) The second has a great many books—a few of them read through, most of them dipped into, but all of them as clean and shiny as the day they were bought. (This person would probably like to make books his own, but is restrained by a false respect for their physical appearance.) The third has a few books or many—every one of them dog-eared and dilapidated, shaken and loosened by continual use, marked and scribbled in from front to back. (This man owns books.)

Mortimer J, Adler,
"How to Mark a Book"

Notice, too, in the paragraph above that the topic sentence clearly tells the reader to expect to read about *three* kinds of book owners and that the *words first, second,* and *third* are used to identify them.

In the essay below, the writer explains the *passions that have governed his life.* The three passions he explains—longing for love, search for knowledge, and pity for suffering mankind—are the categories of the classification.

Thesis statement: classification

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

Category 1: love

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy—ecstasy so great that 1 would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy. I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness—that terrible loneliness in which one's shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss. I have sought it, finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and though it might seem too good for human life, this is what—at last—I have found.

Category 2: Knowledge

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. … A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Category 3: pity

Love and knowledge, as far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a hated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but 1 cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my fife. I have found it worth living, and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.

Bertrand Russell,
The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell: 1872-19U

Although the organization of the essay above is developed primarily by classification, notice that the writer has also used description and examples within the paragraphs. In paragraph 2, the writer uses descriptive details to explain why he sought love. In paragraph 3, he uses examples of the knowledge he has looked for. In paragraph 4, he uses both descriptive details and examples to explain his pity for the suffering of humankind.

Writers often use topic sentences such as "A safe city street has three main qualities" or "The treatment prescribed for the disease was aspirin, bed rest, and fluids" to indicate the categories that will follow in the body of a paragraph or essay. Following "A safe city street has three main qualities/[7] the writer would explain the three specific qualities that make a city street safe. Following "The treatment prescribed for the disease was aspirin, bed rest, and fluids," the writer would probably explain the reasons for prescribing aspirin, bed rest, and fluids.

Usually, too, writers will *follow the same order* in discussing the divisions (or categories) that they used in first introducing them. For instance, suppose the topic is "Four methods can be used to cook fish: broiling, baking, poaching, and frying." Ordinarily the writer would explain (1) boiling; then (2) baking; (3) poaching; and

(4) frying. Listing the categories and explaining them in order can make the composition easier for the reader to understand.

Classification and division both will require some preplanning before you begin to write. Again, it is useful to brainstorm by jotting down many ideas and making rough lists. Do not skimp on planning and prewriting work. Finding a workable, well-designed scheme of classification or division is the key to this type of writing. The questions at the ends of the readings that follow will help you recognize how experienced writers use classification and division, and the writing assignments will let you plan and compose classifications and divisions of your own.

The Three New Yorks

E. B. White

There is, of course, only one New York. But our largest city presents a different face to each person who experiences it. E. B. White, who died in 7985, was a student of the city. In this paragraph, he finds that there are three ways of looking at New York, and that these are also, in a way, three ways of using *New York—to live, to work, and to dream.*

Words to Know

continuity existence over a long period
Consolidated Edison Company the power company serving New York **City**
deportment behavior, conduct
solidarity wholeness
turbulence agitation, disturbance

X here are roughly three New Yorks. There is, first, the New York of the man or woman who was born here, who takes the city for granted and accepts its size and its turbulence as natural and inevitable. Second, there is the New York of the commuter—the city that is devoured by locusts each day and spat out each night. Third, there is the New York of the person who was born somewhere else and came to New York in quest of something. Of these three trembling cities the greatest is the last—the city of final destination, the city that is a goal. It is this third city that accounts for New York's high-strung disposition, its poetical deportment, its dedication to the arts, and its incomparable achievements. Commuters give the city its tidal restlessness, natives give it solidarity and continuity, but the settlers give it passion. And whether it is a farmer arriving from Italy to set up a small grocery store in a slum, or a young girl arriving from a small town in Mississippi to escape the indignity of being observed by her neighbors, or a boy arriving from the Corn Belt with a manuscript in his suitcase and a pain in his heart, it makes no difference: each embraces New York with the intense excitement of first love, each absorbs New York with the fresh eyes of an adventurer, each generates heat and light to dwarf the Consolidated Edison Company.

Questions About the Reading

1. Which of the New Yorks does White think is the greatest? Why? Support your answer with statements from the paragraph.
2. What do the people who make up the first New York contribute to it? Which statements tell you?
3. What is the meaning of the essay's final clause ("each generates heat

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Does the paragraph have a **topic sentence?** If so, identify it. If not, state the topic in a sentence of your own.
2. What **transitions** does White use to help the reader identify the relation of ideas?
3. Identify the **metaphor** in the essay's third sentence and interpret what it means.
4. Is the paragraph developed by classification, division, or both?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph in which you classify the different groups of people in the town where you grew up.
2. Write a paragraph in which you identify and classify at least three groups of people in your school or place of work.
3. Suppose you are getting ready to do your laundry. Write a paragraph in which you explain how you sort the clothes for washing.

Silence

Beryl Markham

Born in 1902 in England, Beryl Markham spent most of her life in East Africa. An adventurer and skillful aviator, she was the first to fly solo from east to west across the Atlantic. In this paragraph from her book West with the Night, *she shows that classification and division can be used not only to categorize concrete objects and ideas but also to give form to abstract sensations and emotions.*

Words to Know

emanate to come out of, arise
raucous noisy, unrestrained

1 here are all kinds of silences and each of them means a different thing. There is the silence that comes with morning in a forest, and this is different from the silence of a sleeping city. There is silence after a rainstorm, and before a rainstorm, and these are not the same. There is the silence of emptiness, the silence of fear, the silence of doubt. There is a certain silence that can emanate from a lifeless object as from a chair lately used, or from a piano with old dust upon its keys, or from anything that has answered to the need of a man, for pleasure or for work. This kind of silence can speak. Its voice may be melancholy, but it is not always so; for the chair may have been left by a laughing child or the last notes of the piano may have been raucous and gay. Whatever the mood or the circumstance, the essence of its quality may linger in the silence that follows. It is a soundless echo.

Questions About the Reading

1. Pick two or three of the silences the writer describes and, in your own words, explain how they differ from one another.
2. What does the writer mean by "silence"?
3. What is it that gives silences their different qualities?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify the topic sentence in this paragraph.
2. Read this paragraph aloud to yourself, and then describe the effects of sound the writer achieves with the words she uses.
3. The basic contradiction, or irony in this paragraph is summarized in the term "soundless echo." Describe this contradiction in a few sentences of your own.

Writing Assignments

1. In a paragraph, classify or divide the qualities or types of some abstract concept, such as life, truth, courage, beauty, hate, fear, or greed. If you can, choose examples from your own experience to include in your classification or division.
2. Write a paragraph classifying the sounds you hear during a routine day

The American Language

Robert Hendrickson

If *asked what language is spoken in the United States, most of us would say English, without even thinking about it. Here, Robert Hendrickson suggests that this response considerably oversimplifies matters.*

Word to Know

infusion putting into; introducing

One British traveler, with a snobbery bordering on self-destructiveness, complained more than a century ago that American was not "pure enough Anglo-Saxon English." The American language, with its numerous native terms or Americanisms (from 14,000 to 100,000 of them, according to various estimates) deriving from local conditions and the infusion of so many foreign tongues, would obviously differ from Received Standard British English on that score alone, not to mention the effect of these tongues on American *pronunciation.* Perhaps a hundred languages are spoken in the United States in addition to English. The top six, according to the 1970 Census, are German (6 million speakers), Italian (4 million), French (2.5 million), Polish (2.5 million), Yiddish (1.5 million), and Scandinavian languages (1.2 million). Of Native American languages Navaho is spoken by more people (100,000) than any other, with Ojibwa, or Chippewa, next (30,000) and Sioux, or Dakota, third (20,000). Indian languages alone have contributed a great number of words to our vocabulary, and obviously these and other Americanisms have become part of the true universal English language, just as have words from the scores of languages that influenced British English over a much longer period of time. . . . In truth, no such thing as Anglo-Saxon English exists anymore, if it ever did. There are well over a million Latin scientific names for animals used by English-speaking people, a million for insects, a million for flowers. That alone totals over 3 million English words with a foreign base. It seems clear that only a small portion of the 8 to 10 million English words (including technical terms and slang) were native-born in the British Isles.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why did the British traveler's snobbery border on "self-destructiveness"? Where do you think the traveler was when the words were written?
2. One non-English language spoken widely in the United States is conspicuously absent from the writer's list. What is it? Why do you think it is not included?
3. List words you can think of that originated in a language other than English. (If you have trouble thinking of any, scan the dictionary for a while and list the ones you find.)

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is this a paragraph of classification, division, or both? Support your answer.
2. Is there a **topic sentence** in this paragraph? If so, where is it? If not, state the **main idea** in your own words.
3. What audience do you think the writer had in mind for the paragraph? What is his purpose? About whom or what is he making a statement?
4. What is the writer's tone? Does it change during the course of the paragraph?

Writing Assignments

1. **In** a paragraph, classify some of the kinds of writing you do—for example, letters, essay exams, compositions for English class, notes to remind yourself to do things, or writing in journals. Explain the differences and similarities among the different kinds of writing. You might want to indicate certain words that you would use in some but not in other kinds of writing.
2. Write a paragraph about the state where you live. Divide it into parts and describe some characteristics you associate with each part. This doesn't have to be based on firsthand experience. If you haven't been to all the parts of your state, base your descriptions on impressions you have formed from other sources, like newspapers, television, or word of mouth.

No More Bad Bugs

Colin McEnroe

Colin McEnroe writes humorous columns for the Hartford Courant. *In this passage, he uses classification and division to mock our tendency to classify and divide things.*

Words *to Know*

exude ooze forth
panoply huge collection
serrated saw-toothed

JL OU may remember reading, as a child, in the *Golden Wonder Book of the Living World of Exciting and Fun Bugs,* about the thrilling panoply of roughly 9 jillion species of insect, each as marvelously different from one another as snowflakes. 1

Don't believe it. 2

Bugs would like nothing better than for us humans to waste enormous bundles of time classifying them. A much more useful way of understanding bugs involves breaking them down into four easy-to-remember categories. 3

1. Bugus horrificus: bugs with massive, serrated, flesh-tearing jaws 4
2. Bugus terribilis: bugs with massive, hooked, flesh-puncturing stingers full of disease-causing venom 5
3. Bugus disgustibus: bugs which exude toxic, germ-infested, nauseating rabid purple slime 6
4. Bugus invisibilis: bugs so tiny you can't see them at all but which can bite the bejabbers out of you 7

That's it. Anyone tells you there are other kinds of bugs, chances are he's on their payroll. Look into it. 8

Questions About the Reading

1. Why do bugs want us to waste our time classifying them?
2. What is the writer's overall attitude toward bugs?
3. Is the writer making fun of science? What does he **imply** about the usefulness of science in our everyday encounters with insects?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. In the descriptions of his four classes, the writer uses exaggeration to create humor. Analyze his method.
2. In the first sentence the writer implies a comparison between bugs and snowflakes. What is the effect of this suggestion? What term could be used to describe it?
3. What is the **main idea** of the passage? Is the main idea directly stated or implied?

Writing Assignments

1. In an essay, choose one of McEnroe's categories and classify it further, identifying the different classes of biting bugs, stinging bugs, or whatever. Make this essay humorous or informative (or both), whichever you prefer.
2. Write a paragraph classifying people into two or three categories according to the way they behave when they are attacked by bugs. For example, some people try to sneak their hand up quietly to swat, some just shoo the bug away, and so on.

The Plot Against People

Russell Baker

Russell Baker's humorous and Hghthearted columns appear regularly in the Sunday magazine section of the New York Times. *Here he claims that objects we depend on in everyday life frustrate us intentionally by not working, breaking down, or getting lost.*

Words to Know

attain achieve, reach
conciliatory tending to make peace
cunning shrewdness, slyness
inanimate not living
plausible believable

Washington, June 17—Inanimate objects are classified scientifically into three major categories—those that don't work, those that break down and those that get lost. 1

The goal of all inanimate objects is to resist man and ultimately to defeat him, and the three major classifications are based on the method each object uses to achieve its purpose. As a general rule, any object capable of breaking down at the moment when it is most needed will do so. The automobile is typical of the category. 2

With the cunning typical of its breed, the automobile never breaks down while entering a filling station with a large staff of idle mechanics. It waits until it reaches a downtown intersection in the middle of the rush hour, or until it is fully loaded with family and luggage on the Ohio turnpike. 3

Thus it creates maximum misery, inconvenience, frustration and irritability among its human cargo, thereby reducing its owner's life span. 4

Washing machines, garbage disposals, lawn mowers, light bulbs, automatic laundry dryers, water pipes, furnaces, electrical fuses, television tubes, hose nozzles, tape recorders, slide projectors—all are in league with the automobile to take their turn at breaking down whenever life threatens to flow smoothly for their human enemies. 5

Many inanimate objects, of course, find it extremely difficult to break down. Pliers, for example, and gloves and keys are almost totally incapable of breaking down. Therefore, they have had to evolve a different technique for resisting man. 6

They get lost. Science has still not solved the mystery of how they *i*
do it, and no man has ever caught one of them in the act of getting lost. The most plausible theory is that they have developed a secret method of locomotion which they are able to conceal the instant a human eye falls upon them.

It is not uncommon for a pair of pliers to climb all the way from 8
the cellar to the attic in its single-minded determination to raise its owner's blood pressure. Keys have been known to burrow three feet under mattresses. Women's purses, despite their great weight, frequently travel through six or seven rooms to find hiding space under a couch.

Scientists have been struck by the fact that things that break down g
virtually never get lost, while things that get lost hardly ever break down.

A furnace, for example, will invariably break down at the depth of 10
the first winter cold wave, but it will never get lost. A woman's purse, which after all does have some inherent capacity for breaking down, hardly ever does; it almost invariably chooses to get lost.

Some persons believe this constitutes evidence that inanimate ob- 11
jects are not entirely hostile to man, and that a negotiated peace is possible. After all, they point out, a furnace could infuriate a man even more thoroughly by getting lost than by breaking down, just as a glove could upset him far more by breaking down than by getting lost.

Not everyone agrees, however, that this indicates a conciliatory atti- 12
tude among inanimate objects. Many say it merely proves that furnaces, gloves and pliers are incredibly stupid.

The third class of objects—those that don't work—is the most curi- 13
ous of all. These include such objects as barometers, car clocks, cigarette lighters, flashlights and toy-train locomotives. It is inaccurate, of course, to say that they never work. They work once, usually for the first few hours after being brought home, and then quit. Thereaf[f]°r, they never work again. 3

In fact, it is widely assumed that they are built for the purpose of 14
not working. Some people have reached advanced ages without ever seeing some of these objects—barometers, for example—in working order.

Science is utterly baffled by the entire category. There are many 15
theories about it. The most interesting holds that the things that don't work have attained the highest state possible for an inanimate object, the state to which things that break down and things that get lost can still only aspire.

They have truly defeated man by conditioning him never to expect 16
anything of them, and in return they have given man the only peace he receives from inanimate society. He does not expect his barometer to work, his electric locomotive to run, his cigarette lighter to light or his flashlight to illuminate, and when they don't it does not raise his blood pressure.

He cannot attain that peace with furnaces and keys, and cars and 17
women's purses as long as he demands that they work for their keep.

Questions About the Reading

1. What contradictory qualities does the writer ascribe to inanimate objects?
2. According to the writer, when is an object most likely to break down? Why?
3. What is the "highest state possible for inanimate objects"?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the function of paragraph 6?
2. What is the irony in paragraph 14?
3. Do scientists really study the problems described in the essay? Why does the writer refer to science and scientists?
4. What is the tone of the essay? How does the clear classification structure contribute to the tone?
5. Although the writer uses structure and wording that make his ideas seem logical and objective, the essay really just expresses his own imaginative opinion. How does he let the reader know, early in the essay, that he is presenting a subjective interpretation of reality?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay in which you classify household tasks according to the amount of work or trouble they are to you.
2. Write an essay in which you classify household appliances according to their work-saving qualities. If you prefer, classify tools or yard equipment according to their work-saving or efficiency qualities.
3. Write your own humorous essay in which you use classification as your mode of development. Try to be absurd. Possible topics might include dorm food, dogs or cats, winter weather, housekeeping styles, or types of laziness.

Friends, Good Friends—and Such Good Friends

Judith Viorst

Friendship is not a subject we give a lot of thought to. As the saying goes, we know who our friends are. But we've probably never considered the difference between, say, "convenience friends" and "crossroads friends." Judith Viorst has, and the classification of friends she outlines here will probably ring true to you.

Words to Know

ardor intensity, emotion, passion
calibrated checked, adjusted, standardized
Ingmar Bergman Swedish screenwriter and director
nonchalant casual, offhand
sufficient enough, adequate

omen are friends, I once would have said, when they totally love and support and trust each other, and bare to each other the secrets of their souls, and run—no questions asked—to help each other, and tell harsh truths to each other (no, you can't wear that dress unless you lose ten pounds first) when harsh truths must be told. 1

Women are friends, I once would have said, when they share the same affection for Ingmar Bergman, plus train rides, cats, warm rain, charades, Camus, and hate with equal ardor Newark and Brussels sprouts and Lawrence Welk and camping. 2

In other words, I once would have said that a friend is a friend all the way, but now I believe that's'a narrow point of view. For the friendships I have and the friendships I see are conducted at many levels of intensity, serve many different functions, meet different needs and range from those as all-the-way as the friendship of the soul sisters mentioned above to that of the most nonchalant and casual playmates. 3

Consider these varieties of friendship: 4

? *1.* Convenience friends. These are the women with whom, if our paths weren't crossing all the time, we'd have no particular reason to be friends: a next-door neighbor, a woman in our car pool, the mother of one of our children's closest friends or maybe some mommy with whom we serve juice and cookies each week at the Glenwood Co-op Nursery. 5

Convenience friends are convenient indeed. They'll lend us their cups and silverware for a party. They'll drive our kids to soccer when we're sick. They'll take us to pick up our car when we need a lift to the garage. They'll even take our cats when we go on vacation. As we will for them.

But we don't, with convenience friends, ever come too close or tell too much; we maintain our public face and emotional distance. "Which means," says Elaine, "that I'll talk about being overweight but not about being depressed. Which means I'll admit being mad but not blind with rage. Which means I might say that we're pinched this month but never that I'm worried sick over money."

But which doesn't mean that there isn't sufficient value to be found in these friendships of mutual aid, in convenience friends.

2. Special-interest friends. These friendships aren't intimate, and they needn't involve kids or silverware or cats. Their value lies in some interest jointly shared. And so we may have an office friend or a yoga friend or a tennis friend or a friend from the Women's Democratic Club.

"I've got one woman friend," says Joyce, "who likes, as I do, to take psychology courses. Which makes it nice for me—and nice for her. It's fun to go with someone you know and it's fun to discuss what you've learned, driving back from the classes." And for the most part, she says, that's all they discuss. 10

"I'd say that what we're *doing* is *doing* together, not being together," Suzanne says of her Tuesday-doubles friends. "It's mainly a tennis relationship, but we play together well. And I guess we all need to have a couple of playmates." 11

I agree. 12

My playmate is a shopping friend, a woman of marvelous taste, a woman who knows exactly *where* to buy *what,* and furthermore is a woman who always knows beyond a doubt what one ought to be buying. I don't have the time to keep up with what's new in eyeshadow, hemlines and shoes and whether the smock look is in or finished already. But since (oh shame!) I care a lot about eyeshadow, hemlines and shoes, and since I don't *want* to wear smocks if the smock look is finished, I'm very glad to have a shopping friend. 13

3. Historical friends. We all have a friend who knew us when .. . maybe way back in Miss Meltzer's second grade, when our family lived in that three-room flat in Brooklyn, when our dad was out of work for seven months, when our brother Allie got in that fight where they had to call the police, when our sister married the endodontist 14

from Yonkers and when, the morning after we lost our virginity, she was the first, the only friend we told.

The years have gone by and we've gone separate ways and we've little in common now, but we're still an intimate part of each other's past. And so whenever we go to Detroit we always go to visit this friend of our girlhood. Who knows how we looked before our teeth were straightened. Who knows how we talked before our voice got unBrooklyned. Who knows what we ate before we learned about artichokes. And who, by her presence, puts us in touch with an earlier part of ourself, a part of ourself it's important never to lose.

"What this friend means to me and what I mean to her," says Grace, "is having a sister without sibling rivalry. We know the texture of each other's lives. She remembers my grandmother's cabbage soup. I remember the way her uncle played the piano. There's simply no other friend who remembers those things."

4. Crossroads friends. Like historical friends, our crossroads friends are important for *what was*—for the friendship we shared at a crucial, now past, time of life. A time, perhaps, when we roomed in college together; or worked as eager young singles in the Big City together; or went together, as my friend Elizabeth and I did through pregnancy, birth and that scary first year of new motherhood.

Crossroads friends forge powerful links, links strong enough to endure with not much more contact than once-a-year letters at Christmas. And out of respect for those crossroads years, for those dramas and dreams we once shared, we will always be friends.

5. Cross-generational friends. Historical friends and crossroads friends seem to maintain a special kind of intimacy—dormant but always ready to be revived—and though we may rarely meet, whenever we do connect, it's personal and intense- Another kind of intimacy exists in the friendships that form across generations in what one woman calls her daughter-mother and her mother-daughter relationships.

Evelyn's friend is her mother's age—"but I share so much more than I ever could with my mother"—a woman she talks to of music, of books and of life. "What I get from her is the benefit of her experience. What she gets—and enjoys—from me is a youthful perspective. It's a pleasure for both of us."

I have in my own life a precious friend, a woman of 65 who has lived very hard, who is wise, who listens well; who has been where I am and can help me understand it; and who represents not only an ultimate ideal mother to me but also the person I'd like to be when I grow up.

In our daughter role we tend to do more than our share of self-revelation; in our mother role we tend to receive what's revealed. It's another kind of pleasure—playing wise mother to a questing younger person. It's another very lovely kind of friendship.

6. Part-of-a-couple friends. Some of the women we call our friends we never see alone—we see them as part of a couple at couples' parties. And though we share interests in many things and respect each' other's views, we aren't moved to deepen the relationship. Whatever the reason, a lack of time or—and this is more likely—a lack of chemistry, our friendship remains in the context of a group. But the fact that our feeling on seeing each other is always, "I'm so glad she's here" and the fact that we spend half the evening talking together says that this too, in its own way, counts as a friendship.

(Other part-of-a-couple friends are the friends that came with the marriage, and some of these are friends we could live without. But sometimes, alas, she married our husband's best friend; and sometimes, alas, she *is* our husband's best friend. And so we find ourself dealing with her, somewhat against our will, in a spirit of what I'll call *reluctant* friendship.)

7. Men who are friends. I wanted to write just of women friends, but the women I've talked to won't let me—they say I must mention man-woman friendships too. For these friendships can be just as close and as dear as those that we form with women. Listen to Lucy's description of one such friendship:

"We've found we have things to talk about that are different from what he talks about with my husband and different from what I talk about with his wife. So sometimes we call on the phone or meet for lunch. There are similar intellectual interests—we always pass on to each other the books that we love—but there's also something tender and caring too."

In a couple of crises, Lucy says, "he offered himself, for talking and for helping. And when someone died in his family he wanted me there. The sexual, flirty part of our friendship is very small, but *some*—just enough to make it fun and different." She thinks—and I agree—that the sexual part, though small is always *some,* is always there when a man and a woman are friends.

It's only in the past few years that I've made friends with men, in the sense of a friendship that's *mine,* not just part of two couples. And achieving with them the ease and the trust I've found with women friends has value indeed. Under the dryer at home last week, putting on mascara and rouge, I comfortably sat and talked with a fellow named Peter. Peter, I finally decided, could handle the shock of me

minus mascara under the dryer. Because we care for each other. Because we're friends. ⁝, .&;,uu

8. There are medium friends, and pretty good friends, and very 29
good friends, indeed, and these.friendships are defined by their level of intimacy. And what we'll reveal at each of these levels of intimacy is calibrated with care. We might tell a medium friend, for example, that yesterday we had a fight with our husband. And we might tell a pretty good friend that this fight with our husband made us so mad that we slept on the couch. And we might tell a very good friend that the reason we got so mad in that fight that we slept on the couch had something to do with that girl who works in his office. But it's only to our very best friends that we're willing to tell all, to tell what's going on with that girl in his office.

The best of friends, I still believe, totally love and support and trust 30
each other, and bare to each other the secrets of their souls, and run—no questions asked—to help each other, and tell harsh truths to each other when they must be told.

But we needn't agree about everything (only 12-year-old girl friends 31
agree about *everything)* to tolerate each other's point of view. To accept \v without judgment. To give and to take without ever keeping score. *$#* And to *be* there, as I am for them and as they are for me, to comfort < our sorrows, to celebrate our joys. .- "V" •

Questions About the Reading

1. What was Viorst's original **definition** of women friends? How does the definition within the essay differ from her original definition?
2. How many kinds of friends does Viorst identify? Support your answer with statements from the reading.
3. Why does the writer refer to special-interest friends as playmates?
4. Explain in your own words what the writer means in her description of the importance of historical friends.
5. How are special-interest friends like part-of-a-couple friends?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What purpose do the quotations in the essay serve?
2. How does the writer indicate that her dominant **mode of development** will be classification? How does she introduce the classifications she will use?
3. Are the last three statements of the last paragraph complete sentences? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think Viorst uses the *order* she does in discussing different kinds of friends? What is the order that she uses—time, space, or importance?
5. Does the writer use other modes of development in addition to classification? If so, give examples from the essay.

Writing Assignments

1. Classify some of the people you know based on some category—perhaps study methods, sense of humor (or lack of it), taste **in** clothes, or levels of physical fitness. Use **examples** to clarify your classifications.
2. Classify the kinds of Christmas gifts you received when you were little or that you receive now. Again, use examples to clarify your classifications.
3. Classify at least three types of music that you and your friends listen to. Use **description** to explain your classifications.

Fatigue

Jane Brody

Despite the number of labor-saving devices and convenient means of transportation available today, fatigue is one of the most common complaints heard by doctors. When so few people do hard physical labor, why do so many people feel tired? In the following essay, noted health expert fane Brody tells us why. And she also tells us what we can do about it.

Words to Know

defense mechanism an involuntary mental mechanism that prevents one from dealing with uncomfortable feelings
disorder a disease or ailment
induced caused
manifestation display
metabolic of the physical and chemical processes involved in maintaining **life**
pathological diseased or disease-related
precipitate bring on, cause
repressed suppressed, held back
requisite needed
tedium boredom

.Fatigue is one of the most common complaints brought to doctors, 1
friends, and relatives. You'd think in this era of labor-saving devices and convenient transportation that few people would have reason to be so tired. But probably^more people complain of fatigue today than in the days when hay was baled by hand$_y$and laundry scrubbed on a washboard. Witness these typical complaints:

• "It doesn't seem to matter how long I sleep—I'm more tired when 2
I wake up than when I went to bed."

"Some of my friends come home from work and jog for several 3
miles or swim laps. I don't know how they do it. I'm completely exhausted at the end of a day at the office."

"I thought I was weary because of the holidays, but now that they're 4
over, I'm even worse. I can barely get through this week, and on the weekend I don't even have the strength to get dressed. I wonder if I'm anemic or something."

"I don't know what's wrong with me lately, but I've been so col- 5
lapsed that I haven't made a proper meal for the family in weeks. We've been living on TV dinners and packaged mixes. I was finally forced to do a laundry because the kids ran out of underwear."

The causes of modern-day fatigue are diverse and only rarely re- 6
lated to excessive physical exertion. The relatively few people who do heavy labor all day long almost never complain about being tired, perhaps because they expect to be. Today, physicians report$_{/t}$tiredness is more likely a consequence of underexertion than of wearing yourself down with overactivity^In fact, increased physical activity is often prescribed as a *cure* for sagging energy.

Kinds of Fatigue

There are^three main categories of fatigue. These are physical fatigue, 7
pathological fatigue, and psychological fatigue.

Physical. This is the well-known result of overworking your 8
muscles to the point where metabolic waste products—carbon dioxide and lactic acid—accumulate in your blood and sap your strength. Your muscles can't continue to work efficiently in a bath of these chemicals. (Physical fatigue is usually a pleasant tirednessj, such as that which you might experience after playing a hard set of tennis, chopping wood, or climbing a mountain. The cure is simple and fast. You rest, giving your body a chance to get rid of accumulated wastes and restore muscle fuel.

Pathological. Here fatigue is a warning sign or consequence of 9
some underlying physical disorder, perhaps the common cold or flu or something more serious like diabetes or cancer. Usually other symptoms besides fatigue are present that suggest the true cause.

Even after an illness has passed, you're likely to feel dragged out 10
for a week or more. Take your fatigue as a signal to go slow while your body has a chance to recover fully even if all you had was a cold. Pushing yourself to resume full activity too soon could precipitate a relapse and almost certainly will prolong your period of fatigue.

Even though illness is not a frequent cause of prolonged fatigue, it's 11
very important that it not be overlooked. Therefore, anyone who feels drained of energy for weeks on end should have a thorough physical checkup. But even if nothing shows up as a result of the various medical tests, that doesn't mean there's nothing wrong with you.

Unfortunately too often a medical work-up ends with a battery of negative test results, the patient is dismissed, and the true cause of serious fatigue goes undetected. As Dr. John Bulette, a psychiatrist at the Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, tells it, this is what happened to a Pennsylvania woman who had lost nearly fifty pounds and was "almost dead—so tired she could hardly lift her head up." The doctors who first examined the woman were sure she had cancer. But no matter how hard they looked, they could find no sign of malignancy or of any other disease that could account for her wasting away. Finally, she was brought to the college hospital, where doctors noted that she was severely depressed. 12

They questioned her about her life and discovered that her troubles had begun two years earlier, after her husband died. Once treated for depression, the woman quickly perked up, gained ten pounds in just a few weeks, then returned home to continue her recovery with the aid of psychotherapy. 13

Psychological. Emotional problems and conflicts, especially depression and anxiety, are by far the most common causes of prolonged fatigue. Fatigue may represent a defense mechanism that prevents you from having to face the true cause of your depression, such as the fact that you hate your job. It is also your body's safety valve for expressing repressed emotional conflicts, such as feeling trapped in an ungratifying role or an unhappy marriage. When such feelings are not expressed openly, they often come out as physical symptoms, with fatigue as one of the most common manifestations. /'Many people who are extremely fatigued""dorrt even know they're depressed/ Dr. Bulette says. "They're so busy distracting themselves or just worrying about being tired that they don't recognize their depression." 14

One of these situations is so common it's been given a name—tired housewife syndrome. The victims are commonly young mother., v^ho day in and day out face the predictable tedium of caring for a home and small children, fixing meals, dealing with repairmen, and generally having no one interesting to talk to and nothing enjoyable to look forward to at the end of their boring and unrewarding day. The tired housewife may be inwardly resentful, envious of her husband's job, and guilty about her feelings. But rather than face them head-on, she becomes extremely fatigued. 15

Today, with nearly half the mothers of young children working outside the home, the tired housewife syndrome has taken on a new twist, 16

that of conflicting roles and responsibilities and guilt over leaving the children, often with an overlay of genuine physical exhaustion from trying to be all things to all people.

Emotionally induced fatigue may be compounded by sleep disturbance that results from the underlying psychological conflict. A person may develop insomnia or may sleep the requisite number of hours but fitfully, tossing and turning all night, having disturbing dreams, and awakening, as one woman put it, feeling as if she "had been run over by a truck." 17

Understanding the underlying emotional problem is the crucial first step toward curing psychological fatigue and by itself often results in considerable lessening of the tiredness. Professional psychological help or career or marriage counseling may be needed. 18

Questions About the Reading

1. How can you cure physical fatigue?
2. What is "tired housewife syndrome"?
3. Why might physical activity help cure some types of fatigue?
4. How does fatigue act as a safety valve?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is the thesis directly stated or implied? If it is implied, state it in your own words. If it is stated directly, where is it found?
2. Does the writer use classification, division, or both?
3. Does the writer use any other modes of development? Support your answer with examples.
4. What is the tone of this essay?
5. What is the purpose of paragraphs 12 and 13?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay in which you identify and describe at least three activities that would cause physical fatigue.
2. Everyone feels bored now and again. Write an essay in which you classify the types of situations that make you bored. Describe each type to show why it is boring.
3. Using division as your mode of development, write an essay describing one of your favorite things—perhaps a good book, a useful tool, an enjoyable activity, or a tasty meal. Try to include details that show why your subject appeals to you.

The Womanly Art of Beast Feeding

Alice Kahn

As a contemporary parent, Alice Kahn is confronted by the many theories being publicized today about health and child care. This essay from her book My Life as a Gal *introduces us to her notions about how parents can influence what their children eat or, to look at it another way, how children can influence their parents to give them what they want to eat.*

Words to Know

conscientious governed by conscience
empirical gained through experiment or observation
fomented proposed, supported
indistinguishable without distinctive qualities
La Leche Spanish for milk
morphology structure
nonadulterated uncontaminated—free of preservatives, for example

LJ s parents, we have a hell of a time feeding our kids these days. How simple it was in the olden days when people knew nothing of the science of nutrition and the little darlings had to eat their porridge, swallow their spinach, and lap up their stew with its juices while keeping their yaps shut.

Today, it's not untypical to sit down to dinner and hear, "Oh, no, not steak again" or "I hate quiche Lorraine" or "Yuck—homemade tortellini with pesto." In my family, two girls, *tyrannicus girlus,* have divided up the known food world so that dining is virtually impossible. One hates Chinese, the other hates Mexican. One won't eat chicken, the other won't eat meat. They have achieved unity on fish and French cuisine—neither will eat either.

Concern about what the children eat naturally follows the returned importance of breast-feeding as fomented by those Friends of the Breast, the La Leche League. The League, which I always suspected grew out of the French obsession with the mammary gland (so evident in their art and their postcards), wrote a pamphlet, "The Womanly Art of Breast Feeding," which urged women not only to nurse their babies but to do it in public. They were aided in this effort by a male support group, the Le Lechers League.

It became gospel that a child who got off to a good start by consuming nothing but healthy breast milk would be hooked for life on simple natural foods. But has a truly scientific study ever shown that any child (or adult, for that matter) who spends long hours at the breast is any more intelligent for the experience? 4

Nevertheless, a generation of well-educated, busy women devoted themselves to breast-feeding. We nursed them in offices, we nursed them on buses, we nursed them at tax accountants except when the trauma made our milk dry up. Once I actually saw a bride coming down the aisle nursing her baby. We pumped our milk and saved it lest we deprive our child while on the job. We bared our breasts as well-meaning fathers-in-law self-consciously shouted, "Chow bag!" 5

And what did we get for our effort? Offspring who, as soon as they could talk, demanded "Jell-O Pudding Pops—now." 6

Well, we tried. Maybe we tried too hard. Maybe it's hopeless, in this crazy Ronald McDonald world, to think you can do something as simple as feed children well. Christ, I hardly know what to feed myself between low-fat, high-fiber, calcium-rich, iron-rich, nonadulterated foods. Vitamin pills, that's what most adults take to feel wholesome these days—pills. 7

There are several theories on how to handle the unmistakable lust for consuming junk that seems to be epidemic in our youth. There is the hard-line approach: Eat it and weep. Most of us parents are simply too wimpy for that. There is the bribery approach: Eat the chicken and vegetable and then you can have the cookies and ice cream and bubble gum. And finally there is the Little Bo-peep approach: Leave them alone and they will come home wagging their tails behind them. 8

The Bo-peep Plan or the non-nutrisystems approach allows the child to self-select foods. There have been scientific studies showing that if allowed to pick at random, a baby will eventually select all it needs to satisfy its nutritional needs. A similar approach can be taken with older children, but it is best done if the parent provides some structure. Here, some education is necessary so that the child can choose from the Seven Basic Junk Food Groups. A well-balanced meal would include something from each of the following: 9

THE SEVEN BASIC JUNK FOOD GROUPS

1. The Chip Group. Like any conscientious parent, I try to steer my little heifers toward the healthier chips—the pure, natural potato chip as opposed to cheese puffs or sour cream and onion. I skip barbecued anything. The children will enjoy exercising choice concerning the 10

morphology of the chip—ruffled versus flat—as well as selecting among corn, potato, and the newer nacho chips that provide an opportunity to become acquainted with a different culture.

2. The Nitrate/Nitrite Group. There is a growing body of empirical 11
evidence that children are born with an innate need for nitrates and nitrites. Whether it is due to a missing gene or a result of mutation is unclear. But no child's lunch is complete without the protein portion consisting of salami, bologna, bacon, hot dog, and so on. Further evidence of the biological need for nitrates is seen in the child's refusal to eat nitrate-free versions of these products amid claims that these adulterated foods taste "gross." Even children's normal intolerance of ambiguity in food is held in check as they select mysterious items like "luncheon meat."

3. The Grainless Bread Group. Thanks to modern marketing, a 12
wide variety of grainless breads are now available, from the traditional Wonder to the historic San Francisco sourdough. And because of improved food technology one can even purchase a variety of whole wheat bread that is indistinguishable in flavor and texture from white. Don't ask me how they do it. No doubt some truth-in-labeling law requires that for every ton of processed flour one actual whole grain must be dropped in the mix. At any rate, either bread will do very nicely to hold the catsup, mustard, or mayo that accompanies the nitrite filler.

4. The Fruitoid Group. Children quickly learn that there's a whole 13
world of fruit-related products that are much sweeter and more interestingly packaged than actual fruit. These range from canned fruits that save wear and tear on teeth and jaws to fruit rolls in which the uninteresting pulp portion of the fruit is removed, leaving only the important sugar portion. This is arranged in a leathery substance that sticks to the teeth as well as the ribs. Since the addition of artificial fluorides have rendered much of modern dentistry unnecessary, these products are useful for restoring the natural balance between the tootl. enamel and Mr. Cavity.

5. The Cake and Cookie Group. Although a balanced meal, one that 14
includes all the basic junk food groups, makes it less difficult to get through the rest of the crap so one can come to the finale, the addition of a treat is always welcome. Most children prefer a sandwich-style cookie so the filling can be scraped off and the remaining cookie can still be traded with a friend for something else.

6. The Health Food Group. Most supermarkets now include a 15
health food section where delicious snacks are displayed in large old-fashioned wooden bins to which you help yourself. Here one can find

a variety of treats from plain carob chips to honey-soaked granola cereal (said to have nine times more sweetener than a Hershey bar). Some traditional foods here include the yogurt-covered nuts, and some stores even have mint-flavored yogurt-covered nuts. Those little bright green balls are my favorite natural food. To find out which ones your child likes, just have him reach in the bins, squeeze a few pieces, and eat a bunch of each one right out of his hands.

7. The Drink Group. Choosing a drink used to be a battle. Children 16
always wanted Coke or Pepsi. But today's sophisticated kid is reaching out for natural-flavored soft drinks or oddities like cola-flavored Calistoga water. Exciting developments in fruit drinks go beyond the traditional teeth-rotting apple juice to a whole range of drinks that boast of being fruit-flavored. One orange drink label brags "20% Real Fruit Flavoring!"

The wise parent will simply stand back and let the child choose 17
among these groups. In fact, this is a process that may already be occurring in your house, but it's nice to read about it from an expert like myself so you can tell a friend that you saw an article saying it was okay to do this.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why does the writer call her children *tymnnicus girlus?*
2. In paragraph 12, the writer says, "Don't ask me how they do it." Who are "they"?
3. How does the writer feel about so-called health food?
4. How does the writer feel about contemporary child-rearing advice?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the main idea in this essay? Is there a thesis statement? If so, where is it? If not, how does the writer express the main idea?
2. Describe the contrast the writer uses to introduce her essay in paragraphs 1 and 2.
3. In addition to classification and division, what are some other modes of development that the writer uses in the essay?
4. What is the irony in the writer's classification of "basic junk food groups"?

Writing Assignments

1. In an essay, classify the ways people behave at the table when they eat. For example, your categories might be "wolfers," "pickers/' and "chewers." To illustrate each category, use an example, either of someone you know or of a **fictional** person eating the way you are describing.
2. Write an essay dividing the human body into three or more parts. Explain how each part works and some of the important things it does. (Or, if you like, take one part of the body and divide that into its components.)

Three Disciplines for Children

John Holt

Classification or division can be useful in helping us understand how life works. In reading this essay, try to think back to your own childhood. Can you apply the writer's categories to what you experienced as you grew up?

Word to Know

impotent powerless; weak

child, in growing up, may meet and learn from three different kinds of disciplines. The first and the most important is what we might call the Discipline of Nature or of Reality. When he is trying to do something real, if he does the wrong thing or doesn't do the right one, he doesn't get the result he wants. If he doesn't!pile .tone block right on top of another, or tries to build on a slanting surface, his tower falls down. If he hits the wrong key, he hears the wrong note. If he doesn't hit the nail squarely on the head, it bends, and he has to pull it out and start with another. If he doesn't measure properly what he is trying to build, it won't open, close, fit, stand up, fly, float, whistle, or do whatever he wants it to do. If he closes his eyes when he swings, he doesn't hit the ball. A child meets this kind of discipline every time he tries to *do* something, which is why it is so important in school to give children more chances to do things., instead of just reading or listening to someone talk {or pretending to). This discipline is a great teacher. The learner never has to wait long for his answer; it usually comes quickly, often instantly. Also it is clear, and very often points toward the needed correction; from what happened he cannot only see what he did was wrong, but also why, and what he needs to do instead. Finally, and most important, the giver of the answer, call it Nature, is impersonal, impartial, and indifferent. She does not give opinions, or make judgments; she cannot be wheedled, bullied, or fooled; she does not get angry or disappointed; she does not praise or blame; she does not remember past failures or hold grudges; with her one always gets a fresh start, this time is the one that counts.

The next discipline we might call the Discipline of Culture, of Sod- 2
ety, of What People Really Do. Man is a social, a cultural animal. Children sense around them this culture, this network of agreements, customs, habits, and rules binding the adults together. They want to

understand it and be a part of it. They watch very carefully what people around them are doing and want to do the same. They want to do right, unless they become convinced they can't do right. Thus children rarely misbehave seriously in church, but sit as quietly as they can. The example of all those grownups is contagious. Some mysterious ritual is going on, and children, who like rituals, want to be part of it. In the same way, the little children that I see at concerts or operas, though they may fidget a little, or perhaps take a nap now and then, rarely make any disturbance. With all those grownups sitting there, neither moving nor talking, it is the most natural thing in the world to imitate them. Children who live among adults who are habitually courteous to each other, and to them, will soon learn to be courteous. Children who live surrounded by people who speak a certain way will speak that way, however much we may try to tell them that speaking that way is bad or wrong.

The third discipline is the one most people mean when they speak 3
of discipline—the Discipline of Superior Force, of sergeant to private, of "you do what I tell you or I'll make you wish you had." There is bound to be some of this in a child's life. Living as we do surrounded by things that can hurt children, or that children can hurt, we cannot avoid it. We can't afford to let a small child find out from experience the danger of playing in a busy street, or of fooling with the pots on the top of a stove, or of eating up the pills in the medicine cabinet. So, along with other precautions, we say to him, "Don't play in the street, or touch things en the stove, or go into the medicine cabinet, or I'll punish you." Between him and the danger too great for him to imagine we put a lesser danger, but one he can imagine and maybe therefore want to avoid. He can have no idea of what it would be like to be hit by a car, but he can imagine being shouted at, or spanked, or sent to his room. He avoids these substitutes for the greater danger until he can understand it and avoid it for its own sake. But we ought to use this discipline only when it is necessary to protect the life!-health, safety, or well-being of people or other living creatures, or to prevent destruction of things that people care about. We ought not to assume too long, as we usually do, that a child cannot understand the real nature of the danger from which we want to protect him. The sooner he avoids the danger, not to escape our punishment, but as a matter of good sense, the better. He can learn that faster than we think. In Mexico, for example, where people drive their cars with a good deal of spirit, I saw many children no older than five or four walking unattended on the streets. They understood about cars, they knew what to do. A child whose life is full of the threat and fear of punishment

is locked into babyhood. There is no way for him to grow up, to learn to take responsibility for his life and acts. Most important of all, we should not assume that having to yield to the threat of our superior force is good for the child's character. It is never good for anyone's character. To bow to superior force makes us feel impotent and cowardly for not having had the strength or courage to resist. Worse, it makes us resentful and vengeful. We can hardly wait to make someone pay for our humiliation, yield to us as we were once made to yield. No, if we cannot always avoid using the Discipline of Superior Force, we should at least use it as seldom as we can.

Questions About the Reading

1. What makes the Discipline of Nature a "great teacher"?
2. In paragraph 2, the writer says children "want to do right, unless they become convinced they can't do right." What are the implications of this statement? What happens to the children who are convinced they can't do right?
3. What is wrong with the Discipline of Superior Force? Why should we use it as seldom as possible? Why must we use it sometimes?
4. As a young adult, you probably remember experiencing many kinds of discipline while you were growing up. Can you think of any classes besides the ones the writer identifies? Try to describe some different types of discipline.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What primary mode of development does the writer use for each paragraph of the essay?
2. This essay is clearly structured, with one paragraph for each class of discipline. In what order are the paragraphs presented? Explain your answer.
3. What is the thesis statement in the essay? What is the topic sentence of each paragraph? How is the main idea expressed?
4. Reread the writer's description of Nature at the end of paragraph 1. In a few words, describe the method he uses, and explain why it is or is not effective.
5. Why is paragraph 3 the longest one in the essay?

Writing Assignments

1. *Discipline* means many things. It isn't just a way to teach or to control misbehavior. Write an essay classifying different meanings of

discipline. Use **examples,** or one extended example, to illustrate each class. Your categories might include things like academic discipline (study habits); the discipline needed for athletics, drama, or dance; moral discipline; the discipline needed to do your part in your family, and so on.

2. Write an essay in which you identify different classes of parental style, such as stern, friendly, playful, immature, supportive, or aloof. Create a single **fictional** example to illustrate each category, but base it on parents you know, if you like.

Why Do People Own Handguns?

Pete Shields

Pete Shields does a good job here of classifying the reasons people give for owning handguns. Shields also does a good job of refuting the arguments behind these reasons. This should come as no surprise. He has been an outspoken advocate of gun control since his own son was murdered by a man with a handgun in 1974, and he is now the chairman of Handgun Control, Inc.

Words *to Know*

aggravated assault violent attack on a person
felony a serious crime, such as murder, burglary, or rape
lethal deadly
might strength, power
proponent someone who supports something

Answers to the question "Why do people own or acquire *handguns?"* are entirely different from answers to the question "Why do people own rifles and shotguns?" 1

It is not at all difficult to explain why people own firearms other than handguns. From southern Florida to northern Michigan, and from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine, men and women have been using rifles and shotguns for hunting and for sport for as long as this country has been a country—and before. Their use of firearms—rifles and shotguns—is not part of the problem. . . . 2

It is important to understand that our organization, Handgun Control, Inc., does not propose further controls on rifles and shotguns. Rifles and shotguns are not the problem; they are not *concealable.* 3

Why do people own and acquire handguns? That's the hard question. There are many answers to it. Some are perfectly logical, others questionable, and a few downright hard to figure. 4

Criminal Activity

After the handgun, the criminal's next weapon of choice is the knife, but it is such a far second that guns used in crime outnumber knives used in crime by *at least* three to one. The handgun, especially one with a relatively short barrel, is the preferred weapon of crime because itis both so lethal and so easily concealed. Stuck inside the belt, only the 5

grip or handle is visible, and a jacket or suitcoat or sweater can easily cover that small bulge. Also, the handgun slips easily into a coat, jacket pocket or purse. The inside of an automobile offers any number of handy hiding spots. . . .

In the American Handgun War, the small, easily concealable hand- 6
gun in the wrong hands is the *enemy*. For despite what the pro-pistol lobby says, guns *do* kill people. One person every fifty minutes.

Self-Defense

The frightening rise in crimes of violence throughout the country has 7
caused more and more well-intentioned people to arm themselves. They buy guns to protect their homes and to carry with them for personal protection when traveling. Many, many people now carry handguns in their cars. Perhaps we should not have been so startled by an incident at the height of the gasoline crisis a few years ago, when one motorist shot and killed another who had cut in front of him in a filling-station line.

Unfortunately, instead of protection, what the new handgun owner 8
too often gets is personal tragedy. As I found out in my original reading, and as research in the area of self-defense has borne out ever since, a handgun does not protect the American home very well.

The home handgun is far more likely to kill or injure family mem- 9
bers and friends than anyone who breaks in, and is especially harmful to young adults and to children.

Because 90 percent of burglaries take place when no one is home, 10
the handgun bought for self-defense is very often stolen. According to law-enforcement authorities, each year an estimated 100,000 handguns are stolen from law-abiding citizens. These guns then enter the criminal underworld and are used in more crimes. Thus, inadvertently, the solid citizen is helping to arm the criminal class.

As a New York City police sergeant recently pointed out to a home^ 11
owner who asked if he should buy a handgun to protect his home, too often it is the homeowner *himself* who ends up getting shot and killed, because he most often *warns* the robber by saying something like "Stop!" or "What do you think you're doing?" Alerted, the thief turns and fires.

Another reason the handgun is not essential for home protection 12
is that citizens in their homes don't need the one feature which most appeals to and attracts the criminal to the handgun—its concealability. The shotgun is far more intimidating to the intruder.

In street crime, the use of a handgun for self-defense is extremely 13
risky, with the defender often losing the weapon and having it used against him. The handgun owner seldom even gets the *chance* to use his or her weapon because the element of surprise is always with the attacker. In fact, trying to use a handgun to ward off someone bent on aggravated assault makes the risk of death quite a bit higher.

For the ordinary citizen, using a handgun is seldom helpful for 14
self-defense on the street. And, in the home, about the only way to get real protection from a personal handgun would be to have it always at the ready, perhaps in hand every time there is a knock on the door, loaded and ready to fire. That is not exactly the American way. Or my idea of a civilized society.

One question should be asked of anyone who says he or she would 15
be willing to use a handgun to keep from being robbed: Are you sure you want to take a life-and-death risk just to keep from losing some replaceable property?

The Southland Corporation, which operates the more than 5,000 16
"7-11" stores, has *ordered* its managers and employees not to try and defend themselves against a handgun robbery attempt. The Employee's Workbook, in its Violence Prevention Procedures section, says pointedly, "DON'T USE WEAPONS. *Southland policy forbids guns or other weapons in stores.* Weapons breed violence; it's dangerous to even have them in the store. The robber's weapon is already one too many." . . .

Hunting and Target-Shooting

In my opinion, there is only one legitimate handgun sport and that 17
is target-shooting. It is practiced at target ranges which are properly supervised and usually quite safe. Only certain handguns are true "sporting weapons," recognized as such by the sport's adherents.

On the other hand, "plinking"—shooting at tin cans and other small 18
targets—in one's backyard is not and should not be considered a serious sport. When uncontrolled and unsupervised, it can be a very dangerous practice.

Some opponents of handgun control have claimed that we are out 19
to stop all hunting and that controlling the handgun would severely affect hunting. That is simply untrue. Handgun control would in no way abridge the freedom of the true hunter. Few if any knowledgeable hunters consider the handgun an effective hunting weapon.

There *are* a few hunters who do hunt with handguns, but most 20
states place restrictions on the type of guns that can be used in hunt-

ing, the reason being that killing of game should be done in as humane a manner as possible. Small-caliber handguns are more likely to wound the animal rather than kill it outright. Realistically, only long guns, rifles and shotguns are effective firearms for hunting.

People must understand that handguns and hunters are distinctly 21 separate issues. Because the vast majority of hunters use a rifle or a shotgun, there is no reason why their pursuit of game (and sport) should be affected by handgun control. Mixing anti-hunting sentiment with the handgun issue confuses the killing of animals with the killing of people.

Two further reasons have been advanced to show why people 22 should be allowed to own or acquire handguns without restriction. The first of the two, the Second Amendment argument which the NRA [National Rifle Association] has worked so hard and spent so much time and money to implant in our minds, is that there is a constitutional right to own any type of firearm. Actually, I consider their argument an excuse rather than a reason. The other "reason," the "macho" image argument, is more properly an explanation of an attitude or point of view which sheds some light on why certain types of people own, acquire, and use handguns.

The Second Amendment Argument

To understand the supposed constitutional argument it is essential 23 that the reader be familiar with the *full and complete* wording of the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. It reads: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." It would be interesting to take a poll of Americans and see how many have forgotten, or never knew, the Amendment's initial twelve words. Certainly the pro-pistol lobby has not seen fit to clarify' that point. The "militia" of the Amendment is what we all know today as the National Guard.

On five separate occasions, the Supreme Court of the United States 24 has ruled that the Second Amendment was intended to protect members of a state militia from being disarmed by the federal government. In addition to those five Supreme Court decisions, the American Bar Association stated, in 1975, at its annual convention, that "every federal court decision involving the amendment has given the amendment a collective, militia interpretation and/or held that firearms-control laws enacted under a state's police power are constitutional."

The five cases in which the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled on the 25 Second Amendment are: *U.S.* v. *Cruickshank* (1875); *Presser* v. *Illinois* (1886); *Miller* v. *Texas* (1894); *U.S.* v. *Miller* (1939); and *U.S.* v. *Tot* (1942)____

The "Macho" Image Argument

To many handgun buyers, owning a gun is a carry-over from the days 26 of the Wild West, the frontier days, when the six-shooter made might, and might made the man. And in that era, one of the mightiest or most macho of men was Wyatt Earp—at least that is what many of today's handgun owners believe. Yet few of these present-day tough guys know that Earp was in fact an early proponent of handgun control. He went so far as to *ban* them inside the city limits. There was a law in Dodge City that no one but law-enforcement officers was allowed to carry a six-shooter in public. Earp arrested anyone who broke this law.

Psychiatrists tell us that the great frontier still lives in the minds of 27 men who buy handguns believing the weapon will give them a stronger sense of masculinity. The deadly nature of a handgun can make the smallest man bigger than the biggest *unarmed* man.

As we have seen time and time again, a loaded handgun in the pos- 28 session of someone driven by emotion is a time bomb ready to explode. Examples are provided by almost any newspaper on almost any day.

> Clarksville, Tennessee: "RUSSIAN ROULETTE GAME PROVES FATAL"
> Austin, Texas: "FRIENDS TRIED TO STOP HIM, HE TRIED RUSSIAN ROULETTE—AND HE LOST"
> Chicago, Illinois: "CHICAGO BOX % DIES IN CLUB'S 'RUSSIAN ROULETTE' INITIATION"
> Indianapolis, Indiana: "DRIVER SHOT TO DEATH ON FREEWAY FOLLOWING RIGHT-OF-WAY DISPUTE" . . .

When asked by a psychologist why they had used or obtained 29 handguns, inmates of a Florida prison told him that the main reason was for "protection," and that if the felony they were about to commit carried a prison term of ten to twenty years, they didn't worry about the extra three years they might get because they had used a handgun. Another common answer was that they had obtained a handgun because they would rather take the chance of getting caught by the police for carrying an illegal weapon than have their *friends* and *associates*

find them without one. Apparently, it is not macho to be unarmed. . . .

I would like to underline a point about the extent of violence in 30
America today. It concerns the effect that all of these crimes have on us—whether we realize it or not.

It is said, and certainly my own experience bears it out, that until 31
the violence touches you, no matter how great your concern may be, it still remains *concern* and not *action.*

We all deplore the statistics, and we shudder as we read the latest 32
horror story in the newspaper or see the interview with the grieving survivors, but until we are touched personally we seldom take action.

But the point is we already *are* personally touched by the amount 33
of violence in this country.

If you love to walk in the evening but aren't doing so because your 34
neighborhood isn't "as safe as it once was," or you avoid seeing certain old friends because of where they live, or if you find yourself getting up in the middle of the night to double-check doors and windows, then you are already a casualty, already a victim of the American Handgun War.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why, according to the writer, is a handgun in the home often a tragedy?
2. Why is the Second Amendment argument "an excuse rather than a reason"?
3. The writer never explicitly defines the term *"macho image."* Based on the essay, define the term in your own words.
4. In what ways do the criminal activity and self-defense categories overlap?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Does the writer use classification, division, or both? Support your answer with statements from the essay.
2. Does the writer use any other **modes** of **development?** If so, what are they? Where in the essay do they occur?
3. In what **person** is the essay written? Cite examples from the essay to support your answer.
4. In what ways is the essay **subjective?** In what ways is it **objective?**
5. Which paragraphs develop the **thesis** of the essay? Which make **up** the **conclusion?**

Writing Assignments

1. Think of a group of people who have some habit or activity in common—for instance, smokers, joggers, professional basketball players. Write an essay describing categories or types of people who make up the larger group.
2. Write an essay on how much noise should be tolerated in certain types of public places, such as dormitories, libraries, and public transportation.
3. Write a classification essay in which you identify and explain at least three actions for which a person should be cited for exceptional bravery.

6 Comparison and Contrast

To COMPARE IS to show how items are alike. To **contrast** is **to** show how items are different. Thus comparison and contrast involve pointing out the similarities or differences between two (or more) items. Birdwatchers, for instance, may compare bird A with bird B by certain distinguishing marks, colors, and features.

In the preceding chapter, you learned about the **mode of development** called classification **and** division, and the comparison and contrast mode is related. In deciding what to compare or contrast, you will want to make sure that both items share points in common. Thus, the items compared are usually the same kind or class of things, and in comparing or contrasting them, you essentially establish two or more categories, showing the differences or similarities between them. For instance, you can compare two passenger cars—a Ford and a Chevrolet—with more precision than you can compare a Ford and a helicopter. Fords are compared with Chevrolets because they share many features in common—features that you can pinpoint. Similarly, you can usually compare two paintings more precisely than you can compare a novel and a painting. (If you wish to make a humorous comparison, however, you might choose two items that are not in the same category, creating the opportunity for humorous **irony** based on surprising and contradictory connections.)

Once you have picked out two closely related items, you will want to explain as clearly as possible the ways in which the items are alike or different. In any given

piece of writing, you may want to use comparison only—or contrast only. *Or* you may decide to use some of both in the same essay. These three possibilities are illustrated in the following paragraphs. Notice, in each case, how the writer compares or contrasts *specific* points.

Comparison

A Buick and a Cadillac, both built by General Motors, are alike in many ways. A Buick, which measures over 200 inches in length and weighs over 3,000 pounds, is large and holds the road well. A Cadillac is similar in length and weight. Like a Buick, a Cadillac gets relatively low gas mileage compared with smaller economy cars made by the same manufacturer. The Buick provides an unusually comfortable ride, especially on cross-country trips on the highway, as does a Cadillac. And both cars enjoy a certain status as a luxury automobile.

Contrast

The twins are as different as two people can be. Sally, who is always hoping someone will have a party, has black hair, brown eyes, and an outgoing personality. She wants to be an actress or a popular singer. Susan, more serious and studious, has blonde hair, blue eyes, and a somewhat shy manner. Since she has done well in all her classes in graphic arts and math, she plans to become an architect or an engineer.

Mixed Comparison and Contrast

Most Americans would say it is not really possible to establish an ideal society. But time after time, a small dedicated group of people will drop out of the mainstream of American society to try, once more, to live according to the group's concept of an ideal society. Most of these groups have believed in holding their property in common. Most have used the word *family* to refer to all members of the group. Many of these groups, however, have differed widely in their attitudes toward sex and marriage.

Notice that all three of these paragraphs supply information but do not try to claim that one of the compared items is "better" or "worse" than the other. Notice, too, the objective tone of these paragraphs. However, writers also use comparison and contrast to support their opinions about subjects or to show how a certain thing or idea

is superior to others in the same class. The writer of the second paragraph above, for instance, could have used her information to support an opinion, as in the following revised paragraph.

The twins are as different as two people can be. Sally, who has black hair, brown eyes, and an outgoing, flighty personality, is always hoping someone will have a party. She fritters away her time and money shopping for the latest clothes, and she dreams of being an actress or a popular singer. But until she settles down and applies her energy to something useful, she will probably not be successful at anything. Susan, more serious and studious, has blonde hair, blue eyes, and a somewhat shy manner. Since she works hard and makes good use of her time, she has done well in all her classes in graphic arts and math. She plans to become an architect or an engineer and will no doubt be a good one.

Opinion

Opinion

As you plan a comparison-and-contrast composition, it is again very useful to brainstorm for items of comparison. That is, as described in Chapter 3, think about the subjects of your composition and jot down briefly whatever comes to mind about them. You can then pick and choose from your list in deciding on the contents of your comparison.

Organization

You should organize your comparison (or contrast) by whichever method suits your material best. One simple method is to explain one characteristic of item A, perhaps its cost, and then compare it immediately with the cost of item B—and then go on to compare the two items point by point. For example, in contrasting two chocolate cakes, you may first want to say cake A is more expensive to prepare than cake B. Second, you may say that cake A, requiring more steps and ingredients, takes more time than cake B. Third, cake A is richer—almost too rich—and sweeter than cake B. You may conclude by saying you recommend cake B. In this manner, the writer moves back and forth mentioning the specific differences between cake A and cake B in an orderly manner.

When the writer compares (or contrasts) two objects item by item, it is called the *alternating* or *point-by-point*

method. The following diagram shows how this method works in the earlier paragraph comparing Buicks and Cadillacs (page 188).

Alternating (or point-by-point) method

Topic sentence: "A Buick and a Cadillac are alike in many ways.'

Point 1: length and width	Buick : Cadillac:
Point 2: mileage	.Buick Cadillac
Point 3: comfort	Buick Cadillac
Point 4: status	Buick Cadillac

If the writer prefers a second type of organization, the *block method,* he or she explains all the characteristics of the first item together in a block and then explains all the characteristics of the second item in a corresponding block. The paragraph contrasting the twins Sally and Susan (page 188) is organized in this block method.

Block method

Topic sentence: "The twins are as different as two people can be."

Block 1:

Sally:
point 1: appearance
point 2: personality
point 3: career

Block 2:

Susan:
point 1: appearance
point 2; personality
point 3: career

A third, "mixed" method is useful when the writer wants to both compare and contrast in the same paragraph. All the similarities of the two items may be explained first and then all the differences. (Of course, if the writer chooses, the differences may be explained first and then the similarities.) The following diagram shows this third method of organization, which was used in the paragraph on ideal societies (page 188).

Mixed comparison-and-contrast method

Topic sentence: ".. . people drop out of the mainstream of American society … to live according to the group's concept of an ideal society."

Block 1: comparisons

Comparison
- common property
- group as "family"

Block 2: contrast

Contrast
- attitudes toward sex and marriage

You will want to use these same three methods in writing longer essays. In the following essay, the writer uses the alternating method of organization to contrast types of people. Notice, too, that Andy Rooney usually devotes a paragraph to each point.

There are only two types of people in the world, Type A and Type Z. It isn't hard to tell which type you are. How long before the plane leaves do you arrive at the airport?

Point 1: catching a plane

Early plane-catchers, Type A, pack their bags at least a day in advance, and they pack neatly. If they're booked on a flight that leaves at four in the afternoon, they get up at 5:30 that morning. If they haven't left the house by noon, they're worried about missing the plane.

Late plane-catchers, Type Z, pack hastily at the last minute and arrive at the airport too late to buy a newspaper.

Point 2: reading a book

What do you do with a new book? Type A reads more carefully and finishes every book, even though it isn't any good.

Type Z skims through a lot of books and is more apt to write in the margins with a pencil.

Point 3: eating breakfast

Type A eats a good breakfast; Type Z grabs a cup of coffee.

Point 4: turning off lights

Type As turn off the lights when leaving a room and lock the doors when leaving a house. They go back to make sure they've locked it, and they worry later about whether they left the iron on or not. They didn't.

Type Zs leave the lights burning and if they lock the door at all when they leave the house, they're apt to have forgotten their keys.

PointS: seeing the dentist

Type A sees the dentist twice a year, has an annual physical checkup and thinks he may have something.

Type Z has been meaning to see a doctor.

Point 6: using toothpaste

Type A squeezes a tube of toothpaste from the bottom, rolls it very carefully as he uses it and puts the top back on every time.

Type Z squeezes the tube from the middle, and he's lost the cap under the radiator.

Point 7: other characteristics

Type Zs are more apt to have some Type A characteristics than Type As are apt to have any Type Z characteristics.

Point 8: marriage

Type As always marry Type Zs.

Type Zs always marry Type As.

Andy Rooney,
"Types"

The comparison and contrast mode of development gives Rooney a framework for making use of irony and showing both Type As and Type Zs in a somewhat unflattering light—another type of judgmental comparison.

Comparison and contrast, like classification and division, is a useful mode of development for writing on the academic subjects you will study in college courses. You will encounter it in textbooks and, again, if you become comfortable with this mode, it will come in handy in your writing for other courses. Be alert, for example, to essay assignments and exam questions that begin "Compare and contrast. . . ."

In the readings that follow, you will find the alternating, block, and mixed methods of organizing comparison-and-contrast development. You will also see the variety of ideas that writers express through comparison and contrast. The questions and assignments at the ends of the readings will help you understand the principles underlying this mode of development, so that you can apply them in your own writing.

Children of Two Nations

Brenda David

Brenda David spent several years in Milan, Italy, working at a school for American and Italian children. At the school she observed some interesting differences among the children, which she attributes to the differing priorities and values of Americans and Italians. Since her return to the United States, Brenda David has been studying piano, flying airplanes, and teaching English as a second language.

*Words **to** Know*

inquisitive curious
passive quiet, inactive
priority order of importance

.11 young children, whatever their culture, are alike in their charm and innocence—in being a clean slate on which the wonders and ways of the world are yet to be written. But during the three years I worked in a school in Milan, I learned that American and Italian children are different in several ways. First, young American children tend to be active, enthusiastic, and inquisitive. Italian children, on the other hand, tend to be passive, quiet, and not particularly inquisitive. They usually depend on their parents to tell them what to do. Second, American children show their independence while their Italian counterparts are still looking to their parents and grandparents to tell them what to do or not do. Third, and most important to those who question the influence of environment on a child, the American children generally surpass their Italian schoolmates in math, mechanical, and scientific abilities. But American children are overshadowed by their Italian counterparts in their languages, literature, art, and music courses. Perhaps the differences, which those of us at the school confirmed in an informal study, were to be expected. After all, what priority do Americans give to the technological skills? And what value do Italians—with the literature of poets and authors like Boccaccio, the works of Michelangelo, and the music of the world-famous La Scala opera at Milan—place on the cultural arts?

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean when she says all young children are a "clean slate"?
2. Why, according to the writer, do American children score higher in technical subjects? Why do Italian children score higher in cultural subjects?
3. What does the writer **imply** about the influence of environment on a child?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** of the paragraph?
2. Is the writer's **mode of development** comparison, contrast, or both?
3. What organizational method does the writer use? Draw a diagram of the organization. (See pages 190-191.)
4. The writer uses some **transitional** words to help you identify the points she makes in the paragraph. Identify these expressions.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting high school students and college students. Use point-by-point organization.
2. Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting people from two different neighborhoods near your home. Use the block method of organization.
3. Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting parents who are permissive and parents who are strict.

Two Views of Time

Robert Grudin

Is time a single entity, always having the same meaning? Hardly, says Robert Grudin in this passage. Time, he indicates, can be viewed in sharply contrasting ways, suggesting-quite different realities.

Word to Know

cosmos the universe

Imagine that you spent your whole life at a single house. Each day at the same hour you entered an artificially-lit room, undressed and took up the same position in front of a motion picture camera. It photographed one frame of you per day every day of your life. On your seventy-second birthday, the reel of film was shown. You saw yourself growing and aging over seventy-two years in less than half an hour (27.4 minutes at sixteen frames per second). Images of this sort, though terrifying, are helpful in suggesting unfamiliar but useful perspectives of time. They may, for example, symbolize the telescoped, almost momentary character of the past as seen through the eyes of an anxious or disaffected individual. Or they may suggest the remarkable brevity of our lives in the cosmic scale of time. If the estimated age of the cosmos were shortened to seventy-two years, a human life would take about ten seconds.

But look at time the other way. Each day is a minor eternity of/over 86,000 seconds. During each second, the number of distinct molecular functions going on within the human body is comparable to the number of seconds in the estimated age of the cosmos. A few seconds are long enough for a revolutionary idea, a startling communication, a baby's conception, a wounding insult, a sudden death. Depending on how we think of them, our lives can be infinitely long or infinitely short.

Questions About the Reading

1. Which view of time do you prefer? Why?
2. What does the writer **imply** is useful about each view of time?
3. How old is the cosmos? (Don't grab your calculator. Just give a rough estimate in your own words.)

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What method did the writer use to organize the passage?
2. What primary **mode of development** does the writer use for his contrast? Does he use more than one?
3. What is **the main idea** of this contrast? Where is the **thesis statement?**

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph contrasting the amount of time it takes to do two different things; for example, eating a pizza versus brushing your teeth, writing a paragraph versus reading a paragraph, jogging a mile in the rain versus walking home from class on a pleasant day. Try to give a sense of how time *feels* in each situation.
2. In a paragraph, compare and contrast your views of time now with those you remember having as a child. Think, for instance, about the value you attach to time now versus the value you attached then, or about how quickly time seems to pass now versus then.

The Natural Superiority of Women

Ashley Montagu

Who do you think are superior: men or women? Myth has it that men are, but anthropologist Ashley Montagu disagrees. In the following paragraph, taken from his controversial book The Natural Superiority of Women, *Montagu provides evidence that women are superior to men.*

Words to Know

chestnut an old story or joke
constitutional concerned with the body's health and strength
rigors harshness
Y-chromosome in genetics, the part of a cell responsible for transmitting male characteristics

JL hysically and psychically women are by far the superior of men. The old chestnut about women being more emotional than men has been forever destroyed by the facts of two great wars. Women under blockade, heavy bombardment, concentration camp confinement, and similar rigors withstand them vastly more successfully than men. The psychiatric casualties of civilian populations under such conditions are mostly masculine, and there are far more men in our mental hospitals than there are women. The steady hand at the helm is the hand that has had the practice at rocking the cradle. Because of their greater size and weight, men are physically more powerful than women—which is not the same thing as saying that they are stronger. A man of the same size and weight as a woman of comparable background and occupational status would probably not be any more powerful than a woman. As far as constitutional strength is concerned, women are stronger than men. Many diseases from which men suffer can be shown to be largely influenced by their relation to the male Y-chromosome. More males die than females. Deaths from almost all causes are more frequent in males of all ages. Though women are more frequently ill than men, they recover from illnesses more easily and more frequently than men.

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean by the "steady hand at the helm"? What connections is the writer suggesting between the hand at the helm and the hand that rocks the cradle?
2. What influences many of the diseases from which men suffer?
3. Why do you think the writer states that men are not stronger than women, even though they are physically more powerful?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Does the writer use comparison, contrast, or a combination of the two to develop his paragraph?
2. What is the topic of this paragraph? Where is the **topic sentence** located?
3. Does the writer use the point-by-point method or the block method to organize his paragraph?

Writing Assignments

1. Think of one male friend and one female friend. Which do you think is stronger? Why? Using comparison and/or contrast as your **mode of development,** explain your answer in a paragraph.
2. Is there someone with whom you are often compared, such as a sister, a brother, or a friend? Write a paragraph in which you compare yourself with this person. Are the similarities superficial, or are you really alike? How are you different? Is there a good reason for you to be compared?
3. In a paragraph, compare and contrast the cafeteria at your school with a restaurant at which you like to eat. Use examples to show similarities and differences.

Civilization and Education

fames Baldwin

James Baldwin, who died in 1988, is one of America's most noted black writers. Here he implies a disturbing contrast between separate meanings of two important concepts.

Words to Know

exacts demands; extorts
obtain prevail

Every human being born begins to be *civilized* the moment he or she is born. Since we all arrive here absolutely helpless, with no way of getting a decent meal or of moving from one place to another without human help (and human help exacts a human price), there is no way around that. But this is civilization with a small *c.* Civilization with a large C is something else again. So is education with a small *e* different from Education with a large *E.* In the lowercase, education refers to the relations that actually obtain among human beings. In the uppercase, it refers to po.wer. Or, to put it another way, my father, mother, brothers, sisters, lovers, friends, sons, daughters civilize me in quite another way than the state intends. And the education I can receive from an afternoon with Picasso, or from taking one of my nieces or nephews to the movies, is not at all what the state has in mind when it speaks of Education.

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean by civilized?
2. In your own words, describe the differences between the uppercase terms and the lowercase terms the writer is contrasting.
3. Speculate on what the writer is implying about the state.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main** idea of the paragraph? Is there a **topic sentence?**
2. What examples does the writer use to help clarify his contrast?
3. Is this paragraph written **subjectively** or **objectively?** Support your answer.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph or essay classifying teachers according to their attitudes toward students (or, if you like, students according to their attitudes toward teachers).
2. In a paragraph, describe the categories of power or advantage people derive from education. As one of your categories, use the type of power you think Baldwin refers to.

Two Towns in Delaware

Charles Kuralt

Two things—in this case, towns—started out the same way. at the same time. Over the years they developed vast differences. What arc the differences? How did they come about? What do they mean in our lives? In this look at Wilmington and New Castle, Delaware, Charles Kuralt tries to answer these questions.

New Castle, Delaware: During the first half of the seventeenth century, when the nations of Europe were squabbling over who owned the New World, the Dutch and the Swedes founded competing villages ten miles apart on the Delaware River. Not long afterward, the English took over both places and gave them new names, New Castle and Wilmington. 1

For a century and a half the two'villages grew apace, but gradually Wilmington gained all the advantages. It was a little closer to Philadelphia, so when new textile mills opened, they opened in Wilmington, not in New Castle. There was plenty of water power from rivers and creeks at Wilmington, so when young Irenee DuPont chose a place for his gunpowder mill, it was Wilmington he chose, not New Castle. Wilmington became a town and then a city—a rather important city, much the largest in Delaware. And New Castle, bypassed by the highways and waterways that made Wilmington prosperous? New Castle slumbered, ten miles south on the Delaware River. No two villages with such similar pasts could have gone such separate ways. And today no two places could be more different. 2

Wilmington, with its expressways and parking lots and all its other concrete ribbons and badges, is a tired old veteran of the industrial wars and wears a vacant stare. Block after city block where people used to live and shop is broken and empty. 3

New Castle never had to make way for progress and therefore never had any reason to tear down its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century houses. So they are still here, standing in tasteful rows under ancient elms around the original town green. New Castle is still an agreeable place to live. The pretty buildings of its quiet past make a serene setting for the lives of 4,800 people. New Castle may be America's loveliest town, but it is not an important town at all. Progress passed it by. 4

Poor New Castle.

Lucky Wilmington.

Questions About the Reading

1. Were New Castle and Wilmington founded before or after the American Revolution? How do you know?
2. In paragraph 2, in the next to last sentence, what does the writer mean by "New Castle slumbered"?
3. How old, approximately, are the houses in New Castle?
4. What does the writer mean by an "important" city or town?
5. What does the writer think of Wilmington? What does he think of New Castle?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify the metaphors in paragraph 3.
2. Is the writer's mode of **development** comparison, contrast, or mixed? Support your answer.
3. What method of organization does Kuralt use in comparing the two cities? Does he follow one method exclusively? (See pages 190-191.)
4. The **thesis statement** is not presented in the first paragraph of this essay. Where is it presented? What is the thesis statement? Rewrite it in your own words. Is the same idea expressed anywhere else in the essay? If so, wliere?
5. The writer concludes the essay by saying "Poor New Castle. Lucky Wilmington." What **tone** is the writer using?

Writing Assignments

1. Compare the city or town in which you live with another city or town nearby. How does each place look? What educational and social outlets does it provide? What services does it provide? In which town or city would you prefer to live?
2. Think of a town or neighborhood where you lived when you were growing up. Write an essay comparing and contrasting what that place was like then with what it is like now. How has it changed? How has it stayed the same?

Nursing Practices—England and America

Mary Madden

Mary Madden contrasts the way the important profession of nursing is practiced in England and in the United States. Her approach is a generous one. Until the last paragraph, she concentrates on the positive features of a nurse's life and work in each country. She leaves the drawbacks of working in each country unstated—though she implies them clearly.

Words to Know

restrictions limitations
vocation a regular occupation or profession

J. left my native Ireland after I had completed a high school education. I studied to become a nurse and midwife in England, and I eventually came to the United States of America. Because I have worked five years in hospitals in England and the U.S.A., my friends frequently ask about differences, as I see them, in the practice of nursing on both sides of the Atlantic. 1

Until I realized how different the licensing laws of Great Britain are from those in the United States, I was surprised at the number of restrictions placed on a nurse's actions in this country. A nurse licensed in Britain may practice anywhere in the British Isles and in some countries abroad; in the United States, the nurse must apply in every state in which she hopes to work. 2

In Britain, a nurse is a deeply respected, devoted woman, entrusted with a vast amount of responsibility. The patients place unquestioned confidence in her judgment and advice. The doctor relies on her report of her observations, and he seldom interferes in what is considered a nursing duty. 3

The nurse decides when the patient is allowed out of bed or what type of bath he may have. I do not recall ever seeing an order on a physician's chart such as "OOR in 24 hours" or "may take a shower." The nurse judges when a wound is healed and when sutures may be removed. She is always consulted about the patient's requirements and his progress. And because of the structure of most hospitals in England, the nurse is in view of the patient constantly. Whenever he needs attention, the nurse is there in the ward, and she may observe him, too, unobtrusively. 4

Furthermore, the nurse is a member of the health team who sees the patient most frequently. To the patient she is the most familiar person in the strange hospital world. 5

In the United States, the patient is likely to be under the care of the same doctor in and out of the hospital, so the doctor is the person the patient knows best and the one in whom he confides most easily. But though the patient's treatment and care are discussed with the nursing staff, a nurse is not allowed much freedom to advise a patient. Also, I have seen doctors visit patients without a word of communication to the nurse. Personally I think it difficult to be ignored when a patient's care is concerned and I think it prevents full utilization of the nurse's knowledge and skills. 6

I myself found nursing practice easier, in a way, under the so-called "socialized medicine" of Great Britain than the more individual type of medical care found in the United States. It involved much less writing and left me at the patient's bedside, where 1 am happiest. There was no need to vvrire several charges and requests for the needs of the patient. Stocks *oi* drugs and other medicines were kept on each ward, so that when medication was ordered, it was at hand. All charges were met by "National Health"—including all supplies and equipment used on the ward- The nurse tends a person who is free from much anxiety and hence more easily cared for while he is an inpatient. 7

On the other hand, 1 found that my introduction to an American hospital was a hacDv experience. As a new nurse, 1 was guided by an orientation program given by another nurse and quickiy found my place on the patient care team. I had never experienced such an orientation in England. 3

Policy, drug reference, and procedure books at the nurses' station provide a ready reference where a nurse may check facts when she is in doubt, and she can instruct a new nurse on the staff without confusion. The active U.S. nurse, while working, can keep informed about new trends, discoveries, and inventions in a rapidly changing world of medicine. 9

Here in the United States the nurse is regarded as an individual person and her personal life outside the hospital is given consideration. She develops interests in arts, sport or a creative hobby; she is encouraged to further her education. Time and means are available to her to expand her horizons and to enrich her personality. Many nurses combine marriage and a career very ably in this country, but not in England or Ireland. All this tends to involve her more with people other 10

than the sick. She is an interesting, informed, and happy person and at the bedside she can show understanding and perception.

In Britain, like most nurses, I lived in a nurses' home on the hospital grounds and was thus isolated in a special hospital community. Theoretically I worked eight hours each day that I was on duty. But these hours were so arranged that one went to work twice in one day. One might work four hours in the morning, have a *iew* hours free, and then o-o back to the ward for the evening. This schedule demands most of one's waking hours, and so mingling in the larger community outside the hospital was quite limited. The nurse was expected to find full satisfaction in her vocation, and thoughts of increases in salary were considered unworthy. Now, such attitudes are beginning to change and the winds of unrest are blowing through nursing in England, ruffling many a well-placed cap.

Questions About the Reading

1. What is the relationship between nurse and patient in the United States? How does this relationship differ from that found in Great Britain?
2. Does the writer suggest that nurses in the United States are not respected by doctors? Cite statements in the essay to support your answer.
3. How does Great Britain's "socialized" health-care system affect nursing practice?
4. Based on what the essay says about the nursing profession in the two countries, in which do you think patients would receive better care? Why do you feel this way?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Does the writer express opinions on whether it is better to work as a nurse in the United States or in England? Are the writer's opinions directly stated or implied?
2. Is the essay as a whole organized according to the point-by-point method, the block method, or the mixed comparison-and-contrast method?
3. Do you think the writer's main purpose in the essay is to supply information or to judge the quality of English nursing care versus care in the United States?
4. In your own words, state the thesis of this essay.

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay comparing and contrasting the teaching styles of two college instructors. Use the point-by-point method to organize your essay.
2. Using the block method of organization, write an essay comparing and contrasting one of the following pairs: older brothers/older sisters, houses/dormitories, riding the bus/walking, or high school classes/college classes.

The Difference Between a Brain and a Computer

Isaac Asimov

Most scientists and knowledgeable observers agree that computers will change our lives more completely than the automobile did, than television did, or than any technological innovation has so far. How far can computers go? Science writer Isaac Asimov here compares the computer with the human brain. His conclusions may frighten you. They're sure to make you stop and think.

Words to Know

components individual parts
conceiving forming an idea
mammal the class of animals, including human beings, that have backbones and controlled body temperature and nurse their young
neurons nerve cells
program a set of directions, instructions, or rules

The difference between a brain and a computer can be expressed in a single word: complexity. 1

The large mammalian brain is the most complicated thing, for its size, known to us. The human brain weighs three pounds, but in that three pounds are ten billion neurons and a hundred billion smaller cells. These many billions of cells are interconnected in a vastly complicated network that we can't begin to unravel as yet. 2

Even the most complicated computer man has yet built can't compare in intricacy with the brain. Computer switches and components number in the thousands rather than in the billions. What's more, the computer switch is just an on-off device, whereas the brain cell is itself possessed of a tremendously complex inner structure. 3

Can a computer think? That depends on what you mean by "think." If solving a mathematical problem is "thinking," then a computer can "think" and do so much faster than a man. Of course, most mathematical problems can be solved quite mechanically by repeating certain straightforward processes over and over again. Even the simple computers of today can be geared for that. 4

It is frequently said that computers solve problems only because they are "programmed" to do so. They can only do what men have them do. One must remember that human beings also can only do what they are "programmed" to do. Our genes "program" us the instant the fertilized ovum is formed, and our potentialities are limited by that "program." 5

Our "program" is so much more enormously complex, though, that we might like to define "thinking" in terms of the creativity that goes into writing a great play or composing a great symphony, in conceiving a brilliant scientific theory or a profound ethical judgment. In that sense, computers certainly can't think and neither can most humans. 6

Surely, though, if a computer can be made complex enough, it can be as creative as we. If it could be made as complex as a human brain, it could be the equivalent of a human brain and do whatever a human brain can do. 7

To suppose anything else is to suppose that there is more to the human brain than the matter that composes it. The brain is made up of cells in a certain arrangement and the cells are made up of atoms and molecules in certain arrangements. If anything else is there, no signs of it have ever been detected. To duplicate the material complexity of the brain is therefore to duplicate everything about it. 8

But how long will it take to build a computer complex enough to duplicate the human brain? Perhaps not as long as some think. Long before we approach a computer as complex as our brain, we will perhaps build a computer that is at least complex enough to design another computer more complex than itself. This more complex computer could design one still more complex and so on and so on and so on. 9

In other words, once we pass a certain critical point, the computers take over and there is a "complexity explosion." In a very short time thereafter, computers may exist that not only duplicate the human brain—but far surpass it. 10

Then what? Well, mankind is not doing a very good job of running the earth right now. Maybe, when the time comes, we ought to step gracefully aside and hand over the job to someone who can do it better. And if we don't step aside, perhaps Supercomputer will simply move in and push us aside. 11

Questions About the Reading

1. What makes the human brain more complex than a computer?
2. Can a computer be built that would duplicate the human brain? Explain your answer.
3. What processes of the human brain can be duplicated by a computer?
4. Can a computer be creative? Explain your answer.
5. What might happen to humanity if a computer were built that could surpass the human brain?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. In your own words, explain the thesis of this essay.
2. What does the writer think of human beings? Which sentences express his attitude?
3. Which paragraphs provide information primarily on the computer? Which paragraphs deal mainly with the human brain? Which does Asimov spend more time describing? Why?
4. Besides comparison and contrast, what primary **mode of development** does the writer use in forming his paragraphs?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the human memory with the memory of a computer. Do you think each can remember the same kinds of things? Is each equally capable of remembering things?
2. At the end of the essay, Asimov suggests that a supercomputer could one day move in and push people aside. Write an essay comparing a person's everyday life with life in a supercomputer society.
3. Asimov maintains that there is nothing more to the human brain than its material substance—that the brain is just "atoms and molecules in certain arrangements. If anything else is there, no signs of it have ever been detected." Do you agree? Write an essay in which you compare and contrast Asimov's description of the brain with your own views.

Computers

*Lewis **Thomas***

In the preceding essay, Isaac Asimov identifies complexity within the human brain as the unique quality that distinguishes us from computers. In this essay, Lewis Thomas focuses on a broader, external complexity that characterizes the human race—and can never characterize computers.

Words *to Know*

aggregation mass collection
fallibility a tendency to make mistakes
millennium a 1,000-year period
syncytium cells fused into a mass of living material

X ou can make computers that are almost human. In some respects they are superhuman; they can beat most of us at chess, memorize whole telephone books at a glance, compose music of a certain kind and write obscure poetry, diagnose heart ailments, send personal invitations to vast parties, even go transiently crazy. No one has yet programmed a computer to be of two minds about a hard problem, or to burst out laughing, but that may come. Sooner or later, there will be real human hardware, great whirring, clicking cabinets intelligent enough to read magazines and vote, able to think rings around the rest of us. 1

Well, maybe, but not for a while anyway. Before we begin organizing sanctuaries and reservations for our software selves, lest we vanish like the whales, here is a thought to relax with. 2

Even when technology succeeds in manufacturing a machine as big as Texas to do everything we recognize as human, it will still be, at best, a single individual. This amounts to nothing, practically speaking. To match what we can do, there would have to be 3 billion of them with more coming down the assembly line, and I doubt that anyone will put up the money, much less make room. And even so, they would all have to be wired together, intricately and delicately, as we are, communicating with each other, talking incessantly listening. If they weren't *at* each other this way, all their waking hours, they wouldn't be anything like human, after all. I think we're safe, for a long time ahead. 3

It is in our collective behavior that we are most mysterious. We *4*
won't be able to construct machines like ourselves until we've understood this, and we're not even close. All we know is the phenomenon: we spend our time sending messages to each other, talking and trying to listen at the same time, exchanging information. This seems to be our most urgent biological function; it is what we do with our lives. By the time we reach the end, each of us has taken in a staggering store, enough to exhaust any computer, much of it incomprehensible, and we generally manage to put out even more than we take in. Information is our source of energy; we are driven by it. It has become a tremendous enterprise, a kind of energy system on its own. All 3 billion of us are being connected by telephones, radios, television sets, airplanes, satellites, harangues on public-address systems, newspapers, magazines, leaflets dropped from great heights, words got in edgewise. We are becoming a grid, a circuitry around the earth. If we keep at it, we will become a computer to end all computers, capable of fusing all the thoughts of the world into a syncytium.

Already, there are no closed, two-way conversations. Any word you 5
speak this afternoon will radiate out in all directions, around town before tomorrow, out and around the world before Tuesday, accelerating to the speed of light, modulating as it goes, shaping new and unexpected messages, emerging at the end as an enormously funny Hungarian joke, a fluctuation in the money market, a poem, or simply a long pause in someone's conversation in Brazil.

We do a lot of collective thinking, probably more than any other 6
social species, although it goes on in something like secrecy. We don't acknowledge the gift publicly, and we are not as celebrated as the insects, but we do it. Effortlessly, without giving it a moment's thought, we are capable of changing our language, music, manners, morals, entertainment, even the way we dress, all around the earth in a year's turning. We seem to do this by general agreement, without voting or even polling. We simply think our way along, pass information around, exchange codes disguised as art, change our minds, transform ourselves,

Computers cannot deal with such levels of improbability, and.it is 7
just as well. Otherwise, we might be tempted to take over the control of ourselves in order to make long-range plans, and that would surely be the end of us. It would mean that some group or other, marvelously intelligent and superbly informed, undoubtedly guided by a computer, would begin deciding what human society ought to be like, say over the next five hundred years or so, and the rest of us would be persuaded, one way or another, to go along. The process of social evolution would then grind to a standstill, and we'd be stuck in today's rut for a millennium.

Much better we work our way out of it on our own, without gover- 8
nance. The future is too interesting and dangerous to be entrusted to any predictable, reliable agency. We need all the fallibility we can get. Most of all, we need to preserve the absolute unpredictability and total improbability of our connected minds. That way we can keep open all the options, as we have in the past.

It would be nice to have better ways of monitoring what we're up 9
to so that we could recognize change while it is occurring, instead of waking up as we do now to the astonished realization that the whole century just past wasn't what we thought it was, at all. Maybe computers can be used to help in this, although I rather doubt it. You can make simulation models of cities, but what you learn is that they seem to be beyond the reach of intelligent analysis; if you try to use common sense to make predictions, things get more botched up than ever. This is interesting, since a city is the most concentrated aggregation of humans, all exerting whatever influence they can bring to bear. The city seems to have a life of its own. If we cannot understand how this works, we are not likely to get very far with human society at large.

Still, you'd think there would be some way in. Joined together, the 10
great mass of human minds around the earth seems to behave like a coherent, living system. The trouble is that the flow of information is mostly one-way. We are all obsessed by the need to feed information in, as fast as we can, but we lack sensing mechanisms for getting anything much back. I will confess that I have no more sense of what goes on in the mind of mankind than I have for the mind of an ant. Come to think of it, this might be a good place to start.

Questions About the Reading

1. What is the main difference between human beings and computers, according to the writer?
2. In your own words, explain what makes human beings mysterious, in the writer's view.
3. In paragraph 4 the writer says, "Information is our source of energy." Think of some examples to illustrate this statement.
4. Reread paragraph 5. What is the writer talking about? What is the point of the paragraph?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** of the essay? Is it directly stated in a **thesis statement?** If so, where? If not, in which sentence or sentences is it most clearly expressed?
2. What type of audience do you think the writer had in mind when he wrote this essay—philosophers? essayists? you and me? Do you think his purpose in writing it was similar to Asimov's in his essay? Why or why not?
3. Is this essay clearly organized? Can you detect any purpose to the organization?
4. Would you characterize this essay as **subjective** or **objective?** Do you think the writer is expressing approval or disapproval of computers? How about of people?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay comparing or contrasting Asimov's view of people with Thomas's view. To illustrate your thesis, restate points from both essays in your own words.
2. Compare or contrast Asimov's and Thomas's views on computers. Use quotations from the essays to illustrate.

Through the One-Way Mirror

Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood is a novelist who lives in Toronto. She has strong opinions about the unequal relationship between Canada and the United States, and in this essay she expresses them with wit and contempt. Although she pokes fun at her own country, the bulk of her criticism is leveled at the United States.

Words** to **Know

bunion-toed having a large **painful bump** on **the**, inside of the big toe , ;
construe interpret
decipherable understandable
Mr. Magoo a cartoon character—a funny little, extremely nearsighted man
myopia nearsightedness
protoplasmic having the formless, goopy quality, of the stuff of which living cells are made

T he noses of a great many Canadians resemble Porky Pig's. This comes from spending so much time pressing them against the longest undefended one-way mirror in the world. The Canadians looking through this mirror behave the way people on the hidden side of such mirrors usually do: they observe, analyze, ponder, snoop and wonder what all the activity on the other side means in decipherable human terms. 1

The Americans, bless their innocent little hearts, are rarely aware that they are even being watched, much less by the Canadians. They just go on doing body language, playing in the sandbox of the world, bashing one another on the head and planning how to blow things up, same as always. If they think about Canada at all, it's only when things get a bit snowy or the water goes off or the Canadians start fussing over some piddly detail, such as fish. Then they regard them as unpatriotic; for Americans don't really see Canadians as foreigners, not like the Mexicans, unless they do something weird like speak French or beat the New York Yankees at baseball. Really, think the Americans, the Canadians are just like us, or would be if they could. 2

Or we could switch metaphors and call the border the longest undefended backyard fence in the world. The Canadians are the folks in 3

the neat little bungalow, with the tidy little garden and the duck pond: The Americans are the other folks, the ones in the sprawly mansion with the bad-taste statues on the lawn. There's a perpetual party, or something, going on there—loud music, raucous laughter, smoke billowing from the barbecue. Beer bottles and Coke cans land among the peonies. The Canadians have their own beer bottles and barbecue smoke, but they tend to overlook it. Your own mess is always more forgivable than the mess someone else makes on your patio.

The Canadians can't exactly call the police—they suspect that the Americans are the police—and part of their distress, which seems permanent, comes from their uncertainty as to whether or not they've been invited. Sometimes they do drop by next door, and find it exciting but scary. Sometimes the Americans drop by their house and find it clean. This worries the Canadians. They worry a lot. Maybe those Americans will want to buy up their duck pond, with all the money they seem to have, and turn it into a cesspool or a water-skiing emporium. 4

It also worries them that the Americans don't seem to know who the Canadians are, or even where, exactly, they are. Sometimes the Americans call Canada their backyard, sometimes their front yard, both of which imply ownership. Sometimes they say they are the Mounties and the Canadians are Rose Marie. (All these things have, in fact, been said by American politicians.) Then they accuse the Canadians of being paranoid and having an identity crisis. Heck, there is no call for the Canadians to fret about their identity, because everyone knows they're Americans, really. If the Canadians disagree with that, they're told not to be so insecure. 5

One of the problems is that Canadians and Americans are educated backward from one another. The Canadians—except for the Quebecois, one keeps saying—are taught about the rest of the world first and Canada second. The Americans are taught about the United States first, and maybe later about other places, if they're of strategic importance. The Vietnam War draft dodgers got more culture shock in Canada than they did in Sweden. It's not the clothing that is different, it's those mental noises. 6

Of course, none of this holds true when you get close enough, where concepts like "Americans" and "Canadians" dissolve and people are just people, or anyway some of them are, the ones you happen to approve of. I, for instance, have never met any Americans I didn't like, but I only get to meet the nice ones. That's what the businessmen think too, though they have other individuals in mind. But big-scale national mythologies have a way of showing up in things like foreign policy, 7

and at events like international writers' congresses, where the Canadians often find they have more to talk about with the Australians, the West Indians, the New Zealanders and even the once-loathed snooty Brits, now declining into humanity with the dissolution of empire, than they do with the impenetrable and mysterious Yanks.

But only sometimes. Because surely the Canadians understand the Yanks. Shoot, don't they see Yank movies, read Yank mags, bobble round to Yank music and watch Yank telly, as well as their own, when there is any? 8

Sometimes the Canadians think it's their job to interpret the Yanks to the rest of the world; explain them, sort of. This is an illusion: they don't understand the Yanks as much as they think they do, and it isn't their job. 9

But, as we say up here among God's frozen people, when Washington catches a cold, Ottawa sneezes. Some Canadians even refer to their capital city as Washington North and wonder why we're paying those guys in Ottawa when a telephone order service would be cheaper. Canadians make jokes about the relationship with Washington which the Americans, in their thin-skinned, bunion-toed way, construe as anti-American (they tend to see any nonworshipful comment coming from that gray, protoplasmic fuzz outside their borders as anti-American). They are no more anti-American than the jokes Canadians make about the weather: it's there, it's big, it's hard to influence, and it affects your life. 10

Of course, in any conflict with the Dreaded Menace, whatever it might be, the Canadians would line up with the Yanks, probably, if they thought it was a real menace, or if the Yanks twisted their arms or other bodily parts enough or threatened a "scorched-earth policy" (another real quote). Note the qualifiers. The Canadian idea of a menace is not the same as the U.S. one. Canada, for instance, never broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba, and it was quick to recognize China. Contemplating the U.S.-Soviet growling match, Canadians are apt to recall a line from Blake: "They became what they beheld." Certainly both superpowers suffer from the imperial diseases once so noteworthy among the Romans, the British and the French: arrogance and myopia. But the bodily-parts threat is real enough, and accounts for the observable wimpiness and flunkiness of some Ottawa politicians. Nobody, except at welcoming-committee time, pretends this is an equal relationship. 11

Americans don't have Porky Pig noses. Instead they have Mr. Magoo eyes, with which they see the rest of the world. That would 12

not be a problem if the United States were not so powerful. But it is, so it is.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why do Canadians "suspect that the Americans are the police" (paragraph 4)?
2. In paragraph 8, what comment is the writer making about Canadian culture?
3. In paragraph 10, what is meant by the expression, "When Washington catches a cold, Ottawa sneezes"?
4. What is the "Dreaded Menace" (paragraph 11)?
5. In the writer's view, what is the American attitude toward Canada? Briefly state her opinion in your own words.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the earlier metaphor (the one from which she is switching) that the writer refers to in paragraph 3?
2. Which paragraphs make up the introduction in this essay? Which ones form the body? And which ones are the conclusion?
3. What is the main contrast between Canadians and Americans? Try to isolate and put in your own words the writer's main point.
4. Do you. think the writer's presentation is fair to the United States? Does it include as much information as it should about the issues the writer raises?

Writing Assignments

1. Think of two cities or two states. Write an essay describing how they are *alike.* Use the point-by-point method to organize your comparison. (If you have ever been to a foreign country, you might prefer to describe points of similarity between that country and the United States.)
2. Write a comparison-and-contrast essay on two kinds of food, such as Chinese food and Italian food, food of the southern and northeastern United States, Mexican food and Greek food, or food from some other pair of cooking traditions. Try to write a mixed comparison and contrast, identifying similarities as well as differences.

Women and Men

Scott Russell Sanders

Scott Russell Sanders grew up among poor farmers, laborers, and factory workers. The men in this world faced endless toil. But Sanders was also exposed as a boy to soldiers on military bases, and he came to view soldiering as the only available alternative to a life of toil—the warrior, faced not with toil, but with waiting, killing, and death. As he explains in this essay, when Sanders reached college and learned that men were viewed as oppressors by the women there, it was not easy for him to relate that idea to his experience of what manhood meant.

Word to Know

fretted worried

J. was slow to understand the deep grievances of women. This was 1
because, as a boy, I had envied them. Before college, the only people I had ever known who were interested in art or music or literature, the only ones who read books, the only ones who ever seemed to enjoy a sense of ease and grace were the mothers and daughters. Like the menfolk, they fretted about money, they scrimped and made-do. But, when the pay stopped coming in, they were not the ones who had failed. Nor did they have to go to war, and that seemed to me a blessed fact. By comparison with the narrow, ironclad days of fathers, there was an expansiveness, I thought, in the days of mothers. They went to see neighbors, to shop in town, to run errands at school, at the library, at church. No doubt, had I looked harder at their lives, I would have envied them less. It was not my fate to become a woman, so it was easier for me to see the graces. Few of them held jobs outside the home, and those who did filled thankless roles as clerks and waitresses. I didn't see, then, what a prison a house could be, since houses seemed to me brighter, handsomer places than any factory. I did not realize—because such things were never spoken of—how often women suffered from men's bullying. I did learn about the wretchedness of abandoned wives, single mothers, widows; but I also learned about the wretchedness of lone men. Even then I could see how exhausting it was for a mother to cater all day to the needs of young children. But if I had been asked, as a boy, to choose between tending a baby and tending a machine, I think I would have chosen the baby. (Having now tended both, I know I would choose the baby.)

So I was baffled when the women at college accused me and my sex of having cornered the world's pleasures. I think something like my bafflement has been felt by other boys (and by girls as well) who grew up in dirt-poor farm country, in mining country, in black ghettos, in Hispanic barrios, in the shadows of factories, in Third World nations —any place where the fate of men is as grim and bleak as the fate of women. Toilers and warriors. I realize now how ancient these identities are, how deep the tug they exert on men, the undertow of a thousand generations. The miseries I saw, as a boy, in the lives of nearly all men I continue to see in the lives of many—the body-breaking toil, the tedium, the call to be tough, the humiliating powerlessness, the battle for a living and for territory. 2

When the women I met at college thought about the joys and privileges of men, they did not carry in their minds the sort of men I had known in my childhood. They thought of their fathers, who were bankers, physicians, architects, stockbrokers, the big wheels of the big cities. These fathers rode the train to work or drove cars that cost more than any of my childhood houses. They were attended from morning to night by female helpers, wives and nurses and secretaries. They were never laid off, never short of cash at month's end, never lined up for welfare. These fathers made decisions that mattered. They ran the world. 3

The daughters of such men wanted to share in this power, this glory. So did I. They yearned for a say over their future, for jobs worthy of their abilities, for the right to live at peace, unmolested, whole. Yes, I thought, yes yes. The difference between me and these daughters was that they saw me, because of my sex, as destined from birth to become like their fathers, and therefore as an enemy to their desires. But I knew better. I wasn't an enemy, in fact or in feeling. I was an ally. If I had known, then, how to tell them so, would they have believed me? Would they now? 4

Questions About the Reading *

1. Why did the writer envy women when he was a boy?
2. Explain the "bafflement" the writer feels and believes others feel (paragraph 2).
3. In addition to women and men, what other groups is the writer comparing and contrasting here? What overlaps are there among the different groups?
4. Which of the groups that he describes does the writer identify with most closely? Cite statements from the essay to support your answer.
5. Because he received a scholarship, Sanders was able to go to a university attended by students from wealthy families. What was his attitude toward these students? Why do you think he chose an elite university over a less prestigious one?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify the introduction, body, and conclusion in this essay.
2. What is the **main idea** of the essay? Is there a **thesis statement? If** so, where is it? If not, state the main idea in your own words.
3. Is this essay written **objectively** or **subjectively?** Identify objective or subjective elements, or both, in the writer's presentation.
4. Is the writer being judgmental? What does he **imply** about the groups he compares and contrasts?

Writing Assignments

1. Compare or contrast two or more social groups at your school, for instance, jocks, nerds, fraternity or sorority types, business majors, art majors, party-goers, or social activists.
2. Look again at the examples essay "My Mother Never Worked" on page 137. Contrast Sanders's view of the women of his childhood with the view presented by Smith-Yackel. In doing so, feel free to offer opinions about each writer's attitude toward women.

Mistaken Ideas About College

Kimberly Ordway (Student)

Before she came to college, this student was prepared for the worst: bossy upper-classmen, frightening professors, and disastrous exams. Now, she has learned not to jump to conclusions. In the essay that follows, she contrasts her old, mistaken ideas about college with a more realistic view.

Words to Know

harassing tormenting
inaudible unable to be heard
pessimist someone with a gloomy outlook

D efore I came to college, I was sure I knew all about it. I had talked 1
to guidance counselors, I had met some college students, I had looked at some catalogues, and I had seen more than my share of old "college" movies where the heroes belonged to "jock" fraternities and the heroines to sophisticated sororities. I knew all about it. Or so I thought. But, now, after one semester as a college student, many of my old ideas have changed completely.

I used to imagine bossy upper-classmen, for example. I thought they 2
would be know-it-all rulers of the campus who got their kicks from harassing freshmen. 1 pictured being directed to the wrong classrooms, being snubbed because I was too young, and eating lunch standing up because older students wouldn't allow me at their tables. But, in fact, the upper-classmen (when I could tell them from the freshmen) turned out to be quite civilized. They didn't even notice me, but if I did need help, they were willing to give it. In the beginning, more experienced students helped me to choose my professors and courses and to find my rooms, and later they encouraged me to stick with my tough courses (even calculus) and they tried (unsuccessfully) to teach me how to stay cool during examinations. No harassment here.

The upper-classmen weren't the only ones 1 worried about. I was 3
also concerned about the other freshmen. I was afraid they might think I was too fat, too shy, too ugly, too cowardly, or even too dumb to bother with. I thought their backgrounds and interests would be much more exciting than mine; I wondered who would care about a small-town girl whose typical pastime was strolling to the corner store for penny candy, popsicles, and Pepsi. And, most of all, 1 was afraid

of being alone, with my old friends far away and no new ones here. Again, I was wrong. When I finally got to college, I discovered that most students felt exactly as I did. They were as uneasy with me as I was with them, and as we started to open up, we began to trust one another. We began to become curious about each others' backgrounds and interests; the differences among us actually became attractions. We laughed, for example, at our comparative pronunciations of "car" as "cah" or "car" and I learned that "Get down" means "Feel good" in Boston. And no one seemed to think that I was fat, shy, ugly, cowardly, or dumb!

These weren't all of my worries, though. I was also frightened by 4
the classes and especially by the teachers. 1 imagined myself lost in a two-hundred-seat lecture hall, desperately scratching down pieces of notes preached from a great distance by a tiny, inaudible male professor with white hair and little gold-rimmed glasses. 1 was convinced he'd have no patience with my stupid questions, so I'd be perpetually lost. Wrong here too. Most of my classes had only thirty to forty students (some were smaller) and the professors, male and female, looked downright ordinary. One teacher had prematurely grey hair and none of them had gold-rimmed glasses. I did find myself desperately scratching down notes, but I also had plenty of chances to ask questions and even to take part in discussions. In the one-to-one meetings after class, I came to appreciate the teachers even more. They were actually interested in teaching me!

I changed my mind about other things too. I had expected home- 5
work to be a book-filled nightmare as I burned the midnight oil until two A.M., fighting off a headache which would keep me from meeting due dates, and eventually send me back to the corner store. Actually, I got most of my homework done well before midnight and I met all my due dates. And even the examinations were not a total disaster. They were not three-hour tests crammed into one hour, nor were they made up of many pages of single-spaced typed questions exclusively on details I had overlooked. Oh yes, I did have some awful tests; I did break out in a clammy sweat, develop a stomach upset and a gigantic headache; and I did spend finals week on Pepto-Bismol, but contrary to expectations, 1 passed all of my exams with good grades.

I've always been a pessimist. Then if the worst happens, I'm ready 6
for it. For at least three and a half more years, I plan to live by this philosophy, but even with this, I know I won't be as negative as I was before I got to college. Not all schools would be the same, but this one turned out to be much better than I thought it would be—a good lesson in not jumping to conclusions. And, being a pessimist, I had the

extra fun of discovering just how much better it could be. No doubt my attitude toward college will shift still more as I go on, but I know I'll never be as far off as I was before I got here.

Questions About the Reading

1. Where did the writer get her mistaken ideas about college?
2. Why was the writer afraid of being lonely?
3. Why has the writer always been a pessimist? How has her attitude changed?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the writer contrasting? What method does she use to organize the items she is contrasting?
2. What is the thesis of this essay? Is it directly stated? If so, where is it located?
3. Apart from comparison and contrast, what other **mode of development** does the writer use to develop her essay?

Writing Assignments

1. Have you ever anticipated an event (such as a date, a vacation, or a lecture) with great excitement and then been disappointed by the actual event? Mite an essay that describes the event and contrasts your expectations with how the event actually turned out.
2. Do you feel more comfortable about writing now than you did at the start of this course? Contrast the way you approached and wrote your first college writing assignment with the way you handled a more recent one. Have your methods or your attitude changed?
3. Has an important event or period in your life greatly changed your outlook on life? If so, write a paper describing the event and contrasting the attitudes you held before with those you hold now.

Process

IF YOU WANT to learn to make coffee in your new percolator, you will probably follow the directions provided by the manufacturer to explain the whole process. A process is a method of doing a task or a job, usually in orderly steps, to achieve a desired result. For example, directions and recipes are both detailed explanations of processes. So are all articles and essays that tell "how to" prepare for a job interview, how to assemble a stereo system, how to dress for success, or how to operate a microcomputer. So, too, are essays that describe how someone else used a process to accomplish something or complete a task.

In an essay explaining how to carry out a process, the writer tries to give clear and accurate guidance or directions, making the steps as simple as possible for the reader to follow. To do this, the writer must decide exactly what the reader already knows and what he or she needs to be told. The burden is on the writer to provide complete information to enable the reader to perform the task. If the writer forgets to mention how long the cookies should bake, the cook may be left with burned chocolate chip cookies and disappointed friends.

The written explanation of such a process must be organized with particular care, Each step or part of the directions should be discussed in the same order as it occurs in the process. The following sample paragraph is a recipe for **shrimp**—one you might want to try. Notice that the writer begins with the purchase of the shrimp and then proceeds, step by step, through preparing, cooking, and serving the shrimp.

Topic sentence

Step 1: choose size

Step 2: choose quantity

Step 3: shell shrimp

Step 4: cooking directions

C When fresh shrimp can be had, have it. What size? Medium for reasons of economy and common sense. Huge shrimps are magnificently expensive while small ones come in such numbers per pound that shelling them becomes slave labor.

C Buy two pounds of fresh shrimp and shell them. First, with a thumbnail pinch the tail shell hard crosswise (so the tail segments will come out intact), then handle the headless animals like so many pea pods; split them lengthwise, save the contents, and throw the husks away. Saute the shrimp with three crushed garlic cloves in two-thirds of a stick of butter. When the shrimp turn pink, add a 12-ounce can of Italian tomatoes (which taste better than the fresh supermarket **kind),** two bay leaves, a teaspoon of dried oregano, a half-cup of dry white wine, and the juice of a lemon. Simmer for ten minutes, sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve with rice.

Philip Kopper,
"Delicacies de la Mer"

Because this paragraph is telling the reader what to do, it is written in the second **person** *(you),* present tense *(come, buy, save, throw,* and so forth), but the word *you* is unstated, which makes the paragraph seem to address the reader even more directly. This **tone** is commonly used in process writing that instructs the reader.

Not all process essays are such clear-cut models of "process" writing as the paragraph above. In some cases, a paragraph or essay describing a process may serve a purpose similar to that of a **narrative** or a **description. That** is, whereas strictly process writing is intended primarily to **instruct,** process writing can also be adapted to situations in which the writer wants mainly to **inform** or **describe.** In such cases, a process is often combined with narration and description, as in the following example. Notice that in describing the process—the way the woman packs her suitcases and leaves the house—the writer describes her character. You also know, by the contrast between her habits and those of her husband, that her basic character differs sharply from his. By detailing the process of packing and combining it with other narrative details, the writer tells you indirectly what has previously happened in the woman's life.

Introduction—narrative

F He slammed the door angrily behind him, and she heard the
I squeal of the tires as he raced off in the car. For a moment,

she felt her usual fear. She knew he shouldn't drive after he'd been drinking heavily.

Step **1**: preparation

But then she turned, went to the linen closet, and took out a clean towel. She spread the towel out on her neatly made bed. She hesitated a moment, looking at his rumpled unmade bed with his pajamas thrown in a ball across the pillow. Beside his bed, in a heap where he'd stepped out of them, were the clothes he wore last night. One last time, she sighed, then hung up the clothes and made his bed.

Step 2: tidying up

Next, she got her overnight bag from the closet and put it carefully on the towel on her bed. She looked at it a moment, then got another larger suitcase from the closet and put it on the towel beside the other bag.

Step 3: finding suitcases

Methodically, she took neatly folded underwear, stockings, and nightgowns from her drawers and packed them in neat rows in the two bags. One set in the overnight bag, and five in the larger suitcase. She laid aside a nightgown with a matching robe to pack last.

Next, she lifted dresses and suits, carefully hung on the hangers and buttoned up so they wouldn't wrinkle, from her closet. She took a package of tissue paper from under the jumble of his belts and socks in the bottom dresser drawer. She folded the tissue paper inside her clothes so they wouldn't wrinkle. Two extra blouses and a dress went into the overnight bag. She'd wear the suit she had on. Two suits, two blouses, and two dresses went into the larger bag.

She brought plastic bags from the kitchen and put her shoes into them. One pair went into the overnight bag; two pairs, one for the dresses and one for the suits, went into the larger bag. Then she put her bedroom slippers and the nightgown with the matching robe on top of the other clothes in the overnight bag. She would take only the overnight bag into her parents' house, at least at first. No need for them to know right away that this time was for more than one night. They'd always said that she wasn't going to change him and that the marriage wouldn't last.

She sighed again, closed the suitcases, carried them out to her car, and then went back into the house for one last look around. She checked to see that the appliances were turned off, disconnected the TV, and turned off the hot water heater. If this time was like all the other times, he wouldn't be back for at least three days. No need to take any chances on fire or to run up the electric **bill.** He'd be angry when he came back and found it turned off, but . . .

Step 5: final check and look around

Almost ready, she took her coat from the hall closet, folded it carefully over her arm, and took a last look at his shoes and socks left beside his chair and the newspaper flung across the couch where it would leave newsprint on the upholstery. She left the shoes and socks but couldn't resist

folding the newspaper and putting it on a table. Finally, she went out, closed the door silently behind her, got into her car, and drove quietly and slowly away.

As you started reading this essay, you probably realized right away that it would be more descriptive and informative than instructive. Two signals that alerted you are that the writing is in the third person *(she)* and in the past tense *(took, packed, lifted, laid,* and so on). Think, for a minute, about how you would go about writing a clear instructive process description in that person and tense. Experienced writers may use varying points of view in process writing, but for clear point-by-point instructions, second person *(you),* present tense (take, pour, measure), and a straightforward tone are the most common.

Although a process approach can sometimes be useful in writing narratives and descriptions that deal with significant activities or accomplishments, you will usually use process in writing assignments that involve giving directions, describing how a mechanical gadget works, or reporting science experiments. In these situations you may combine process with other modes like definition (Chapter 9), examples (Chapter 4), and cause and effect (Chapter 8). Always remember that three factors are essential to an effective process essay. First, be sure that the steps or procedures are carefully organized, step by step—usually in the same order as they should be carried out—so that the reader can understand and follow your explanation. Second, be sure that you include any information that the reader needs about any special materials or preliminary steps. And, third, include *all* the specific steps in the process.

The following selections will show you how experienced writers use process writing to instruct and inform their readers. As you read, try to pick out each step in the process described. The questions at the ends of the readings will help you pick out and analyze the writers' techniques, and the writing assignments will give you practice in applying the principles of process writing.

Insert Flap "A" and Throw Away

S. J. Perelman

Have you ever tried to assemble something you bought, only to find out the instructions provided seem to match neither the product nor the process required to put it together? In this paragraph, S. /. Perelman describes the process that can result from bad process writing.

Words to Know

capricious unstable and unpredictable
convulsively in a fit, thrashing around
dolorous miserable, pained
procurable available for purchase
purgatory temporary suffering

U n e stifling summer afternoon last August, in the attic of a tiny stone house in Pennsylvania, I made a most interesting discovery: the shortest, cheapest method of inducing a nervous breakdown ever perfected. In this technique (eventually adopted by the psychology department of Duke University, which will adopt anything), the subject is placed in a sharply sloping attic heated to 340°F. and given a mothproof closet known as the Jiffy-Cloz to assemble. The Jiffy-Cloz, procurable at any department store or neighborhood insane asylum, consists of half a dozen gigantic sheets of red cardboard, two plywood doors, a clothes rack, and a packet of staples. With these is included a set of instructions mimeographed in pale-violet ink, fruity with phrases like "Pass Section F through Slot AA, taking care not to fold tabs behind washers (see Fig. 9)." The cardboard is so processed that as a subject struggles convulsively to force the staple through, it suddenly buckles, plunging the staple deep into his thumb. He thereupon springs up with a dolorous cry and smites his knob (Section K) on the rafters (RR). As a final demonic touch, the Jiffy-Cloz people cunningly omit four of the staples necessary to finish the job, so that after indescribable purgatory, the best the subject can possibly achieve is a sleazy, capricious structure which would reduce any self-respecting moth to helpless laughter. The cumulative frustration, the tropical heat, and the soft, ghostly chuckling of the moths are calculated to unseat the strongest mentality.

Questions About the Reading

1. What is the person in the paragraph trying to do? Why?
2. What do you think laughing moths sound like? Why does the writer refer to moths, in particular?
3. Is the writer ultimately successful in accomplishing his task?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify some points of **irony** in this paragraph.
2. What does "smites his knob" mean? Why does the writer use this language?
3. What is the controlling **metaphor** in this paragraph? That is, the writer is describing the situation as if it were something it is not. What is the substitute situation he is using? (Hint: An important clue is the word *subject.)*

Writing Assignments

1. Write **a** paragraph of advice to the writer of this paragraph. Using a process format, explain how to successfully follow step-by-step instructions without becoming impatient or frustrated. Try to illustrate the process by pointing out some things the writer did wrong.
2. In a process paragraph, explain how to wash a casserole dish left on the counter overnight, clean up a Coke or Pepsi spilled on the floor, freshen up a pair of smelly sneakers, clean a greasy engine, or perform some other unattractive task. Be humorous if you can.

Mastering Scrabble

Barry Chamish

Scrabble is a game that offers a fun way to increase your vocabulary. But according to this paragraph, becoming a true expert at the game requires painstaking memorization.

Words to Know

hoarding the act of saving a hidden store of items
OSPD *Official Scrabble Player's Dictionary*

J\. scrabble master is not born; like the alphabet he uses, he is made. An enormous amount of training lies behind his apparent gift. First, all of the *OSPD's* two-letter words must be memorized. Also learned are which ones can be pluralized and which ones cannot. For instance, *ka* can take an *s* but *xu* can't. Next, all three-letter words are learned by heart, both those that hook to two-letter words, like *kab,* and those that stand alone, like *neb.* After this, all four-letter words that hook to three-letter words (for example, *rani* and *taro)* must be memorized. Then all four-letter words are memorized. Short words are not a majority of all words in the language, but they are disproportionately important in Scrabble. In a typical game they account for three quarters of the words put down and for more than half the points scored. Knowing these two-, three-, and four-letter words makes possible the dumping of unwanted letters and the hoarding of important ones. This is known as rack management.

Questions About the Reading

1. What are *ka* and *xu?*
2. What is "rack management"?
3. Why are short words so important in Scrabble?
4. Do you think Scrabble is a creative game for the Scrabble master? Why or why not?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph? Which sentence(s) state it?
2. What order does the writer use to describe the process?
3. Identify three transitions in the paragraph.

Writing Assignments

1. We all learn new things. Write a paragraph describing the steps by which you learned an important skill, such as driving a car or operating a personal computer.
2. Write a process paragraph describing the procedure you follow if you want to remember how to spell a difficult word.

The Right Way to Eat an Ice-Cream Cone

I. Rust Hills

Rust Hills was fiction editor of Esquire *and* The Saturday Evening Post, *and is now a freelance writer. In this paragraph, taken from his book* How to Do Things Right, *he explains his technique, which was perfected through years of taking his children to ic"e-cream cone stands. Having given us the preliminary pitfalls—melted ice cream on car* ***upholstery,*** *choosing a flavor, holding more than one cone at once—**he** delivers the ultimate instructions on eating the cone.*

***Words to** Know*

forgoing deciding against
jostling bumping together
molecules very small particles
stance way of standing

\J J rasp the cone with the right hand firmly but gently between thumb and at least one but not more than three fingers, two-thirds of the way up the cone. Then dart swiftly away to an open area, away from the jostling crowd at the stand. Now take up the classic ice-cream-cone-eating stance: feet from one to two feet apart, body bent forward from the waist at a twenty-five-degree angle, right elbow well up, right forearm horizontal, at a level with your collarbone and about twelve inches from it. But don't start eating yet! Check first to see what emergency repairs may be necessary. Sometimes a sugar cone will be so crushed or broken or cracked that all one can do is gulp at the thing like a savage, getting what he can of it and letting the rest drop to the ground, and then evacuating the area of catastrophe as quickly as possible. Checking the cone for possible trouble can be done in a second or two, if one knows where to look and does it systematically. A trouble spot some people overlook is the bottom tip of the cone. This may have been broken off. Or the flap of the cone material at the bottom, usually wrapped over itself in that funny spiral construction, may be folded in a way that is imperfect and leaves an opening. No need to say that through this opening[1]—in a matter of perhaps thirty or, at most, ninety seconds—will begin to pour hundreds of thousands of sticky molecules of melted ice cream. You know in this case that you must instantly get the paper napkin in your left hand under and around the bottom of the cone to stem the forthcoming flow, or else be doomed to eat the cone far too rapidly. It is a grim moment.

No one wants to eat a cone under that kind of pressure, but neither does anyone want to end up with the bottom of the cone stuck to a messy napkin. There's one other alternative—one that takes both skill and courage: Forgoing any cradling action, grasp the cone more firmly between thumb and forefinger and extend the other fingers so that they are out of the way of the dripping from the bottom, then increase the waist-bend angle from twenty-five to **thirty-five** degrees, and then eat the cone, *allowing* it to drip out of the bottom onto the ground in * front of you! Experienced and thoughtful cone-eaters enjoy facing up to this kind of sudden challenge.

Questions About the Reading

1. How many ways are there to eat an ice-cream cone?
2. With all the problems with ice-cream cones, does the writer like to eat them?
3. Why is it necessary to be so careful and systematic when eating an ice-cream cone?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Which words or phrases in this paragraph have a "scientifio" precision that makes this process clear to the reader?
2. Why does the writer take such a serious tone in writing the paragraph? Isn't eating an ice-cream cone supposed to be fun? What will happen to someone who eats an ice-cream cone incorrectly?
3. This writer describes a number of problems associated with ice-cream cones. Which words or phrases does he use to help the reader know when he is about to identify those problems?
4. Which words or phrases does the writer use to make eating an ice-cream cone seem more important than it really is?

Writing Assignments .

1. Imagine that you are sitting down to a heaping plate of spaghetti and meatballs while wearing a brand-new white suit or dress. In a process paragraph, describe how you would eat the meal.
2. Choose some simple, everyday activity such as making a bed or brushing your teeth and write a paragraph describing the process. Use a serious, authoritative tone.

The Cook

garbara Lewis (Student)

Barbara Lezuis takes us through the process of preparing dinner at a busy restaurant. She iuQvles meat, potatoes, and a seemingly endless stream of sauces and other delectables ,-; a two-hour race with the dinner bell. And she does all this after a day of classes at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio.

Words to Knoiv

au jus natural unthickened juices or gravy
escargots snails
requisition a formal written order
saute to fry food quickly in a little tat
scampi slirimp

JL reparing food for the saute line at the restaurant where I work is a hectic two-hour job. 1 come to work at 3:00 P.M. knowing that everything must be done by 5:00 P.M. The first thing I do is to check the requisition for the day and order my food. Then I have to clean and season five or six prime rib roasts and place them in the slow-cooking oven. After this, I clean and season five trays of white potatoes for baking and put them in the fast oven. Now I have two things cooking, prime ribs and potatoes, at different times and temperatures, and they both have to be watched very closely. In the meantime, I must put three trays of bacon in the oven. The bacon needs very close watching, too, because it burns very easily. Now I have prime ribs, potatoes, and bacon all cooking at the same time—and all needing constant watching. Next, I make popovers, which are unseasoned rolls. These also go-into an oven for baking. Now I have prime ribs, baking potatoes, bacon, and popovers cooking at the same time and all of them needing to be closely watched. With my work area set up, I must make clarified^but-^ter and garlic butter. The clarified butter is for cooking liver,' veal, and fish. The garlic butter is for stuffing escargots. I have to make ground meat stuffing also. Half of the ground meat will be mixed with wild ʳice and will be used to stuff breast of chicken. The other half of the ground meat mixture will be used to stuff mushrooms. I have to prepare veal, cut and season scampi, and clean and saute mushrooms and onions. I$_n$ the meantime, I check the prime ribs and potatoes, take the bacon and the popovers out of the oven, and put the veal and chicken

into the oven. Now I make au jus, which is served over the prime ribs make the soup for the day, and cook the vegetables and rice. Then I heat the bordelaise sauce, make the special for the day, and last of all cook food for the employees. This and sometimes more has to be done by five o'clock. Is it any wonder that I say preparing food for the saute line at the restaurant where I work is a very hectic two-hour job!

Questions About the Reading

1. Run through the cook's list again. About how many people do you think she is preparing food for?
2. Classify the food the cook is responsible for.
3. Do you think the cook likes her job? Explain your answer.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Where is the topic sentence of the paragraph? Does the writer restate the topic sentence anywhere in the paragraph? If so, where? Does the sentence then serve a second purpose? What is that purpose?
2. Do you think *hectic* is an effective word for describing this job?
3. The cook states at the beginning that she has two things to watch carefully. The list of things she watches continues to grow during the paragraph. Identify the sentences where **she** re-emphasizes this point. Does this help support her statement that the job is hectic?
4. What order does the writer use to organize her information in the paragraph?

Writing Assignments

1. We all have moments when we feel under pressure. Write a process paragraph illustrating one of your busy days.
2. Imagine that the restaurant has decided to hire a helper for the cook and that you **are** to be that helper. Write a process paragraph explaining the steps you would take to assist the cook and how you would blend your activities with hers.

Think Thin and Get Thin

junius Adams

junius Adams wants to tell you how to lose weight effectively. It's a topic many experts have written countless books on. Few are as simple as Adams's instructions here.

Words to Know

aversion an intense dislike
immune not susceptible to a certain condition
perpetuity eternity
sedentary remaining seated most of the time
solace something that eases or relieves
subside stop
unanimous agreeing completely

x"V t times, it seems that almost everybody I know is desperately trying, without success, to lose weight. But there are a lucky few who *have* found a way to slim down and stay thin. What's their secret? i

To find out, I interviewed dieters, doctors, psychologists and other weight-control .authorities. I quizzed "naturally thin" people to see why they're immune from weight problems. Though not all the answers were unanimous, a number of points were clear: Yes, it *is* possible to become thin. Yes, you *can* choose a diet and stay on it. Yes, you can *remain* slender .after losing weight. 2

Reducing, however, is not just a matter of clipping a diet out of a magazine. It isn't even a matter of following the diet to the technical letter. The diet takes place more in your head than at the table. You have to learn how to "think thin." Here are seven ways: 3

1. You Must Want to Be Thin. Jean Mayer, one of the world's foremost authorities on overweight, says that a major factor ir^rejiuciiig ~is 'Tugh motivation." This became obvious to me as I talked with unsuccessfuTdieters. Typically, they had tried this or that diet and found ' that "it didn't work" or "it made me uncomfortable." They seemed to put too much responsibility on the diet, relying on *it* to make them slim rather than on *themselves* to become slim through the diet. 4

The lucky dieters are, of course, the ones who have a built-in motivation. But what about the rest of us?/A frequent complaint of dieters is: J *don't have the will power*^ Rather than saying that^t's better to say: 5

My dftdrp for food seems to he. stronger than my desire to lose weight. This puts the problem in a more useful perspective^

2. Be Less Food-Centered Much of an infant's life is centered on nourishment, and babies feed-with great intensity. That's their job: to eat and grow. For an adult to be similarly food-centered, however, is inappropriate. Yet many of us are like infants, usually because frustration has caused us to revert to infantile patterns.! We eat when we are unhappy, worried, frightened; when we're feeling lonely, unloved or depressed, food is our solacej

How can you become less food-centered? For one thing you can find alternatives to eating,. Draw up a list of at least five, and preferably a~3ozen or more, activities that please you going for a walk in the country, sailing, talkingjo your best friend, reading the latest mystery novel, whatever. Make sure that the list contains several things that are as easy to do as eating. Now, every time you have a desire to eat, do sornething from your list firsts 7

Another way you can become less food-centered is tc^sjeparate eating from other behavior. When you eat, devote yourself entirely and exclusively to the food/Don't combine eating with any other activity such as watching television, listening to music, reading or working^ jThis strategy,]' says Israel Goldiamond, a behavior-modification specialist, "brings eating behavior under the control of food alone^S If you firmly refuse to combine eating with any other activity, then other activities will lose their power to make you want to eat. .

3. Tolerate Hunger, Many overweight people fear hunger as if it were a disease./One young woman I know is terrified at just the thought of missing a meal. "I even have nightmares about not being fed," she told me. If you are afraid of hunger, here's an experiment to help you tolerate it:

- Step one—postpone a meal^Choose any meal and delay it for a wHTle beyond the usual time] You are doing this not to diet, but to study hunger. Notice how you feel.
  Step two—skip a meal. What you're doing now is trying to test your reactions to hunger. Does it keep increasing as the hours go by or does it rise to a peak and then subside? What about your emotions—does not eating make you feel unhappy, deprived or scared, or do you remain cheerful?
  Step threes—fast all day. Eat nothing until_dinnertimef not even diet sodas or sugarless gum. If you're thirsty, drink waterjln this step, you'll see how you get through a full day's activities without nourishment. Again, ^study all your reactions, both physical and emotional^-
- Step four—experiment zvithjin^erfeeding yourselfjStart eating less all the time so that you feel a slight hunger around the clockj The idea is to stop eating while you still experience a faint edge of hunger. This exercise should be continued for a week orjwo, but if you start feeling really deprived, have an occasional full mealw You're experimenting with hunger, not condemning yourself to be hungry in perpetuity. 13

4. Work on Your Body Image. Which is the "real" you—the slender one or the overweight one? answer to that question is extremely important/No one can become thin who doesn't believe that he can be thiry Your body image is the "you" that you identify with, either consciously or unconsciously, the one that feels natural and proper. 14

If you're trying to reduce, you should have a definite idea of just how thinj/ouwant to_be, how you want to look, how you want to feel. _ Picture your new body image often, vividly and graphically, until it becomes clear and strongs This is not mere daydreaming. You are clarifying your desires and ambitions, creating an emotional reality that can serve as a blueprint for change. 15

5. Set Achievable Goals;. Unsuccessful dieters often fail because they set overly ambitions goals for themselves. {"I'm going to lose 30 pounds in two months.") Don't be inahurry and invite discourage-— rnejiL Set yourself a manageable subgoal—losing 2 pounds or 5 instead of 15 or 30. Once you've achieved one subgoal, you'll find it easier to go on to the nexh Success breeds success. 16

6. Increase Your Physical Activity. The standard unit for measuring foodenergy is the calorie. One pound of body fat equals approximately 3,500 calories.)^The more energy you expend, the more calories you bum up. Thus, exercising is extremely important if you're trying to reduced A sedentary person eating the same amount of food as a physically active individual will take much longer to burn off one pound of fat. 17

try to rev up your energy output. Jogging, bicycle riding, playing and calisthenics are all fine, but it's also important to raise your overall level of activity. If you sit most of the day, d / t i i H l ^ f e

So try to rev up your energy output jogging, bicycle riding? tennis,

Squirm, stretch, tap your feet, move around in your chair. When you walk, \valk quickly. Welcome every opportunity to move, exert yourself, expenct energy. Increasing your^tolal daily physical activity, minute by minute, will do more to help you lose weight than jogging three times around the park every morning

7. Make Up "Head Tricks:" successful dieters cievelopjheir 19 own ploys for "thinking thin". For exapmle, a friend of mine began a reducing campaign by gorging himself on chocolate sundaes and' telling himself with every bite that the stuff was making him ill, flooding his body with sugar, giving him an ugly gut. He can now scarcely bear the sight of chocolate. And a very slender woman I know always recites to herself the names of a dozen unattractively fat people before sitting down to dinner.

You can even invent your own "averasion therapy". Choose a food 20 you are addicted tiTbuTwould like to phase out of your life—let's say it's chocolate-chip cookies. Now pick *some* experience you would find especially horrifying or repulsive—for instance, witnessing a dreadful highway accident. Think about'the two together once or twice a day until the food you selected has become firmly identified with unpleasantness and no longer appeals to you. (Twenty to thirty repetitions of this exercise, according to behavior-modification psychologists, are enough to cure even the most stubborn food addiction.)

Now, where *do* you go from here? Perhaps you've learned and been 21 able to apply the secrets of successful reducing to the point that you don't even need a formal diet. But if you do still need one, make sure not to fall into the "right person, wrong diet" trap. Suppose you're not terribly keen for meat. Don't choose a high-protein regimen that will give you too much of what you don't care for and not enough of what you desire.

Of course, some people *like* diets that are hard to follow. They want 22 to be heroic, perform feats of sacrifice and self-denial. If that's what you want, fine; but remember that a crashdiet cannot be followed in definitely without injury to your health. To.stay thin, you should have apermanent diet in mind, for use ~aTfer the initial weight reduction. No matter what kind of diet you choose, remember that losing weight begins with a state of mind. We could call it simply mind over fat. "1

Questions About the Reading

1. Does the writer feel that all people can be thin?
2. Why must a person "want to be thin" to succeed at reducing? What methods could a person use to increase his or her motivation to be thin?
3. The writer gives four steps to tolerating hunger. What are they? Do they sound reasonable? Do you think it is reasonable and safe for everyone to try these steps? Why or why not?
4. Explain "aversion therapy" in your own words.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What methods does the writer use to make himself seem authoritative on his subject? Cite examples from the essay.
2. Could the writer have used another **order** in listing his points? Does he list his points in order of importance?
3. Does the writer restate the **thesis** in the concluding paragraph? If so, identify the sentence(s) in which it is stated.

Writing Assignments

1. Some people suffer from being underweight. Write a how-to essay titled "Think Fat."
2. Along with losing weight, most experts recommend an exercise program to keep fit. Write a process essay describing three ways of becoming more physically fit through exercise.
3. Write a process essay on how someone might increase his or her will power.

Eating Alone in Restaurants

Bruce Jay Friedman

The human mind is inventive and analytical. If you looked hard enough, you could probably find careful, precise instructions for doing just about anything. Bruce Jay Friedman's writing here is tongue-in-cheek. That should be evident from the title of the book this essay appeared in: The Lonely Guy's Book of Life. *But he's also telling us something useful: with the right attitude, you can pull off anything. In a sense, this piece is telling us how to have that attitude.*

Words to Know

audacious **daring**
conviviality the quality of being warm and festive
disdain despise, look down upon
foreboding a feeling that something bad will happen
Feydeau French writer of bedroom comedies and farces
gaucho cowboy
hors d'oeuvre appetizer
imperiously arrogantly, domineeringly
inconspicuous not noticeable
Pilgrim stocks wooden frames for **punishment**
ploys tricks
scenario outline of a plan
suffice be sufficient

JTl-unched over, trying to be as inconspicuous as possible, a solitary diner slips into a midtown Manhattan steakhouse. No sooner does he check his coat than the voice of the headwaiter comes booming across the restaurant. 1

"Alone again, eh?" 2

As all eyes are raised, the bartender, with enormous good cheer, chimes in: "That's because they all left him high and dry." 3

And then, just in case there is a customer in the restaurant who isn't yet aware of the situation, a waiter shouts out from the buffet table: "Well, we'll take care of him anyway, won't we fellas!" 4

Haw, haw, haw, and a lot of sly winks and pokes in the ribs. 5

Eating alone in a restaurant is one of the most terrifying experiences in America. 6

Sniffed at by headwaiters, an object of scorn and amusement to couples, the solitary diner is the unwanted and unloved child of Restaurant Row. No sooner does he make his appearance than he is whisked out of sight and seated at a thin sliver of a table with barely enough room on it for an hors d'oeuvre. Wedged between busboy stations, a hair's breadth from the men's room, there he sits, feet lodged in a railing as if he were in Pilgrim stocks, wondering where he went wrong in life. 7

Rather than face this grim scenario, most Lonely Guys would prefer to nibble away at a tuna fish sandwich in the relative safety of their high-rise apartments. 8

What can be done to ease the pain of this not only starving but silent minority—to make dining alone in restaurants a rewarding experience? Absolutely nothing. But some small strategies *do* exist for making the experience bearable. 9

Before You Get There

Once the Lonely Guy has decided to dine alone at a restaurant, a sense of terror and foreboding will begin to build throughout the day. All the more reason for him to get there as quickly as possible so that the experience can soon be forgotten and he can resume his normal life. Clothing should be light and loose-fitting, especially around the neck—on the off chance of a fainting attack during the appetizer. It is best to dress modestly, avoiding both the funeral-director-style suit as well as the bold, eye-arresting costume of the gaucho. A single cocktail should suffice; little sympathy will be given to the Lonely Guy who tumbles in, stewed to the gills. (The fellow who stoops to putting morphine in his toes for courage does not belong in this discussion.) En route to the restaurant, it is best to play down dramatics, such as swinging the arms pluckily and humming the theme from *The Bridge on the River Kwai.* 10

Once You Arrive

The way your entrance comes off is of critical importance. Do not skulk in, slipping along the walls as if you are carrying some dirty little secret. There is no need, on the other hand, to fling your coat arrogantly at the hatcheck girl, slap the headwaiter across the cheeks with your gloves and demand to be seated immediately. Simply walk in with a brisk rubbing of the hands and approach the headwaiter. When asked how many are in your party, avoid cute responses such as "Jes HI ol' 11

me." Tell him you are a party of one; the Lonely Guy who does not trust his voice can simply lift a finger. Do not launch into a story about how tired you are of taking out fashion models, night after night, and what a pleasure it is going to be to dine alone.

It is best to arrive with no reservation. Asked to set aside a table 12
for one, the restaurant owner will suspect either a prank on the part of an ex-waiter, or a terrorist plot, in which case windows will be boarded up and the kitchen bombswept. An advantage of the "no reservation" approach is that you will appear to have just stepped off the plane from Des Moines, your first night in years away from Marge and the kids.

All eyes will be upon you when you make the promenade to your 13
table. Stay as close as possible to the headwaiter, trying to match him step for step. This will reduce your visibility and fool some diners into thinking you are a member of the staff. If you hear a generalized snickering throughout the restaurant, do not assume automatically that you are being laughed at. The other diners may all have just recalled an amusing moment in a Feydeau farce.

If your table is unsatisfactory, do not demand imperiously that one 14
for eight people be cleared immediately so that you can dine in solitary grandeur. Glance around discreetly and see if there are other possibilities. The ideal table will allow you to keep your back to the wall so that you can see if anyone is laughing at you. Try to get one close to another couple so that if you lean over at a 45-degree angle it will appear that you are a swinging member of their group. Sitting opposite a mirror can be useful; after a drink or two, you will begin to feel that there are a few of you.

Once you have been seated, and it becomes clear to the staff that 15
you are alone, there will follow The Single Most Heartbreaking Moment in Dining Out Alone—when the second setting is whisked away and yours is spread out a bit to make the table look busier. This will be done with great ceremony by the waiter—angered in advance at being tipped for only one dinner. At this point, you may be tempted to smack your forehead against the table and curse the fates that brought you to this desolate position in life. A wiser course is to grit your teeth, order a drink and use this opportunity to make contact with other Lonely Guys sprinkled around the room. A menu or a leafy stalk of celery can be used as a shield for peering out at them. Do not expect a hearty greeting or a cry of "huzzah" from these frightened and browbeaten people. Too much excitement may cause them to slump over, curtains. Smile gently and be content if you receive a pale

wave of the hand in return. It is unfair to imply that you have come to help them throw off their chains.

When the headwaiter arrives to take your order, do not be bullied 16
into ordering the last of the gazelle haunches unless you really want them. Thrilled to be offered anything at all, many Lonely Guys will say "Get them right out here" and wolf them down. Restaurants take unfair advantage of Lonely Guys, using them to get rid of anything from withered liver to old heels of roast beef. Order anything you like, although it is good to keep to the light and simple in case of a sudden attack of violent stomach cramps.

Some Proven Strategies

Once the meal is under way, a certain pressure will begin to build as 17
couples snuggle together, the women clucking sympathetically in your direction. Warmth and conviviality will pervade the room, none of it encompassing you. At this point, many Lonely Guys will keep their eyes riveted to the restaurant paintings of early Milan or bury themselves in a paperback anthology they have no wish to read.

Here are some ploys designed to confuse other diners and make 18
them feel less sorry for you.

- After each bite of food, lift your head, smack your lips 19
thoughtfully, swallow and make a notation in a pad. Diners will assume you are a restaurant critic.
- Between courses, pull out a walkie-talkie and whisper a mes- 20
sage into it. This will lead everyone to believe you are part of a police stake-out team, about to bust the salad man as an international dope dealer.
- Pretend you are a foreigner. This is done by pointing to items 21
on the menu with an alert smile and saying to the headwaiter: "Is good, no?"
- When the main course arrives, brush the restaurant silverware 22
off the table and pull some of your own out of a breastpocket. People will think you are a wealthy eccentric.
- Keep glancing at the door, and make occasional trips to look 23
out at the street, as if you are waiting for a beautiful woman. Half-way through the meal, shrug in a world-weary manner and begin to eat with gusto. The world is full of women! Why tolerate bad manners! Life is too short.

The Right Way

One other course is open to the Lonely Guy, an audacious one, full 24
of perils, but all the more satisfying if you can bring it off. That is to take off your dark glasses, sit erectly, smile broadly at anyone who looks in your direction, wave off inferior wines, and begin to eat with heartiness and enormous confidence. As outrageous as the thought may be—enjoy your own company. Suddenly, titters and sly winks will tail off, the headwaiter's disdain will fade, and friction will build among couples who will turn out to be not as tightly cemented as they appear. The heads of other Lonely Guys will lift with hope as you become the attractive center of the room.

If that doesn't work, you still have your fainting option. 25

Questions About the Reading

1. What steps should a person eating alone take to be less uncomfortable?
2. In your own words, describe *why* single diners receive the treatment the writer describes.
3. What is the "Single Most Heartbreaking Moment" of dining out alone? What makes it so?
4. What is the writer suggesting in paragraph 24? Why might this option be the best one the Lonely Guy could pursue?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify the thesis statement of this essay.
2. What is the writer's tone?
3. Identify five places where the writer uses exaggeration or overstatement. What is the effect?
4. What makes this a process essay? Briefly list the steps in the process.
5. In what order does the writer present the process?

Writing Assignments

1. Think of a situation that causes you fear or serious embarrassment, such as being called on in class when you haven't read your assignment, going to the dentist to have a cavity filled, asking for an extension on a paper's due date, or being confronted by a snarling dog. Write an essay in which you explain the steps for dealing with the situation. Feel free to use exaggeration to describe the causes of your discomfort.
2. Write a process essay that describes giving a speech in public and the steps you recommend to overcome any possible stage fright. Use a serious, authoritative tone.
3. Write an essay in which you explain the process of introducing yourself to a total stranger and beginning a conversation—at a party, for instance, or on a train.

Obtaining Power

Michael Korda

In this essay from Power! How to Get It, How to Use It!, *Michael Korda lists five steps to getting power in today's world. They are not five easy steps: when you consider them, there is nothing easy about any of them. But knowing them and doing your best to observe them is, says Korda, the only way to appear powerful—and in Korda's scheme of things, to appear powerful is to* be *powerful.*

Words to Know

distort to twist out of normal shape
impeccably neatly, cleanly, completely
impotence powerlessness
justify try to prove right, absolve guilt
rites ceremonies

My friend and I are sitting at the Central Park Zoo, on the terrace 1
of the cafeteria, one of those hot summer afternoons when the park is so crowded with people that the animals seem more human than oneself. To our right are the towers of commercial New York, a high, brutal cliff of great buildings, rising through the layers of haze like the dreaded tower of Barad-Du in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings.* I can understand how one can become a powerful person in simpler societies and cultures; it may be a long, hard initiation, but the distractions are fewer. The sheer size of the city distorts the ego. We are either reduced to the impotence of a meaningless daily routine—sleep, eat, work—made even more painful by the knowledge that we have no power over our lives; or worse, we destroy ourselves by trying to become bigger, more famous, more powerful than the city itself. Can one have power here, I want to know, in a life full of compromises, decisions, worries, pressures, in a place where even the mayor seldom seems able to control anything at all? I can understand the meaning of power in the desert, the significance of the rites of power, the sudden illuminations of self-awareness that come when one is alone with Nature—all that makes sense. But in an office on the thirty-eighth floor of a huge building in which thousands of people work? How does one seek power there?

My friend smiles. There are rules, they are the same for everybody, 2
this terrace is not so very different from a jungle clearing. The rules of power do not change because one is on the subway, or in Central

Park, or in an office without windows, where everything is made of plastic. "The first rule," he says, "is simple. Act impeccably! Perform every act as if it were the only thing in the world that mattered."

I can understand that all right. It's an old Zen principle—you put 3
your whole soul and being and life into the act you're performing. In Zen archery your entire being wills the arrow into the bull's-eye with an invisible force. It's not a question of winning, or even caring, it's making the everyday acts we all perform important to ourselves. No matter how small the task, we have to teach ourselves that it *matters.* If we are going to intervene in a meeting, we must do so at the right moment, prepare for what we want to say, speak up at the crucial point when our intervention will be heard and listened to, make sure that attention is paid. Otherwise, it's best to remain silent. It is better to do nothing than to do something badly.

"Second rule: never reveal all of yourself to other people, hold some- 4
thing back in reserve so that people are never quite sure if they really know you."

I can see that too. It's not that anybody seeking power should be 5
secretive—secrecy isn't the trick at all. It's more a question of remaining slightly mysterious, as if one were always capable of doing something surprising and unexpected. Most people are so predictable and reveal so much of themselves that a person who isn't and who doesn't automatically acquires a kind of power. For this reason, it is important to give up the self-indulgent habit of talking about oneself. The power person listens instead, and when he *does* talk about himself, it is in order to change the subject of conversation. Good players can always tell when someone is about to ask them to do something they don't want to do, and they effortlessly but firmly move the conversation onto a personal level. One of the best players I know can talk about himself for hours at the slightest sign of opposition or a demand about to be made on him. Even so, he reveals nothing. Sometimes he gives the impression that he has two children, sometimes three, occasionally none, and he has at various times given people to understand that he was graduated from Yale, Harvard, Stanford, and Ol' Miss. Some confusion exists as to whether or not he is Jewish or Protestant, since he has claimed to be both, and also crosses himself when he passes St. Patrick's Cathedral. Nobody really knows the truth about him, and he is therefore respected. Once we know everything about a person, we have squeezed him dry like a juiced orange, he is no longer of any use or interest to us, we can throw him away.

"Third rule: learn to use time, think of it as a friend, not an enemy. 6
Don't waste it in going after things you don't want."

Using time! Of course, but how seldom we do! Time uses us, we are merely its servants. We fight it as if it were the enemy, trying to force two hours' work into forty-five minutes if we're ambitious, or to stretch forty-five minutes' work into two hours if we're not. Powerful people devote exactly as much time to what they're doing as they need to or want to. They do not try to answer two telephones at once, or begin a meeting and then end it before a conclusion has been reached because "time has run out," or interrupt one conversation to begin another. They are willing to be late, to miss telephone calls, and to postpone today's work to tomorrow if they have to. Events do not control them—they control events. 7

"Fourth rule: learn to accept your mistakes. Don't be a perfectionist about everything." 8

True enough. Half the people we know are rendered powerless by their need to be perfect, as if making one mistake would destroy them. Powerful people accept the necessity of taking risks and of being wrong. They don't waste time justifying their mistakes, either, or trying to transform them into correct decisions. Nothing makes one seem more foolish or impotent than the inability to admit a mistake. 9

"Last rule: don't make waves, move smoothly without disturbing things." 10

That makes sense too, even in our world. Half the art of power lies in arranging for things to happen the way we want them to, just as a good hunter stays in one place and draws the game toward him, instead of wearing himself out pursuing it. The skills of the hunter are not out of place in our world: they must merely be applied differently. 11

My friend smiles again. "What more can I say?" he asks, waving to the buildings south of the park. "It's your world. You picked it—telephones, Telex machines, credit cards and all. Myself, I wouldn't care to live in it all the time. I'm not interested in negotiating contracts, or buying a new car, or running a corporation—we don't have the same ambitions and desires. But I could live here as easily as I can anywhere else. You only need power. And since *you* live in it, you have to examine this world of yours coldly and clearly, as if your life depended on it. Because it *does."* 12

Questions About the Reading

1. Does the writer feel it is easier to feel powerful in simpler societies? Why?
2. What conditions of modern society make people feel powerless? Have you ever felt overwhelmed by the hustle of a large city? Discuss.
3. What are the rules for seeking power? Discuss how you feel about them. Are they useful? Can you think of more rules than those that are listed?
4. Speculate about what kind of power the writer is discussing and about how it affects a person's life.
5. In paragraph 5, what does the writer mean by the term *flayers*[7].

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify a simile in paragraph 1.
2. The writer lets you know very clearly when he is going to start discussing a new rule. How does he do that? What transitional words does he use?
3. What is the point of view in the essay? Is there more than one point of view? Explain your answer, citing examples from the essay.
4. What makes this a process essay? Briefly list the steps in the process.
5. Is the purpose of this essay to instruct the reader or to inform the reader, or both? Explain your answer.

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay describing the steps you would take if you wanted to become more powerful in your personal life.
2. Are you always as considerate and respectful of others as you could be? Write a process essay describing how you could better your relations with other people. Give rules for others to follow.
3. The writer's third rule is gaining control of time. Write an essay describing what steps you might take to be more in control of your time.

How to Put Off Doing a Job

Andy Rooney

In this essay, Andy Rooney turns the process approach around, using it to show some steps you can follow to avoid *accomplishing something.*

Words to Knoxv

philosophize to speculate or think about

ML ebruary is one of the most difficult times of the year to put off doing some of the things you've been meaning to do. There's no vacation coming up, there are no long weekends scheduled in the immediate future; it's just this long, grim February. Don't tell me it's a short month. February is the longest by a week.

Because I have so many jobs that I don't like to do, I've been reviewing the notebook I keep with notes in it for how to put off doing a job. Let's see now, what could I use today? 2

—Go *to* the store to get something. This is one of my most dependable putter-offers. If I start a job and find I need some simple tool or a piece of hardware, I stop right there. I put on some better clothes, get in the car and drive to the store. If that store doesn't have what I'm looking for, I go to another. Often I'm attracted to some item that has nothing whatsoever to do with the job I was about to start and I buy that instead. For instance, if I go to the hardware store to buy a new snow shovel so I can clean out the driveway, but then I see a can of adhesive spray that will keep rugs in place on the floor, I'm apt to buy the adhesive spray. That ends the idea I had to shovel out the driveway. 3

—Tidy up the work area before starting a job. This has been useful to me over the years as a way of not getting started. Things are such a mess in my workshop, on my desk, in the kitchen and in the trunk of the car that I decide I've got to go through some of the junk before starting to work. 4

—Make those phone calls. There's no sense trying to do a job if you have other things on your mind, so get them out of the way first. This is a very effective way of not getting down to work. Call friends you've been meaning to call, or the distant relative you've been out of touch with. Even if someone is in California, Texas or Chicago and you're in Florida, call. Paying for a long-distance call is still easier and less unpleasant than actually getting down to work. 5

—Study the problem. It's foolish to jump right into a job before you've thought it through. You might be doing the wrong thing. There might be an easier way to accomplish what you want to do, so think it over carefully from every angle. Perhaps someone has written a how-to book about the job you have in front of you. Buy the book and then sit down and read it. Ask friends who have had the same job for advice about the best way to do it. 6

Once you've studied the problem from every angle, don't make a quick decision. Sleep on it. 7

—Take a coffee break. Although the term "coffee break" assumes that you are drinking coffee in an interim period between stretches of solid work, this is not necessarily so. Don't be bound by old ideas about when it's proper to take a coffee break. If taking it before you get started is going to help keep you from doing the work, by all means take your coffee break first. 8

—As a last resort before going to work, think this thing over. Is this really what you want to do with your life? Philosophize. Nothing is better for putting off doing something than philosophizing. Are you a machine, trapped in the same dull, day-after-day routine that everyone else is in? Or are you a person who makes up his or her own mind about things? Are you going to do these jobs because that's what's expected of you, or are you going to break the mold and live the way you feel like living? 9

Try these as ways for not getting down to work. 10

Questions About the Reading

1. In paragraph 1, what does the second sentence mean? How do vacations and long weekends make it easier to put off doing things?
2. Why does the writer say that February is the longest month?
3. Which of the writer's methods for putting off a task can someone use when all the others have been tried?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the writer's thesis? Can you identify a thesis statement, or is the thesis **implied?**
2. In what way is the thesis ironic?
3. What makes this a process essay? Does it describe more than one process?
4. In what humorous way does the writer let us know that he is something of an authority on his subject?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a process essay describing how you *do* get down to work—school work, an odd job, or perhaps an athletic activity or practicing with a musical instrument. How do you discipline yourself to begin, and what steps do you take to get started?
2. Rewrite the essay you wrote for assignment 1, using the second person singular. That is, write a process essay instructing someone else how to get started on a task.
3. Write a process essay describing the steps you would follow if you wanted to teach someone to read.

portraits of a Cop

tf. R. Kleinfield

Sometimes there can be nothing as interesting as watching a true professional at work. jV. R- Kleinfield wrote this article after watching one of New York City's police sketch artists on the job. Although the process is painstaking, the contribution the artist makes to criminal investigations is undeniable. Kleinfield shows us how these artists do it.

Words to Know

befuddle confuse
embellishment decorative addition

A pencil poking out from behind his ear, Arthur Hagenlocher fidgets on his high-legged chair in his box-like office in the old Loft's candy factory at 400 Broome St. in the New York City Hall area. Staring at him are an uncompleted sketch and all manner of pencils and soft erasers. Tacked up on the walls are sketches he and his colleagues have drawn. Except for one of Richard Nixon and another of Alfred E. Newman ("What, me worry?"), the sketches resemble no one recognizable, and Mr. Hagenlocher himself doesn't have any idea who they are supposed to be. 1

"They're just faces to me," he says. "I don't know what their names are, what their occupations are, where they live. To be frank, I haven't any notion who they are. With most of them, 1 never will." 2

Arthur Hagenlocher makes a career of sketching people he has never met. Told by other people what they look like, he sketches them plainly, without much fine detail or embellishment. When he sketches them well enough, they will look, at best, like any one of several thousand or several million people; at worst, they will look like no one. Every so often, however, his sketches lead to the apprehension of a criminal, which, in fact, is what they are intended to do. Arthur Hagenlocher is a police artist, and everyone he draws is a suspected criminal. . . . 3

When a crime that is witnessed occurs and a detective wishes a sketch, he calls an artist as quickly as possible (one artist is always on call). Either the detective will bring witnesses to the artist's office, or else the artist will hustle to the scene of the crime and work there. 4

First off, Mr. Hagenlocher buttonholes all available witnesses, and weeds out those who, by his judgment, are unreliable. Almost always, 5

Mr. Hagenlocher prefers to deal with just one reliable witness, rather than with many conflicting voices that simply befuddle him. All too often when he works with several witnesses, there is a clash of facts. "The more witnesses there are, the more confusing it gets," the artist says.

Determining who makes the most reliable witness involves perception, interrogation and luck. "There's a lot of psychology involved," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "You can sort of feel a good witness. If someone hesitates, or changes his mind, he's no good. If you have to pull things out of someone, he's no good. If the person just starts telling you about mouths and ears right away, then he's good." 6

Usually, the younger the witness, the better. "Fourteen-year-old kids make great witnesses," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "They remember everything. Old ladies make terrible witnesses. They can't remember anything. You ask a child about a nose, and he'll tell you about a nose. You ask an adult about a nose, and he'll start telling you about the color of the person's socks." Youngsters also tend to draw their own sketches to help out. 7

Initially, Mr. Hagenlocher tries to put witnesses at ease so they trust him, rather than barging up and identifying himself as a police officer. When questioning someone, the artist tries to exact as much detail as possible about the suspect, though he can get by on remarkably few facts. As a rule, he looks for five features: shape of face, hair, eyes, ears, and mouth. Distinguishing scars, birthmarks, beards, and mustaches are an artist's dream for producing a useful sketch, but they don't often crop up. 8

Mr. Hagenlocher always carts along 150 to 200 of the 900,000 mug shots the police force keeps. Witnesses are asked to leaf through these to try to find a similar face, and then subtle changes can be made in the sketch. "You could use just one photo, and work from that," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "Using that as a base, you have the witness compare the hair—is it longer or shorter?—the mouth—is it thinner or wider?—and so forth. But that's harder and takes more time. It's usually much quicker to show him a lot of photos and have them pick one that's close." 9

"But I remember one time," the artist goes on, "when a girl flipped through a mess of photos and finally picked one. 'That looks exactly like him/ she said, 'except the hair was longer, the mouth was wider, the eyes were further apart, the nose was smaller and the face was rounder.' She was a big help." 10

Besides the five basic features, Mr. Hagenlocher also questions witnesses about a suspect's apparent nationality and the nature of the language he used. This can be of subtle assistance in sketching the suspect, but it can also sometimes link several sketches together. For instance, if over a short period of time three suspects are described as soft-spoken, in addition to having other similar traits, then chances are they are the same person. It is also a good idea to ask a witness if a suspect resembled a famous person. Suspects have been compared to Marlon Brando, Rod Steiger, Winston Churchill, Nelson Eddy, Jack Palance, Jackie Gleason, Mick Jagger and a Greek god.

After Mr. Hagenlocher completes a sketch, he shows it to the witness or witnesses for their reaction. Usually, there will be lots of minor, and sometimes not too minor, changes to be made. When it's finished, the sketch isn't intended to approach the polished form of a portrait. "We're just trying to narrow down the possibilities," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "If you've just got a big nose and a thin mouth to go with, then at least you've ruled out all the people with small noses and thick mouths. There are still millions of people still in the running, but millions have also been eliminated." 12

From time to time, Mr. Hagenlocher produces no sketch at all. This happens when he receives too many conflicting reports from witnesses, or when a witness can't make up his mind or can't supply sufficient detail. "The whole point is to completely satisfy the witness," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "If the witness isn't satisfied, then I don't turn in a sketch. Some women have cried when they saw my sketch. Others have said, 'No way, no way. That's nothing like him.' " . . . 13

Once a sketch is completed, two photographs are taken of it. These go to the detective who requested the sketch, who can then order copies that can be distributed among police precincts and other forces and departments. The sketch itself, designated by an identification number, the case number, the date drawn and the artist's initials, is filed away in the sketching room. When a suspect is apprehended, the sketch is filed in a different place. Though they are supposed to, detectives don't always notify artists when culprits are caught because they are tied down with new cases. . . . 14

For the time being, Mr. Hagenlocher is content with turning out sketches of people he doesn't know. "There's a tremendous satisfaction," he says. "If you can take a picture of a person after he's apprehended and have it look like your sketch, you say, 'Wow, I can't believe I did that.' But you did." 15

Questions About the Reading

1. What do all the people whom Mr. Hagenlocher sketches have in common?
2. What is the first step Mr. Hagenlocher takes before drawing a police portrait?
3. What are the five facial features Hagenlocher looks for in making a sketch?
4. Under what conditions does Hagenlocher decide not to make a sketch?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. The writer uses **dialogue** to describe the witnesses Hagenlocher thinks are most helpful. What is the effect of dialogue? Could the author have chosen another technique and not used dialogue? In which paragraph does he describe the "best" witnesses? Why are they best?
2. Which paragraphs develop the thesis of the essay? State the thesis of the essay in your own words.
3. What is the purpose of paragraphs 1 and 2?
4. What are the basic steps of the sketching process, according to the essay?

Writing Assignments

1. Perhaps you are familiar with another aspect of detective work, such as fingerprinting. Choose one aspect of a detective's work and describe the process used.
2. Describe any work of art that you have created, such as a painting or a piece of furniture, and explain the steps you took to make it.

Pithing a Frog

Irene Szurley (Student)

Irene Szurley is offering us more than instructions here. Her running commentary on the process she is describing leaves us asking more questions than just "are we doing it right?" She wants us to wonder "are we right to do this?" Be careful. After she gets through with you, you may never want to go to biology class again.

Words to Know

annihilation death
cephalic **of** the **head**
cranial pertaining to the brain
dubiously questionably
flaccid soft, limp
grotesque distorted
intricate complex
middorsal mid-back
occipital the back part of the head
posteriorly along the back part of the body
procure obtain
vertebrae bones of the spinal column

During the course of biological events, it often becomes necessary 1
to kill in order to learn about life. Biologists have devised many intricate procedures to accomplish this annihilation, and pithing is one of these.

This procedure is used as a means of destroying the central nervous 2
system in order to eliminate sensation and response in the frog, so that it can be properly dissected. Anaesthesis cannot possibly be used as an alternative method, because it wears off, and that could prove disastrously disadvantageous.

To begin this dubiously humane procedure, you, the aspiring muti- 3
lationist, must hold the cool, dry frog in your left fist, positioning your fingers and thumbs in the grotesque attitude of a vise-like grip. The index finger must press down on top of the poor, defenseless frog's head, exerting pressure so that the spinal cord will be bent at the neck.

Next, take your right index finger and use your nail—the longer, 4
the better tactile response—to find the junction of the frog's vertebral column with its occipital bone. If a nail doesn't work, bring the point

of a dull dissecting needle—we don't want any more pain than is absolutely necessary—posteriorly along the animal's middorsal line until the first bulge of a vertebra can be felt twinging through the skin.

Now cast aside your dull needles. You are ready to begin the actual rupturing—the mutilation. Procure a sharp needle and puncture the skin at the junction you have just located. Neatness is important, so remember to make only a *hole* in the skin; no lengthy gashes, please. 5

Retrieve your dull needle and insert it through this gaping hole, plunging it into the spinal cord as far as it will go. Don't be timid now. At this point, the frog will become totally limp and flaccid, as he is in a state of spinal shock. You will no longer have to worry about his squirming and wiggling efforts to free himself, all in vain. Tsk. 6

As soon as the probe is in the cord up to the hilt, turn it and direct it forward into the cranial cavity. Move it parallel to the external surface, which by this time is awash with cephalic blood, but don't let this minor problem deter you. If the needle is positioned correctly in the cranial cavity, it will be possible to feel bone on all sides of the needle. 7

Begin, slowly at first, then progressively more rapidly, to twist the needle; thrash it right and left. Complete destruction of the brain is inevitable, even if you are clumsy. 8

After this step, the frog is single-pithed. Since our knowledge must know no bounds, we must invariably explore further. Place the needle at right angles to the body surface, turn its handle towards the vacant head, parallel to the external surface. *Gently,* since we must maintain the essence of humanity at all times, push the needle into the spinal cord. A quick way to test your aim, and to amuse your friends, is to see if the frog's legs have spastically jerked out straight. If so, then you may proceed to slowly rotate your implement of destruction until all the nerves are disconnected and frayed. The frog is now double-pithed and unable to offer any resistance to your further exploratory efforts in the name of science. 9

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean by the phrase "kill in order to learn about life"?
2. What is *pithing?* First describe it as you understand it from the essay and then check a dictionary.
3, What is the purpose of destroying the frog's brain?
4, What further steps are necessary to *double-pith?*

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What **tone** is established in this essay? What words or phrases establish the tone? What is the effect of this tone on the reader?
2. Is the technical terminology clearly defined for the nonscientist? What additional terms would you like to see defined by the writer?
3. Where does the writer define *pithing?* Is the definition necessary? Is that the most effective placement for it?
4. In what **order** does the writer organize her material?

Writing Assignments

1. Describe any other common procedure, using descriptive words to convey your personal feeling about the procedures. For example, tell how to iron a shirt, wash the car, clean the bathtub, or take out the garbage. Tell your feelings and reactions after each step.
2. Rewrite the paragraph eliminating the emotionally charged or sarcastic words, and compare the effectiveness of the two paragraphs.
3. Give a new owner an explanation of how to housebreak a dog or how to care for a bird or cat. Describe some of the less pleasant sides of these tasks.

8 Cause and Effect

IN YOUR LOCAL newspaper you notice a story about a car accident that took place late on a Saturday night. The driver missed a curve, slammed into a tree, and was badly injured. Police investigators reported that the young victim had been drinking heavily with friends and lost control of the car on the way home. This news article is a relatively clear example of a **cause,** heavy consumption of alcohol, and an **effect,** a serious accident.

Sometimes you can recognize immediately that cause and effect is part of a writer's **mode of development** because the writer uses words that signal a cause-and-effect relationship—words like *because, therefore, as a result,* and *consequently.* However, writers will not necessarily indicate cause and effect so directly. Sometimes a cause-and-effect relationship will be clear only from the arrangement of ideas or the narrative sequence of events. Usually, though, the **topic sentence** or **thesis statement** will indicate that the writer is describing a cause-and-effect situation.

A cause-and-effect explanation tells *why* something turns out the way it does. In some cases, a single cause may contribute heavily to a single effect or result. In the following paragraph, the writer says that a single cause-attention to children's needs—led to the addition of family rooms to houses.

Topic

Cause

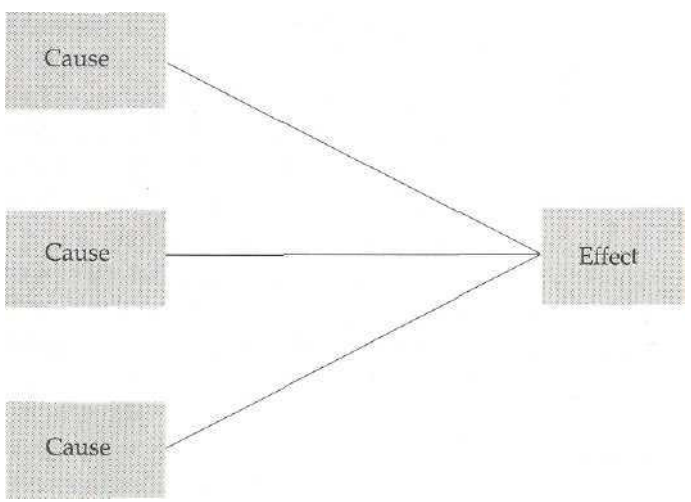
> Tn the suburban houses of the late 1940s and 1950s, attention to children's needs—some would say the creation of children's needs—produced a special place for their activities. First labeled the don't-say-no space or the multipurpose

Effect

room, it was later called the family room in a 1947 *Parent's* L *Magazine* model house. Sometimes no more than an extension of the kitchen, the family room was usually accessible from the outside through a sliding glass door. It had a linoleum floor for dancing, a table for bridge games, and comfortable furniture for the new family pastime of watching television. In 1946, the FCC [Federal Communications Commission] authorized four hundred television stations, and antennas went up on the first eight thousand rooftops across the country Although the family room most often served as a place where children could do as they pleased in the midst of clutter and noise, it was also an architectural expression of family togetherness.

Gwendolyn Wright,
"Levittown and the Postwar Baby Boom"

At other times, the writer explains that several causes contributed to or resulted in a particular effect.



For example, in the following essay, the writer suggests three causes for the disappearance of moonshining—the undercover manufacturing of whiskey—as a fine art.

The manufacture of illicit whiskey in the mountains is not dead. Far from it. As long as the operation of a still remains so financially rewarding, it will never die. There will always be men ready to take their chances against the law for such an attractive profit, and willing to take their punishment when they are caught.

Thesis

Moonshining as a fine art, however, effectively disap-
L peared some time ago. There were several reasons. One was the age of aspirin and modern medicine. As home doctoring lost its stature, the demand for pure corn whiskey as an essential ingredient of many home remedies vanished along
L with those remedies. Increasing affluence was another reason. Young people, rather than follow in their parents' footsteps, decided that there were easier ways to make money,
L and they were right.

Cause 1: decline in use of home remedies containing corn whiskey

Cause 2: young people finding easier ways to make money

Third, and perhaps most influential of all, was the arrival, even in moonshining, of that peculiarly human disease known to most of us as greed. One fateful night, some force
L whispered in an unsuspecting moonshiner's ear, "Look. Add this gadget to your still and you'll double your production. Double your production, and you can double your profits."

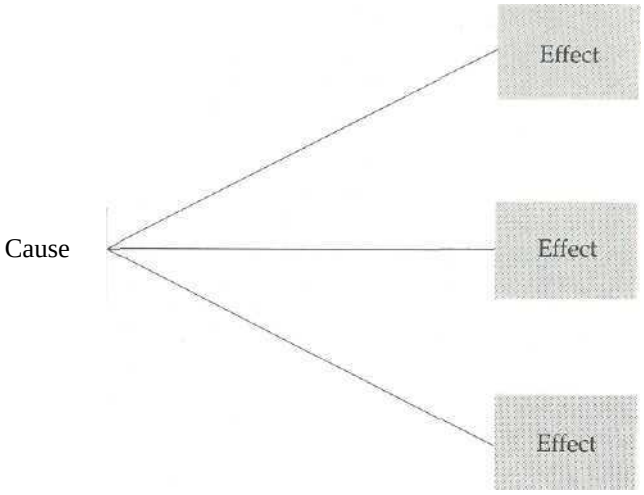
Cause 3: greed causing producers to care more for quantity than quality

Soon the small operators were being forced out of business, and moonshining, like most other manufacturing enterprises, was quickly taken over by a breed of men bent on making money—and lots of it. Loss of pride in the product, and loss of time taken with the product increased in direct proportion to the desire for production; and thus moonshining as a fine art was buried in a quiet little ceremony attended only by those mourners who had once been the proud artists, known far and wide across the hills for the excellence of their product. Too old to continue making it themselves, and with no one following behind them, they were reduced to reminiscing about "the good old days when the whiskey that was made was *really* whiskey and no questions asked."

Suddenly moonshining fell into the same category as faith healing, planting by the signs, and all the other vanishing customs that were a part of a rugged, self-sufficient culture that is now disappearing.

Eliot Wigginton,
"Moonshining as a Fine Art"

In still other cases, one cause may have several effects.



In the paragraph below the writer explains that the explosion of a nuclear bomb (the cause) has five primary effects. Notice, too, as you read, that the writer combines process with the cause-and-effect explanation.

Topic

Cause

Whereas most conventional bombs produce only one destructive effect—the shock wave—nuclear weapons produce many destructive effects. At the moment of the explosion, when the temperature of the weapon material, instantly gasified, is at the superstellar level, the pressure is millions of times the normal atmospheric pressure. Immediately, radiation, consisting mainly of gamma rays, which are a very high-energy form of electromagnetic radiation, begins to stream outward into the environment. This is called the "initial nuclear radiation," and is the first of the destructive effects of a nuclear explosion. In an air burst of a one-megaton bomb—a bomb with the explosive yield of a million tons of TNT, which is a medium-sized weapon in present-day nuclear arsenals—the initial nuclear radiation can kill unprotected human beings in an area of some six square miles. Virtually simultaneously with the initial nuclear radiation, in a second destructive effect of the explosion, an electromagnetic pulse is generated by the intense gamma radiation acting on the air. In a high-altitude detonation, the pulse can knock out electrical equipment over a wide area by inducing a powerful surge of voltage through various conductors, such as antennas, overhead power lines, pipes, and railroad tracks. . . . When the fusion and fission reactions have blown themselves out, a fireball takes shape. As it expands, energy is absorbed in the form of X rays by the surrounding air, and then the air re-radiates a portion of that energy into the environment in the form of the thermal pulse—a wave of blinding light and intense heat—which is the third of the destructive effects of a nuclear explosion.... The thermal pulse of a one-megaton bomb lasts for about ten seconds and can cause second-degree burns in exposed human beings at a distance of nine and a half miles, or in an area of more than two hundred and eighty square miles— As the fireball expands, it also sends out a blast wave in all directions, and this is the fourth destructive effect of the explosion. The blast wave of an air-burst one-megaton bomb can flatten or severely damage all but the strongest buildings within a radius of four and a half miles. … As the fireball burns, it rises, condensing water from the surrounding atmosphere to form the characteristic mushroom cloud. If the bomb has been set off on the ground or close enough to it so that the fireball touches the surface, a so-called ground burst, a crater will be formed, and tons of dust and debris will be fused with the intensely radioactive fission products and sucked up into the mushroom cloud. This mixture will return to earth as radioactive fallout, most of it in the form of fine ash, in the fifth destructive effect of the explosion. Depending upon the composition of the surface, from 40 to 70 percent of this fallout—often called the "early" or "local" fallout—descends to earth within about a day of the explosion, in the vicinity of the blast and downwind from it, exposing human beings to radiation disease, an illness that is fatal when exposure is intense.

Effect 1: Initial nuclear radiation

Effect 2: electromagnetic pulse

Effect 3: thermal pulse

Effect 4: blast wave

Effect 5: radioactive fallout

Jonathan Scheil,
The Fate of the Earth

You should notice still another characteristic in this sample paragraph: the writer describes both main causes and subordinate causes, main effects and subordinate effects. One main cause, the explosion of the bomb, causes a series of five initial (main) effects. However, these effects become the causes for still other effects. The initial nuclear radiation (a main effect), for example, is also a cause that results in the death of unprotected human beings in a six-square-mile area (a subordinate effect). The electromagnetic pulse that is generated by the explosion is the cause, in turn, of the knocking out of electrical equipment (an effect). The thermal pulse (effect 3) causes second-degree burns in exposed humans in a 280-square-mile area. The blast wave (effect 4) causes the destruction of buildings, and the radioactive fallout

(effect 5) exposes humans to radiation disease (an effect). So you can see that the cause-and-effect relationships can be complicated and require careful analysis by the writer.

You should keep two factors in mind when you are writing a cause-and-effect essay. First, be sure that you have actually thought through the causes and effects very carefully. You should not be satisfied with considering only the most obvious or simple causes. For example, we tend to oversimplify and cite one cause as the reason for most wars—the attack on Pearl Harbor for the United States entering World War II, the firing on Fort Sumter for the start of the Civil War, and so on. For the most part, these tend to be the last of many contributing causes that have led to the war. A thoughtful discussion of such a topic in your writing would include an explanation of some of the contributing, less obvious but perhaps more important causes.

Second, you should be careful that you do not mistake some event as a cause simply because it preceded a particular effect. For instance, if a child swallows a coin and then comes down with measles, it would be inaccurate and faulty reasoning to assume that swallowing the coin was a cause of the measles.

Even though you need to guard against faulty assumptions, you should also be aware that writers do not always state a cause-and-effect relationship directly. Sometimes they leave it to the reader to infer such a relationship. That is, the writer does not state the relationship, but gives certain information arranged in such a way that the reader will be able to conclude that the relationship exists, as in the following sentences.

> On the ground next to the parked Jeep, the compass glinted in the moonlight. Deep in the woods, shielded from the moon, the hungry teenager circled in the dark with little idea where he had been or how to get where he wanted to go.

Although the writer does not directly state what happened, it is not hard to infer that the teenager dropped his compass without realizing it, with the effect that he is now lost.

You will need to make inferences when you read cause-and-effect writing as well as other modes of development. When you make an inference, be sure that you can pinpoint the information and trace the logic on which your inference is based. When you are writing cause and effect, be sure to give enough information, directly or indirectly stated, that your reader can determine the cause-and-effect relationship.

You use cause-and-effect reasoning every day in solving problems and making decisions. Legislators create laws to address or prevent the causes of certain problems. In a similar way, scientists find cures for diseases when they are able to isolate the causes of those diseases. Understanding the relation between causes and effects is extremely important both in day-to-day living and in long-range planning. Communicating your understanding in writing is significant evidence of your ability to reason clearly and accurately.

In the selections that follow, the writers use different methods to express interesting cause-and-effect relationships clearly. As you read, try to be aware of when you are inferring these relationships and when they are directly stated. The questions and assignments at the ends of the readings will help you analyze the writers' styles and will give you practice with the cause-and-effect mode of development.

A Momentous Arrest

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was catapulted into international fame when, working for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, he organized blacks in Montgomery, Alabama, to boycott that city's segregated buses in 1955 and 1956. King, preaching nonviolent resistance to segregation, became the most important leader in the civil rights movement that changed American life so radically over the next decade. Here, in a simple, matter-of-fact tone, King tells of the incident that sparked the Montgomery bus boycott.

Words to Know

accommodate to make space for, oblige
complied carried out willingly

On December 1, 1955, an attractive Negro seamstress, Mrs. Rosa Parks, boarded the Cleveland Avenue Bus in downtown Montgomery. She was returning home after her regular day's work in the Montgomery Fair—a leading department store. Tired from long hours on her feet, Mrs. Parks sat down in the first seat behind the section reserved for whites. Not long after she took her seat, the bus operator ordered her, along with three other Negro passengers, to move back in order to accommodate boarding white passengers. By this time every seat in the bus was taken. This meant that if Mrs. Parks followed the driver's command she would have to stand while a white male passenger, who had just boarded the bus, would sit. The other three Negro passengers immediately complied with the driver's request. But Mrs. Parks quietly refused. The result was her arrest.

Questions About the Reading

1. Was Mrs. Parks breaking any law or custom in sitting where she did?
2. Why didn't Mrs. Parks move when the bus driver asked her to do so? Do you think she would have moved if the white passenger had been a woman instead of a man?
3. Was Mrs. Parks thinking about the civil rights movement when she refused to move? Explain your answer.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Which sentence states the cause in this paragraph? Which one states the effect?
2. Do you think the writer presents the incident objectively or subjectively? Use words and phrases from the paragraph to support your answer.
3. Other than cause and effect, what **mode of development** dominates in this paragraph?
4. What is the order in which the incidents in the paragraph are arranged?
5. Do you sympathize with Mrs. Parks? Explain your answer, citing examples from the essay that influence your feelings.

Writing Assignments

1. **If** you have never done so, read Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (page 376). Isolate one or a few statements in the speech and, using them as your cause, write a paragraph explaining their effect on your own attitudes.
2. Think of a situation that has made you angry enough to defy authority and risk discipline or even arrest. Perhaps you have protested an unfair grade, a silly dormitory rule, an unjust traffic ticket, or something of more consequence, like investment in South Africa. Using cause and effect as your mode of development, describe in a paragraph what happened. Try to write objectively.

Why Eat Junk Food?

Judith Wurtman

Each day, Americans eat 50 million pounds of sugar, 3 million gallons of ice cream, and 5.8 million pounds of chocolate candy. Yet junk foods, as they are commonly known, contain few if any of the nutrients needed to maintain good health. Why, then, do people eat so much junk food? In the following paragraph, taken from Eating Your Way Through Life, ***Judith*** *Wurtman suggests two reasons.*

Words to Know

confectionaries sweets, candies
depicted shown, represented
euphoria a feeling of well-being

We crunch and chew our way through vast quantities of snacks and confectionaries and relieve our thirst with multicolored, flavored soft drinks, with and without calories, for two basic reasons. The first is simple: the food tastes good, and we enjoy the sensation of eating it. Second, we associate these foods, often without being aware of it, with the highly pleasurable experiences depicted in the advertisements used to promote their sale. Current television advertisements demonstrate this point: people turn from grumpiness to euphoria after crunching a corn chip. Others water ski into the sunset with their loved ones while drinking a popular soft drink. People entertain on the patio with friends, cook over campfires without mosquitoes, or go to carnivals with granddad munching away at the latest candy or snack food. The people portrayed in these scenarios are all healthy, vigorous, and good looking; one wonders how popular the food they convince us to eat would be if they would crunch or drink away while complaining about low back pain or clogged sinuses.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why do people consume snacks and soft drinks?
2. How do television advertisements portray people eating snack foods?
3. What do you think would happen if television advertisements showed people complaining about poor health while eating snack foods?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. **Is** the **topic** of this paragraph stated directly or implied? If it is stated directly, where is it located? If it is implied, state it in your own words.
2. Identify the cause-and-effect elements of this essay.
3. Explain the ways in which commercials use cause and effect to create false or misleading impressions.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph or an essay in which you describe the long-term ill effects of a poor diet—one that includes too much junk food or, in a quite different case, one that leads to undernourishment owing to hunger. You may want to research this topic in the library.
2. Think of a time when you consumed way too much of something—caffeine, cake or ice cream, spicy chili, or pizza or spaghetti. In a paragraph, describe the effects of your overindulgence.
3. Write a paragraph in which you identify some of the effects on your body of some activity in which you participate—for instance, jogging, tennis, yoga, or dance.

Scourge of the Budworm

Tracy Kidder

Modern civilization has come up with any number of ways to rid itself of insect pests. Or has it? In this paragraph from his book House, *Tracy Kidder points out how "controlled" insects may in the end do more damage than if they had been left alone.*

Words to Know

forage food
virulent severely destructive

X n the natural regime, budworm epidemics besiege the Maine woods every thirty to fifty years. Left to run its course, an outbreak kills some 40 percent of the fir and the red and white spruce in its path. Then the moths subside. Spraying the woods with insecticides began in the 1950s and has continued intermittently. Chemicals have prevented a lot of damage, but in doing so they have also kept alive enough forage for the budworm population to remain at the verge of an outbreak more widespread and virulent than if there had been no spraying. In this way, spraying has made more spraying inevitable. Insecticides now represent the only barrier against truly catastrophic losses of Maine's spruce and fir, but spraying cannot prevent substantial losses. The budworm has already eaten its way through large sections of spruce and fir. In the worst areas, evergreen canopies now stand all gray and powdery. For a time, industries in the Maine woods will have at their disposal more dead and dying trees than they can use, and then, probably, a time will come when there will be less of the right kinds of wood in the forest than the various mills are designed to handle. For the Maine woods, there seem to be no ways around the budworm that won't have unpleasant consequences, both economic and environmental.

Questions About the Reading

|. In the natural cycle, why do budworms subside?
2. How has spraying created a situation in which the budworm is able to avoid its cyclical decline?
3. What point is the writer making about human intervention in ecological systems?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What primary **mode of development** does the writer use for his description of cause and effect?
2. One could identify either spraying or the budworms as the main cause in the paragraph. Which is the cause in your view? Why?
3. Is this paragraph written objectively or **subjectively?** Describe other aspects of the writer's **tone** and how they contribute to the impression of objectivity or subjectivity.

Writing Assignments

1. Think of a time when you behaved impulsively or acted in panic without thinking. Write a paragraph describing the causes and effects of your actions.
2. Most of us have had experiences with pests of some kind. Describe such an experience in a paragraph. Explain what damage or inconvenience the pest caused and what you did about it? What were the effects of what you did?

Bonding at Birth

Douglas A. Bernstein, Edward]. Roy, Thomas K. Srull, and Christopher Wickens

Cause-and-effeddevelopmentoffersausefulformatforobjective,informativewriting.In thisparagraphfromapsychologytextbook,noticehowthewritersusecauseandeffect tosummarize,clearlyandconcisely,thepointtobelearned.

Words to Know

pediatricians doctors who specialize in the care of children

J. n 1976 a book called *Maternal-Infant Bonding* was published. It changed the way that newborn infants are treated from the moment of birth. The authors, pediatricians Marshall Klaus and John Kennell, had observed mothers and their newborns and found that, during the first hour or so after birth, babies are usually awake and will gaze at the mother's face while the mother gazes at and touches the infant. The importance of this early contact was demonstrated by Klaus and Kennell's experiments on the effect of leaving mothers and newborns together for the hour after birth or giving them extra opportunities to be together during their hospital stay. They found that women who were given early and extended contact with their babies were later more emotionally attached to them than mothers given only the routine contact allowed by usual hospital procedures. Further, mothers given early and extended contact with their infants felt more competent and were more reluctant to leave their infants with another person. They stayed closer to their infants, often gazing into their eyes, touching and soothing them, and fondling and kissing them. This difference occurred in the hospital and lasted for a year or more (Hales et al., 1977; Kennell et al., 1974).

Questions About the Reading

1. How are newborn infants now treated? How do you think they were treated formerly?
2. How did Klaus and Kennell arrive at their findings? Make up a more detailed description of how you think the actual activities in their experiment went.
3. Procedures surrounding what fathers do during delivery have also changed in recent years. Judging from this paragraph, what do you think fathers should be doing while the baby is being born and just afterward?

Questions About the Writers' Strategies

1. What is the cause in this paragraph? Is there more than one cause?
2. What is the effect? Is there more than one?
3. Is there a topic **sentence** in this paragraph? If so, where is it? If not, state the main idea in your own words.
4. The paragraph describes observed behavior but not underlying internal causes of that behavior. Why?

Writing Assignments

1. Look at the bonding effect from a different angle. Write a paragraph in which you speculate about the psychological causes of the effect. That is, discuss possible reasons *why* early contact strengthens bonding.
2. Have you ever known anyone who experienced an unwanted pregnancy? Using unwanted pregnancy as your cause, write a paragraph describing its effects. Illustrate with examples, if you can.

On Being Unemployed

Nelliejean Smith (Student)

In the paragraph that follows, we learn of the many effects that unemployment can have on a person's life. The writer makes us see—and feel with her—that unemployment is a traumatic experience. Nelliejean Smith has proven, however, that she can cope, for she wrote this paragraph as a student at Cuyahoga Community College.

Words to Know

bureaucracy government marked by spread of authority among numerous offices, inflexible rules of operation, and unwieldy administration

evoke to summon or call forth, elicit

Deing unemployed creates many problems for my family and me. First of all, there are financial problems. We have cut back on the quality of groceries we purchase. We now buy two pounds of hamburger in place of two pounds of sirloin. This hamburger is also divided into quantities sufficient for three meals: one may be Creole beef, one chili, and the other spaghetti. There is also less money for clothing. Dresses must be altered and made into blouses; pants make nice skirts after some alteration. I have two more very sticky problems. I've fallen behind in the rental payments for our apartment, and now I am experiencing difficulties trying to pay the back rent. The other sticky problem is my son's tuition payments. There does not seem to be any way that I can send a complete payment to his college. These are not the only problems I face. I also have psychological problems as a result of unemployment. Often I wonder why this has happened to me. Then depression and confusion take over, and I feel drained of all my abilities. The one question that fills my mind most often is the following: Why can't I get employment? This question evokes in me a lack of self-confidence and self-worth. I am haunted by an overall feeling of uselessness. My other problems center on trying to cope with the bureaucracy of the Employment Bureau. Once I get to the Employment Bureau, I stand in line to sign up. I then wait in another line to which I must report. Once I go through all of this, I am sent out for job interviews, only to find that the employer wants someone with more experience. To top everything off, I had to wait almost six months to receive my first unemployment check. As you can see, there is often a frustratingly long delay in receiving benefits. My family and I have suffered through many problems because of my unemployment.

Questions About the Reading

1. What do you think makes the inability to pay rent and her son's tuition particularly "sticky" problems for the writer?
2. What makes the writer feel "drained of her abilities?"
3. What psychological effects do you think the writer's unsuccessful job interviews have on her?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** of this paragraph? Where is this idea first introduced? Where is it repeated?
2. **Transitional** words and expressions provide a bridge between points in this paragraph. Identify the writer's transitions.
3. The writer uses many examples to illustrate the effects of unemployment she names. Identify any two effects that are mentioned. Then identify two examples for each of these effects.
4. What order does the writer use in discussing the problems?

Writing Assignments

1. Is the Employment Bureau the writer describes doing a good job? In a paragraph, describe the effects of the bureau's procedures.
2. What are the effects unemployment has had on the American people as a whole? Do you think it has changed our image of ourselves as a nation? Write a cause-and-effect paragraph or essay in which you indicate some of the social effects of unemployment. You may want to read some articles on this topic in the library before you write.
3. Although being employed has more positive than negative effects, work does have effects that may not always be pleasant. Write a paragraph on how a particular job or certain types of jobs can have negative effects.

It Took This Night to Make Us Know

Bob Greene

Eleven Israeli athletes were murdered by Palestinian terrorists at the 1972 summer Olympics in Munich, West Germany. The news shocked and horrified the world. It also made at least one man—Chicago newspaper columnist Bob Greene—look deep inside himself and think, for perhaps the first time, about where he came from, who he was, and what it means to be born Jewish in today's world.

Words to Know

abstraction a general idea representing a physical concept

patronized treated in an offensive, condescending

Washington:—It is not supposed to be very strong in us, for we cannot remember. We are the young Jews, born after Hitler, and we have never considered the fact that we are Jewish to be a large part of our identity. A lot of us have not been near a temple in ten years, and we laugh along with the Jewish jokes to show that we are very cool about the whole thing. We are Americans, we have told ourselves, we do not go around calling ourselves Jews: that is for the elderly men with the tortured faces, the old Jews we feel a little embarrassed to be around. Let them recall the centuries of hurt, we think; it is over now, so let them recall those years while we live our good todays. 1

It is not supposed to be very strong in us, and yet I am sitting at a typewriter in a hotel room hundreds of miles from home trying to write a story about a presidential campaign, and I cannot do it. For the television has just got done telling the story, the story of how once again people who hate the Jews have knocked on a door in the middle of the night and done their killing, and I can think of nothing else. Now the lesson is being taught all over again; it is not up to us to decide how to treat our Jewishness. That was decided for us centuries ago. 2

It is not supposed to be very strong in us, because all the barriers are down now, and a hotel will not turn us away or a restaurant will not deny us a table if our name does not sound right. And yet when the killings began, they thought to get a young man named Mark Spitz out of Germany, because he may be the best swimmer in the world, but first of all he is a Jew, and no one wanted to think what might happen to him. Many of the people who thrilled as he won his gold medals were very surprised to find out now that Spitz is a Jew. Later they will say that of course it doesn't matter what his religion is. But Spitz knew that it mattered; we all knew that it mattered, and that it would be smarter for him to go. 3

It is not supposed to be very strong in us, and we have heard the term "six million Jews are dead" so often that it is just an abstraction to us. And yet if the Dachau concentration camp, just a few miles from the Olympic site, was not enough to remind us, the killers in the Munich darkness made sure that we remembered. There is a hate for us that goes back centuries, and every time it seems to have weakened with the years there is another band of men ready to show us that the hate is still strong enough to make them kill in the night. 4

When the news was certain, when there was no question but that the young Jewish men were dead, I called some friends and we talked about it. They were thinking the same way I was. For all these years we have acted bored with the Jewish traditions, smirked at the ancient, detailed ceremonies, patronized the old ones who insisted on showing their link with the past. 5

And for us, it took this one night to make us know that maybe it will never go away. We are all Jews who were born into a world where money and education and parents who speak with no accent were part of the package, and that can fool you. But this is the oldest hate the world has ever seen, and 25 years of Jewish prosperity in the United States is hardly enough to erase it from the earth. 6

It is nothing that we young ones have ever talked much about, and there are not many words to tell it now. Words cannot tell it as well as the look we have seen for years in the faces of the oldest Jews, the look of deepest sorrow that has been there for as many centuries as the hate. 7

This time the look is there because of a group of Arab terrorists. But it goes so far beyond Middle Eastern politics; the look was there in this same Germany 30 years ago, it was there in Egypt centuries ago, it has been there in every place there have ever been Jews who were not wanted because they were Jews. And because there have been so many of these places, the look has been reborn and reborn and reborn. 8

There are young men who are dead this week who should be alive, and it would be a horrible thing no matter who they were. But of course they were Jews; the reason that they are dead is because they were Jews, and that is why on this night there are so many of us starting to realize for the first time what that means. 9

It is not supposed to be very strong in us, for we cannot remember. 10
We grew up laughing at the solemn old Jewish phrases that sounded so mournful and outmoded and out of date in the second half of the twentieth century. Ancient, outmoded phrases from the temples, phrases like "Let my people go." Phrases that we chose to let mean nothing, because it is not supposed to be very strong in us.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why, according to the writer, are young Jews embarrassed to be around old Jews with "tortured faces?"
2. Why is the writer having difficulty writing a story about a presidential campaign?
3. What effect does the killing of several Jewish men at the Olympics have on the young Jewish people living in the United States?
4. What "is not supposed to be very strong" in young American Jews?
5. Consider the title of the essay. What is it that the writer and his contemporaries now know?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. In your own words, express the main idea or thesis of the essay. Does the writer ever state this idea explicitly in a single sentence or must the reader infer it?
2. What is the writer's **tone** in the essay? What attitude does he have toward the event described—and toward himself and his friends as a result of the event?
3. Identify the cause-and-effect elements in the essay.
4. How does the writer use repetition in the essay? What is its effect?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay in which you discuss what you perceive to be the causes of racial violence and their effects on society.
2. Do the Olympic Games decrease tensions among people of different nations, cultures, and races? Write a cause-and-effect essay on this topic.
3. Recall an incident in which you were ridiculed, harassed, or mistreated for no apparent reason other than groundless hostility. If you have never experienced anything like this, maybe someone among your friends could describe such an incident for you. Using the incident as your cause, write an essay about how it affected you or your friend.

The Whoomper Factor

Nathan Cobb

Like it or not, almost nothing affects our lives so much as the weather. In February 1978, a massive blizzard paralyzed the entire northeastern United States. Three feet of snow fell on New England in two days, and the state of Massachusetts closed down for a week to recover. Nathan Cobb, a columnist for the Boston Globe, *found that the blizzard had an unusual effect on him and his fellow Bostonians.*

Words to Know

bereft deprived of
debacle **a** sudden, disastrous overthrow or collapse, ruin
MBTA Metropolitan Boston Transportation Authority
paralysis a stoppage or crippling of activity
urbania referring to a city or city life
virtual existing in essence or effect, though not in actual fact or form

J\.s this is being written, snow is falling in the streets of Boston in 1
what weather forecasters like to call "record amounts." I would guess by looking out the window that we are only a few hours from that magic moment of paralysis, as in *Storm Paralyzes Hub.* Perhaps we are even due for an *Entire Region Engulfed* or a *Northeast Blanketed,* but I will happily settle for mere local disablement. And the more the merrier.

Some people call them blizzards, others nor'easters. My own term 2
is whoompers, and I freely admit looking forward to them as does a baseball fan to April. Usually I am disappointed, however; because tonight's storm warnings too often turn into tomorrow's light flurries.

Well, flurries be damned. I want the real thing, complete with Volks- 3
wagens turned into drifts along Commonwealth Avenue and the MBTA's third rail frozen like a hunk of raw meat. A storm does not even begin to qualify as a whoomper unless Logan Airport is shut down for a minimum of six hours.

The point is, whoompers teach us a lesson. Or rather several lessons. 4
For one thing, here are all these city folk who pride themselves on their instinct for survival, and suddenly they cannot bear to venture into the streets because they are afraid of being swallowed up. Virtual pris-

oners in their own houses is what they are. In northern New England, the natives view nights such as this with casual indifference, but let a whoomper hit Boston and the locals are not only knee deep in snow but also in befuddlement and disarray.

The lesson? That there is something more powerful out there than the sacred metropolis. It is not unlike the message we can read into the debacle of the windows falling out of the John Hancock Tower; just when we think we've got the upper hand on the elements, we find out we are flies and someone else is holding the swatter. Whoompers keep us in our place. 5

They also slow us down, which is not a bad thing for urbania these days. Frankly, I'm of the opinion Logan should be closed periodically, snow or not, in tribute to the lurking suspicion that it may not be all that necessary for a man to travel at a speed of 600 miles per hour. In a little while I shall go forth into the streets and I know what I will find. People will actually be *walking,* and the avenues will be bereft of cars. It will be something like those marvelous photographs of Back Bay during the nineteenth century, wherein the lack of clutter and traffic makes it seem as if someone has selectively airbrushed the scene. 6

And, of course, there will be the sound of silence tonight. It will be almost deafening. I know city people who have trouble sleeping in the country because of the lack of noise, and I suspect this is what bothers many of them about whoompers. Icy sidewalks and even fewer parking spaces we can handle, but please, God, turn up the volume. City folks tend not to believe in anything they can't hear with their own ears. 7

It should also be noted that nights such as this are obviously quite pretty, hiding the city's wounds beneath a clean white dressing. But it is their effect on the way people suddenly treat each other that is most fascinating, coming as it does when city dwellers are depicted as people of the same general variety as those New Yorkers who stood by when Kitty Genovese was murdered back in 1964. 8

There's nothing like a good whoomper to get people thinking that everyone walking towards them on the sidewalk might not be a mugger, or that saying hello is not necessarily a sign of perversion. You would think that city people, more than any other, would have a strong sense of being in the same rough seas together, yet it is not until a quasi catastrophe hits that many of them stop being lone sharks. 9

But enough of this. There's a whoomper outside tonight, and it requires my presence. 10

Questions About the Reading

1. What do the italicized words in the first paragraph refer to? What does the writer mean by "mere local disablement?"
2. How do "whoompers keep us in our place?"
3. "City folks tend not to believe in anything they can't hear with their own ears." Analyze this statement. What does the writer mean? Is he right, in your opinion?
4. How do whoompers affect the way city people treat one another?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. The writer uses **definition** as an important strategy in this essay. Where and how is it used?
2. What **mode of development** does the writer use in paragraph 9? What idea is developed in the paragraph?
3. How many effects does the writer describe in the essay? Briefly state each effect.
4. In the third paragraph, identify the simile. What does the simile indicate about the writer's attitude toward the subway?
5. Identify the **metaphor** in paragraph 5. What does the metaphor mean:

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay in which you choose one extreme weather event—such as a blizzard, flood, drought, hurricane, or tornado—and explain the effects that it had on your family.
2. In the essay, the writer discusses the idea that people feel they have some control over weather conditions. Write an essay in which you discuss what has caused people to feel this way; discuss such things as scientific forecasting, radar, and satellites.
3. Write an essay describing the effects of a snowstorm on young children and why it has these effects. If you are from a northern climate, include examples from your own experience. If you are from a southern climate, imagine that you are a child seeing snow for the first time.

My First Lesson in How to Live as a Negro

Richard Wright

Richard Wright is one of the most important black American writers. Born in Mississippi in 1908, Wright left school after the ninth grade and moved to Chicago, where he worked as a postal clerk. In 1946, he moved to Paris, where he lived until his death in I960. In the essay, taken from Wright's Uncle Tom's Children, *he describes his first lesson in what it meant to be a young black in the United States in the early part of this century.*

Words to Know

appalling frightful
barrage heavy artillery fire
embankments mounds of earth used for support or protection
fortifications something that strengthens or defends
Jim Crow systematic discrimination against blacks
overreaching reaching beyond
profusely in great quantities
stave a narrow strip of wood that forms the sides of a barrel

I V l y first lesson in how to live as a Negro came when I was quite 1
small. We were living in Arkansas. Our house stood behind the railroad tracks. Its skimpy yard was paved with black cinders. Nothing green ever grew in that yard. The only touch of green we could see was far away, beyond the tracks, over where the white folks lived. But cinders were good enough for me and I never missed the green growing things. And anyhow cinders were fine weapons. You could always have a nice hot war with huge black cinders. All you had to do was crouch behind the brick pillars of a house with your hands full of gritty ammunition. And the first woolly black head you saw pop out from behind another row of pillars was your target. You tried your very best to knock it off. It was great fun.

I never fully realized the appalling disadvantages of a cinder envi- 2
ronment till one day the gang to which I belonged found itself engaged in a war with the white boys who lived beyond the tracks. As usual we laid down our cinder barrage, thinking that this would wipe the white boys out. But they replied with a steady bombardment of broken bottles. We doubled our cinder barrage, but they hid behind trees, hedges, and the sloping embankments of their lawns. Having no such fortifications, we retreated to the brick pillars of our homes. During the retreat a broken milk bottle caught me behind the ear, opening a deep gash which bled profusely. The sight of blood pouring over my face completely demoralized our ranks. My fellow-combatants left me standing paralyzed in the center of the yard, and scurried for their homes. A kind neighbor saw me and rushed me to a doctor, who took three stitches in my neck.

I sat brooding on my front steps, nursing my wound and waiting 3
for my mother to come from work. I felt that a grave injustice had been done me. It was all right to throw cinders. The greatest harm a cinder could do was leave a bruise. But broken bottles were dangerous; they left you cut, bleeding, and helpless.

When night fell, my mother came from the white folks' kitchen. I 4
raced down the street to meet her. I could just feel in my bones that she would understand. I knew she would tell me exactly what to do next time. I grabbed her hand and babbled out the whole story. She examined my wound, then slapped me.

"How come yuh didn't hide?" she asked me. "How come yuh aw- 5
ways fightin'?"

I was outraged, and bawled. Between sobs I told her that I didn't 6
have any trees or hedges to hide behind. There wasn't a thing I could have used as a trench. And you couldn't throw very far when you were hiding behind the brick pillars of a house. She grabbed a barrel stave, dragged me home, stripped me naked, and beat me till I had a fever of one hundred and two. She would smack my rump with the stave, and, while the skin was still smarting, impart to me gems of Jim Crow wisdom. I was never to throw cinders any more. I was never to fight any more wars. I was never, never, under any conditions, to fight *white* folks again. And they were absolutely right in clouting me with the broken milk bottle. Didn't I know she was working hard every day in the hot kitchens of the white folks to make money to take care of me? When was I ever going to learn to be a good boy? She couldn't be bothered with my fights. She finished by telling me that I ought to be thankful to God as long as I lived that they didn't kill me.

All that night I was delirious and could not sleep. Each time I closed 7
my eyes I saw monstrous white faces suspended from the ceiling, leering at me.

From that time on, the charm of my cinder yard was gone. The green trees, the trimmed hedges, the cropped lawns grew very meaningful, became a symbol. Even today when I think of white folks, the hard, sharp outlines of white houses surrounded by trees, lawns, and hedges are present somewhere in the background of my mind. Through the years they grew into an overreaching symbol of fear.

Questions About the Reading

1. What was the difference between fighting with cinders and fighting with broken bottles?
2. Why do you think Wright expected his mother to understand what had happened? Why do you think she beat him instead?
3. Why did the green trees, trimmed hedges, and cropped lawns become a **symbol** of fear for Wright?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Does this essay have a direct thesis statement? If so, what is it and where is it located? If not, state it in your own words.
2. What two **modes of development** are used to develop the thesis?
3. Identify the cause-and-effect elements of the essay.
4. Compare the first and last paragraphs of the essay, and explain the purpose of each.

Writing Assignments

1. Recall an incident from your childhood that has had a long-lasting effect on you. Write an essay that describes that incident and its effects.
2. Have you ever been involved in a fight or an argument that you knew you couldn't win? Describe the incident and discuss its effects on you.
3. Try to recall an incident that brought home to you the painful meaning of discrimination or prejudice. Write an essay describing the incident and its effects on you.

The Bounty of the Sea

Jacques Cousteau

Jacques Cousteau, the famous French oceanographer, has brought the world of the oceans to us through his books and television documentaries. His love for the oceans has extended to a lifelong concern for protecting and conserving the marine environment. In the following essay, written in the mid-1960s, he vividly describes the sickening of the ocean and the effects that the death of the oceans would have on humankind.

Words to Know

buffer something that protects
cheek by jowl very dose together
effluents sewage
insupportable unbearable
plankton algae microscopic plant life that floats in water
remorseless without regret or pity
stench stink, bad smell
teemed swarmed
trawlers fishing boats that drag large nets along the bottom of the ocean

During the past thirty years, I have observed and studied the oceans closely, and with my own two eyes I have seen them sicken. Certain reefs that teemed with fish only ten years ago are now almost lifeless. The ocean bottom has been raped by trawlers. Priceless wetlands have been destroyed by landfill. And everywhere are sticky globs of oil, plastic refuse, and unseen clouds of poisonous effluents. Often, when I describe the symptoms of the oceans' sickness, I hear remarks like "they're only fish" or "they're only whales" or "they're only birds." But I assure you that our destinies are linked with theirs in the most profound and fundamental manner. For if the oceans should die—by which I mean that all life in the sea would finally cease—this would signal the end not only for marine life but for all other animals and plants of this earth, including man.

With life departed, the ocean would become, in effect, one enormous cesspool. Billions of decaying bodies, large and small, would create such an insupportable stench that man would be forced to leave all the coastal regions. But far worse would follow.

The ocean acts as the earth's buffer. It maintains a fine balance between the many salts and gases which make life possible. But dead seas would have no buffering effect. The carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere would start on a steady and remorseless climb, and when it reached a certain level a "greenhouse effect" would be created. The heat that normally radiates outward from the earth to space would be blocked by the CO2, and sea level temperatures would dramatically increase. 3

One catastrophic effect of this heat would be melting of the icecaps at both the North and South Poles. As a result, the ocean would rise by 100 feet or more, enough to flood almost all the world's major cities. These rising waters would drive one-third of the earth's billions inland, creating famine, fighting, chaos, and disease on a scale almost impossible to imagine. 4

Meanwhile, the surface of the ocean would have scummed over with a thick film of decayed matter, and would no longer be able to give water freely to the skies through evaporation. Rain would become a rarity, creating global drought and even more famine. 5

But the final act is yet to come. The wretched remnant of the human race would now be packed check by jowl on the remaining highlands, bewildered, starving, struggling to survive from hour to hour. Then would be visited upon them the final plague, anoxia (lack of oxygen). This would be caused by the extinction of plankton algae and the reduction of land vegetation, the two sources that supply the oxygen you are now breathing. 6

And so man would finally die, slowly gasping out his life on some barren hill. He would have survived the oceans by perhaps thirty years. And his heirs would be bacteria and a few scavenger insects. 7

Questions About the Reading

1. How does Cousteau know that the oceans are sick? What evidence does he give?
2. What is the "greenhouse effect?"
3. What is CO_2?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the thesis of this essay? Is it directly stated or **implied?** If it is directly stated, where in the essay is it stated?
2. Identify the cause-and-effect elements of this essay.
3. Apart from cause and effect, does the writer use any other modes of development?
4. How is the reader affected by the use of such words as "scummed over," "thick film of decayed matter," and "cesspool" to describe the ocean?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay discussing some of the causes and effects of air pollution. You may want to do some reading in the library before you write.
2. What personal steps can you take to stop pollution? Write an essay that describes what you as an individual can do and what effects you think your actions would have.
3. Why do people pollute? Write an essay identifying some of the things that cause people to harm the environment and the types of pollution that result.

The Thirsty Animal

Brian Manning

In this personal essay, Brian Manning recounts how he developed into a problem drinker and describes his ongoing life as an alcoholic who has quit drinking. Straight forwardly, he tells of his bittersweet memories of drinking and of his struggle, successful so far, to keep the thirsty "animal living inside" locked in its cage.

Words to Know

accouterments the things that go along with something, accompanying effects or activities
Bordeaux a type of French wine, usually red
lolling lounging, relaxing

I was very young, but I still vividly remember how my father fascinated my brothers and me at the dinner table by running his finger around the rim of his wineglass. He sent a wonderful, crystal tone wafting through the room, and we loved it. When we laughed too raucously, he would stop, swirl the red liquid in his glass and take a sip. 1

There was a wine cellar in the basement of the house we moved into when I was eleven. My father put a few cases of Bordeaux down there in the dark. We played there with other boys in the neighborhood, hid there, made a secret place. It was musty and cool and private. We wrote things and stuck them in among the bottles and imagined someone way in the future baffled by our messages from the past. 2

Many years later, the very first time I drank, I had far too much. But I found I was suddenly able to tell a girl at my high school that I was mad about her. 3

When I drank in college with the men in my class, I was trying to define a self-image I could feel comfortable with. I wanted to be "an Irishman," I decided, a man who could drink a lot of liquor and hold it. My favorite play was Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, my model the drunken Jamie Tyrone. 4

I got out of college, into the real world, and the drunk on weekends started to slip into the weekdays. Often I didn't know when one drunk ended and another began. The years were measured in hangovers. It took a long time to accept, and then to let the idea sink in, that I was an alcoholic. 5

It took even longer to do anything about it. I didn't want to believe it, and I didn't want to deny myself the exciting, brotherly feeling I had whenever I went boozing with my friends. For a long time, in my relationships with women, I could only feel comfortable with a woman who drank as much as I did. So I didn't meet many women and spent my time with men in dark barrooms, trying to be like them and hoping I'd be accepted. 6

It is now two years since I quit drinking, and that, as all alcoholics know who have come to grips with their problem, is not long ago at all. The urge to have "just one" includes a genuine longing for all the accouterments of drink: the popping of a cork, the color of Scotch through a glass, the warmth creeping over my shoulders with the third glass of stout. Those were joys. Ever since I gave them up I remember them as delicious. 7

I go to parties now and start off fine, but I have difficulty dealing with the changing rhythms as the night wears on. Everyone around me seems to be having a better time the more they drink, and I, not they, become awkward. I feel like a kid with a broken chain when everyone else has bicycled around the corner out of sight. I fight against feeling sorry for myself. 8

What were the things I was looking for and needed when I drank? I often find that what I am looking for when I want a drink is not really the alcohol, but the memories and laughter that seemed possible only with a glass in my hand. In a restaurant, I see the bottle of vintage port on the shelf, and imagine lolling in my chair, swirling the liquid around in the glass, inhaling those marvelous fumes. I think of my neighbor, Eileen, the funniest woman I ever got smashed with, and I want to get up on a bar stool next to her to hear again the wonderful stories she told. She could drink any man under the table, she claimed, and I wanted to be one of those men who tried. She always won, but it made me feel I belonged when I staggered out of the bar, her delighted laughter following me. 9

I had found a world to cling to, a way of belonging, and it still attracts me. I pass by the gin mills and pubs now and glance in at the men lined up inside, and I don't see them as suckers or fools. I remember how I felt sitting there after work, or watching a Sunday afternoon ball game, and I long for the smell of the barroom and that ease—toasts and songs, jokes and equality. I have to keep reminding myself of the wasting hangovers, the lost money, the days down the drain. 10

I imagine my problem as an animal living inside me, demanding a drink before it dies of thirst. That's what it says, but it will never die of thirst. The fact an alcoholic faces is that this animal breathes and waits. It is incapable of death and will spring back to lustful, consuming life with even one drop of sustenance. 11

When I was eighteen and my drinking began in earnest, I didn't play in the wine cellar at home anymore; I stole there. I sneaked bottles to my room, sat in the window and drank alone while my parents were away. I hated the taste of it, but I kept drinking it, without the kids from the neighborhood, without any thought that I was feeding the animal. And one day, I found one of those old notes we had hidden down there years before. It fell to the ground when I pulled a bottle from its cubbyhole. I read it with bleary eyes, then put the paper back into the rack. "Beware," it said, above a childish skull and crossbones, "all ye who enter here." A child, wiser than I was that day, had written that note. 12

I did a lot of stupid, disastrous, sometimes mean things in the years that followed, and remembering them is enough to snap me out of the memories and back to the reality that I quit just in time. I've done something I had to do, something difficult and necessary, and that gives me satisfaction and the strength to stay on the wagon. I'm very lucky so far. I don't get mad that I can't drink anymore; I can handle the self-pity that overwhelmed me in my early days of sobriety. From time to time, I daydream about summer afternoons and cold beer. I know such dreams will never go away. The thirsty animal is there, getting a little fainter every day. It will never die. A lot of my life now is all about keeping it in a very lonely cage. 13

Questions About the Reading

1. What went along with drinking for the writer? Why **did he need** alcohol to achieve those effects?
2. Why are parties difficult for the writer?
3. Why did the writer stop drinking?
4. When you finished reading the essay, what opinions had you formed of the writer's personality and character? Cite specific examples from the essay to support your opinions.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **main idea** of this essay? In which sentences is it most clearly suggested?
2. What are the causes in this essay? What are the effects? Do they overlap at all?
3. Other than cause and effect, what **modes of development** does the writer use? Cite some specific paragraphs in which he uses other modes.
4. The "animal" introduced in paragraph 11 is a **metaphor.** What does it stand for? Interpret it in your own words.
5. Identify the simile in paragraph 8. Is it effective in helping you understand how the writer feels?

Writing Assignments

1. Describe in an essay the effects that alcohol has on you. If you do not drink, describe the effects that you have seen it have on others.
2. Do you know anyone who abuses alcohol or other drugs. If not, you have surely heard or read in the media or in school awareness programs about the lure of drugs. Based on what you know (and on what you have learned from reading this essay), write an essay describing the causes and effects of drug abuse.

The Arctic Forest

Barry Holstun Lopez

Any plant or animal trying to survive on the tundra of the Arctic must adapt to some of the most inhospitable conditions on earth. In this passage from his book Arctic Dreams, *Barry Lopez explains some of the specific hardships faced by trees in the Arctic environment and the ways in which tree species have adapted to survive and, in their way, flourish.*

Words to Know

aquifer underground water trapped within **a** layer of sand or rock
aura essential quality, the sense of **a thing**
boglike wet, swampy
impervious impossible to penetrate (in this case, for water)
implacable not **to** be overcome

L he growth of trees in the Arctic is constrained by several factors. 1
Lack of light for photosynthesis of course is one; but warmth is another. A tree, like an animal, needs heat to carry on its life processes. Solar radiation provides this warmth, but in the Arctic there is a strong correlation between this warmth and closeness to the ground. In summer there may be a difference of as much as 15°F in the first foot or so of air, because of the cooling effect of the wind above and the ability of dark soils to intensify solar radiation. To balance their heat budgets for growth and survival, trees must hug the ground—so they are short. Willows, a resourceful family to begin with, sometimes grow tall, but it is only where some feature of the land stills the drying and cooling wind.

Lack of water is another factor constraining the development of 2
trees. No more moisture falls on the arctic tundra in a year than falls on the Mojave Desert; and it is available to arctic plants in the single form in which they can use it—liquid water—only during the summer.

Permafrost, the permanently frozen soil that underlies the tundra, 3
presents arctic trees with still other difficulties. Though they can penetrate this rocklike substance with their roots, deep roots, which let trees stand tall in a windy landscape, and which can draw water from deep aquifers, serve no purpose in the Arctic. It's too cold to stand tall, and liquid water is to be found only in the first few inches of soil, for

only this upper layer of the ground melts in the summer. (Ironically, since the permafrost beneath remains impervious, in those few weeks when water *is* available to them, arctic trees must sometimes cope with boglike conditions.)

Trees in the Arctic have an aura of implacable endurance about 4
them. A cross-section of the bole of a Richardson willow no thicker than your finger may reveal 200 annual growth rings beneath the magnifying glass. Much of the tundra, of course, appears to be treeless when, in many places, it is actually covered with trees—a thick matting of short, ancient willows and birches. You realize suddenly that you are wandering around on *top* of a forest.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why are arctic trees short?
2. Why do dark soils intensify the sun's warmth?
3. In what way is it ironic that arctic trees may face boglike conditions during the summer?
4. How old is the Richardson willow the writer describes in paragraph 4?
5. What do you think would happen if a truck or tractor drove over the tundra in the summer?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What makes this a cause-and-effect essay? Is there more than one cause? Is there more than one effect?
2. What is the main idea in this essay? Is there a thesis statement, or is the thesis implied?
3. Does the writer use any order in his arrangement of cause-and-effect relationships? If so, what order does he use?
4. The writer could have given the information in paragraph 4 earlier in the essay. Why did he save it for the end?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a cause-and-effect essay explaining what you do to adapt to an outbreak of very cold or hot weather.
2. Write an essay describing what happens to a neighborhood or landscape that you know during some environmental event, like a thunderstorm, a snow or ice storm, a fire, or a drought. What changes take place? What causes the changes, and what effects do the changes have in their turn?

Definition

WHEN WRITERS USE words that they think may be unfamiliar to their readers, they will usually define the words. A **definition** is an explanation of the meaning of a word or term.

In its shortest form, the definition may be simply a synonym—a familiar word or phrase that has the same meaning as the unfamiliar word. For example, in "she shows more *empathy* for, or true understanding of, older people than her sister," the word *understanding* is a synonym for *empathy.* Or the writer may choose to use an **antonym**—a word or phrase that has the opposite meaning of the unfamiliar word—as in "she is a compassionate rather than an *inconsiderate* person." Here the word *inconsiderate* gives the reader the opposite of the meaning of *compassionate.*

The writer may also choose to use the kind of precise definition found in dictionaries, called *a formal definition.* In a formal definition, the writer first uses a form of **classification,** assigning the word to the class of items to which it belongs—and then describing the characteristics that distinguish it from other items of that same class. Here is an example of a formal definition.

Word defined: class

Description of characteristics

I A tiger, a member of the cat family, is native to Asia, usually
F weighs over 350 pounds, and has tawny and black- striped
L fur.

Many complex words and abstract ideas—such as truth and justice —require longer and more detailed explanations, which are called **extended definitions. In** an

extended definition, the writer may use one or more of the methods of development—description, examples, classification, and so forth—that you have learned about in the earlier sections of this book. For instance, in the sample paragraphs below, the writer first defines the word **symbol** by a formal definition and then, in the third sentence, continues to explain by saying what symbols are *not,* using an antonym. In the second paragraph, the writer completes the definition by using several clear-cut **examples** of symbols. As you read this sample, keep in mind that it is not unusual for writers to use symbols to enhance definitions. In fact, symbols can be useful in most of the **modes of development.**

Formal definition

Antonym

Example

Example

Examples

A symbol is a person, place, or thing that stands for or strongly suggests something in addition to itself, generally an abstract idea more important than itself. Don't let this definition intimidate you. Symbols are not fancy literary devices that readers have to wrestle with. In fact, the daiiy, nonliterary lives of readers are filled, quite comfortably and naturally, with more symbols than exist in any book ever written.

A mink coat, for example, is a piece of clothing made from the pelt of an animal in the weasel family, but for many people it stands for something else: it is a symbol of success or status or good taste. People do not make sacrifices and sounds of ecstasy over the pelt of a weasel, but over a symbol. A beard, to cite another example, is a hairy growth on a man's face, but a person would have to be a recent arrival from another planet not to realize that a beard is often viewed as a symbol of anything from youthful self-assertion to political radicalism. Our lives are pervaded, perhaps dominated, by symbols. Think about the different symbolic meanings everyone gives to the following: a Cadillac, a new house, money, rats, a college diploma, a trip to Europe, a crucifix, a date with a popular and good-looking girl, the American flag, a blind date, Lawrence Welk, the F.B.I., Niagara Falls, Valley Forge, a fireplace.

David Skwire and Francis Chitwood,
Student's Book of College English, second edition

A concept related to symbolism is **connotation,** which refers to the feelings or qualities we associate with words and expressions. A word's **denotation,** on the other hand, is its dictionary definition. Think of the word *pig,* for instance. The dictionary may tell you that a pig is simply

a domestic animal with hooves, short legs, bristly hair, and a blunt snout; and a farmer may tell you that a pig is actually rather intelligent and cleaner than other farm animals. However, the negative connotations of this word are so strong that you are likely to have trouble thinking of **a** pig without thinking of filth, fat, and greed.

In writing definitions, it is particularly important to choose your words in such a way that their connotations, as well as their denotations, will give the reader the correct impression of what you are defining. Remember that the technique of **brainstorming,** first described in Chapter 3, can be used to search for the single best word, as well as to pinpoint larger ideas.

When you search for connotative words and expressions to use in your writing, beware of **cliches.** Cliches are words or phrases—like "rosy red," "silly goose," "bull in a china shop," "weird," or "outrageous"—that have become so overused that they indicate a lack of imagination and thought on the part of the writer who uses them. Symbols, too, can be cliches. If you are defining courage, for example, using Rambo as a symbol to enhance your definition is unlikely to impress your reader. Experienced writers may sometimes use cliches to achieve certain effects, such as humor or ridicule. As a student writer, however, you should try to avoid them so that your writing will seem fresh and original. You should also be alert to the fact that many cliches take the form of similes—"as filthy as a pig"—and try to make sure your similes are always of your own creation, not ones you have heard before.

In addition to examples, several other **modes of development** can be used to write an extended definition. For example, the writer might use **description** or **narration** or both as the main method of development.

Topic sentence: formal definition

A glacier is an accumulation of snow and ice that continually flows from a mountain ice field toward sea level. Glaciers are formed when successive snowfalls pile up, creating pressure on the bottom layers. Gradually, the pressure causes the snow on the bottom to undergo a structural change into an extremely dense form of ice called glacier ice, a process that may take several years. Once the ice begins to accumulate, gravity causes the mass to move downhill. Glaciers usually take the path of least resistance, following stream beds or

other natural channels down the mountainside. As they move, they scrape along the surface of the earth, picking up rocks and other sediment on the way. The ice and the debris carve a deep U-shaped valley as they proceed down the mountain. If they advance far enough, they will eventually reach the sea and become tidewater glaciers that break off, or calve, directly into salt water. Southeast Alaska is one of only three places in the world where tidewater glaciers exist. (They also are found in Scandinavia and Chile.) Other glaciers, called hanging glaciers, spill out of icy basins high up on valley walls and tumble toward the valley floor.

Extended definition: descriptive narration

Sarah Eppcnbach,
Alaska's Southeast

Or, as in the example that follows, the writer may use a formal definition combined with **classification, examples,** and **comparison** and **contrast.**

Formal definition
Classification: area of land, sea, or sky

A map is a conventional picture of an area of land, sea, or sky. Perhaps the maps most widely used are the road maps given away by the oil companies. They show the cultural features such as states, towns, parks, and roads, especially paved roads. They show also natural features, such as rivers and lakes, and sometimes mountains. As simple maps, most automobile drivers have on various occasions used sketches drawn by service station men, or by friends, to show the best automobile route from one town to another.

Example: road maps

Example: simple maps

The distinction usually made between "maps" and "charts" is that a chart is a representation of an area consisting chiefly of water; a map represents an area that is predominantly land. It is easy to see how this distinction arose in the days when there was no navigation over land, but a truer distinction is that charts are specially designed for use in navigation, whether at sea or in the air.

Contrast: chart—represents water; map—represents land

Contrast: chart—for navigation

Maps have been used since the earliest civilizations, and explorers find that they are used in rather simple civilizations at the present time by people who are accustomed to traveling. For example, Arctic explorers have obtained considerable help from maps of the coast lines showing settlements, drawn by Eskimo people. Occasionally maps show not only the roads, but pictures of other features. One of the earliest such maps dates from about 1400 B.C. It shows not only roads, but also lakes with fish, and a canal with crocodiles and a bridge over the canal. This is somewhat similar to the modern maps of a state which show for each large town some feature of interest or the chief products of that town.

Example: use of maps

Example: features of some maps

Comparison: features of early maps with modern maps

C.C. Wylic,
Astronomy, Maps, and Weather

As you can see, you may use any method of development that is appropriate when you need to extend a definition of a word or term.

Whether you are writing an extended definition or relying primarily on some other mode of development, always remember to define any words or terms you use that may be unfamiliar to your readers—particularly any words they must know to understand your meaning. You should also define words with any special or technical meaning that you include in your writing.

The readings that follow offer many examples of definition as a mode of development. As you read, watch for words whose connotations add precision or special effect to the definitions. The questions at the ends of the selections will help you recognize methods writers use to make definitions interesting and colorful, and the assignments will give you a chance to apply what you learn about this mode of development.

The Ultimate Kitchen Gadget

Robert Capon

Anyone who likes to cook owns a number of kitchen gadgets. What is your favorite: a garlic press, a food processor, or a blender? In the following selection, Robert Capon, an Episcopal priest and lover of cooking, defines the ultimate kitchen gadget.

Words to Know

trice a very short time

At is the ultimate kitchen gadget. Tt serves as a juicer for lemons, oranges and grapefruit, and as a combination seed remover and pulp crusher for tomatoes. It functions as a bowl scraper, an egg separator and a remover of unwelcome particles—the stray bit of eggshell, the odd grain of black rice—from mixing bowl or saucepan. It is a thermometer capable of gauging temperatures up to 500 degrees Fahrenheit and, in addition, is a measuring device for dry ingredients in amounts from 1 tablespoon down to 1/8 teaspoon or less, and for whatever liquids may be called for in the cooking of grains and stocks. It can be used as tongs for removing hot cup custards from the oven, as a mixer of water into pastry dough and as a kneader of bread. Best of all, it cleans up in a trice, presents no storage problems, will not chip, rust or tarnish and, if it cannot be said to be unlosable or indestructible, it nevertheless comes with a lifetime guarantee to remain the one household convenience you will have the least desire either to lose or to destroy It is, of course, the human hand.

Questions About the Reading

1. Temperatures above about 160 degrees will burn a person's hand. How can the hand be used to gauge temperatures up to 500 degrees?
2. What is the lifetime guarantee of the ultimate kitchen gadget?
3. At what point in the paragraph did you guess what the ultimate kitchen gadget is?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the predominant **mode** of **development** used to define the ultimate kitchen gadget?
2. Why doesn't the writer identify what he is defining until the very last sentence?
3. What is the **tone** of this paragraph?
4. What **connotations** does the word *gadget* have? Would you normally associate these connotations with the human hand?
5. What is the **irony** in this paragraph?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph in which you define a household appliance (such as a blender, a vacuum cleaner, or a toaster) by giving examples of its uses and the purpose it serves.
2. Write a definition of the human hand from another point of view. Instead of giving examples of what it can do in the kitchen, describe its physical anatomy—what it looks like underneath the skin. You may want to consult a biology or anatomy textbook.
3. Write a definition of the human body by giving examples of some of the things it can do.

"I Love You"

Robert C. Solomon

Some words and ideas are almost impossible to define. In this paragraph, however, Robert Solomon shows that a definition can express a great deal about a phrase that has no conclusive, final meaning.

Words to Know

elusive hard to grasp
precipitate cause

T X love you" does not always have the same meaning, and this, too, should tell us something about the elusive nature of love. The first time it is always a surprise, an invasion, an aggressive act, but once said, "I love you" can only be repeated. It is unthinkable that it should not be said again, and again, and again. When one has not said it for a while, this may itself precipitate a crisis. ("Now why haven't you said that in all of these months!") On the other hand, "I love you" can also serve as a threat ("Don't push me on this; you might lose me"), emotional blackmail ("I've said it, now you have to respond in kind"), a warning ("It's only because I love you that I'm willing to put up with this"), an apology ("I could not possibly have meant what I have said to you, *to you* of all people"). It can be an instrument—more effective than the loudest noise—to interrupt a dull or painful conversation. It can be a cry, a plea, a verbal flag ("Pay attention to me!") or it can be an excuse ("It's only because I love you. . ."). It can be a disguise ("I love you," he whispered, looking awkwardly askance at the open door.). It can be an attack ("How can you do this to me?") or even an end ("So that's that. Wi(h regrets, good-bye."). If this single phrase has so many meanings, how varied and variable must be the emotion.

Questions About the Reading

\. What does the writer say happens the first time someone hears "I love you"? Why do you think this occurs?
2. Why must "I love you" be repeated once it has been said?
3. In what way can love be an excuse? Make up an ending for the example sentence.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Do you think the writer is qualified to tell you what "I love you" means? Why or why not?
2. Why does the writer give so many examples of what "I love you" can mean?
3. What mode of development is the writer using in the essay from which this paragraph is taken? How do you know?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph or essay defining marriage—what it is and what it should be. Use specific examples from marriages you know of to illustrate your definition.
2. Write a paragraph defining the word *emotion.* You might try using cause-and-effect development for your definition, showing that something must cause certain effects to qualify as an emotion.

A Cake of Corpses

***Scott** Russell Sanders*

Even a very common rock may be interesting to a knowledgeable observer. In this paragraph, Scott Russell Sanders transmits that interest to us with a skillful, intriguing definition.

Words to Know

fauna animals, fish, and insects

invertebrate without a backbone; usually refers to insects, shellfish, and shrimplike or lobsterlike creatures

leaching the removal of solids from a substance by water

traverse travel over or across

In this region the chief rock is limestone, one of the commonest on earth and the one that wears the shapes of time most handsomely. Like all **limestone,** this local stuff is a cake of corpses, a hardened graveyard of sea creatures. In the warm, shallow oceans that used to cover the **Midwest invertebrate** fauna thrived. As they died, their shells settled to the bottom, where currents slowly wore **them** to bite and sorted the bits **accord ng to** size. Chemicals leaching down from the water gradually cemented these scraps of shell together into thick beds, like a giant layer cake The earth-shrug that heaved up the Appalachian Mountains elevated these beds above sea level, tilting them so that a series of progressively older layers were exposed to the weather and to curious ramblers. If you hike from west to east across southern Indiana you will traverse belt after belt of limestone, ranging in age from about three hundred to about five hundred million years. There are places where you can leap from one outcropping to another and cross a gulf of a thousand centuries. &

Questions About the Reading

1. Who is the writer referring to with the phrase "curious ramblers"?
2. Explain what the writer means in the last sentence.
3. What does the writer think of limestone? Why is he interested in it?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What term describes the use of the word *cake* in the paragraph?
2. What primary **mode of development** does the writer use for his definition?
3. The **main idea** of the paragraph seems to be stated in the first sentence. What does the writer mean by "most handsomely"? How does the rest of the definition clarify and support the main idea?

Writing Assignments

1. In a paragraph, define the word *earth.* Use whatever facts and impressions you like, but you will have to be selective in order to fit your definition into a single paragraph.
2. What is your most satisfying hobby or pastime? Write a paragraph in which you define it.

Grandparents

Nancy Pritts Merrill (Student)

In the paragraph that follows, the writer provides us with an extended definition of the word grandparents *by telling us what they do and how we feel about them at different times in our lives and theirs. The writer, a recent college graduate, makes us understand her feelings about grandparents, and because her feelings are so humo typical, she makes us aware of our own attitudes toward and feelings about gra mis.*

Words to Know

accomplishments achievements
appreciated valued

v-/f all family members, grandparents are probably the least appreciated. They are just people who are always around. They make a fuss over the children in the family, brag to their friends about the accomplishments of this child or that child, and show countless pictures of new babies. Grandfathers can fix anything, and grandmothers always have homemade cookies around. When you are small, it's fun to stay with your grandparents because they always let you do things you can't do at home, and of course they buy you things. They are always available to babysit because they don't go out much and actually prefer to see their grandchildren. They are usually good for a small loan now and then that doesn't need to be paid back because they turn it into a gift. You respectfully listen to their advice but don't follow it because they are old and don't understand how things are in this day and age. You thank them politely for what they do for you, and then don't call or visit them until you need something else. And of course you never tell them how dear they are to you because they know how you feel about them anyway. Then all of a sudden, they are no longer there to do the things that only grandparents do, and you find yourself wishing that you had told them what they meant to you as people and not just as grandparents.

Questions About the Reading

1. What are some of the examples that the writer uses to define grandparents? What are some of the examples she uses to tell how we treat grandparents?
2. Do children understand that grandparents will not always be there? Support your answer with statements from the paragraph.
3. What does the writer mean when she says, "you find yourself wishing that you had told them what they meant to you as people and not just as grandparents"?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the main **mode of development** that the writer uses to define grandparents?
2. Do you think the writer's definition of grandparents is correct? Is part of her definition **implied** rather than directly stated?
3. What is the **point of** view in the paragraph? Does it change? If so, could the writer have maintained the same point of view throughout the paragraph? Explain how it could be done.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph in which you define a true *friend* by giving **examples** of the person's behavior.
2. Using descriptive details, write a paragraph defining what it means to be happy or sad, angry, tired, or hungry.
3. Write a paragraph in which you define what the word *parent* means to you. Use several *modes of development:* examples, description, narration—whatever is appropriate. You might want to begin by **brainstorming** to see what **connotations** the word *parent* has for you.

Baseball's Hot Dogs

Jim Kaplan

Baseball, the game of inches, requires precision performance and intense concentration. Do grandstanding arid posturing constitute unfair psychological interference? In this definition of hot-dogging, Jim Kaplan presents some expert opinions on the question.

Words to Know

imperturbable not easily disturbed
repertoire collection of dramatic skills

Here's Rickey Henderson at the plate. Taking forever to situate himself in the batter's box, the New York Yankees outfielder crouches low and extends a shy left foot, like a man inching into a cold swimming pool. A pitch arrives on the inside corner. Henderson twists away and then looks shocked when the umpire calls it a strike. Finally, Rickey sees a pitch he likes and rides it out of the park. 1

Now the real fun begins. Playing shamelessly to the crowd and camera, Henderson chucks his bat high over his head, ambles to first by way of the Yankee dugout, lowers his head and proceeds around the bases in an endless, mock-serious trot. The fans love it. The opponents do not. 2

Henderson is baseball's foremost "hot dog"—and his repertoire is so varied and controversial that his employers have actually put pressure on him to modify his style. This spring, the Yankees proposed banning Henderson's famous "snatch," a one-handed catch in which he snaps his glove down like a teacher scrawling a semicircle on a blackboard and finishes with it pressed to his heart. 3

"They said, 'Rickey, the only snatch you can make is the last out of the World Series/" explained Henderson, adding that he thought he could still get away with it on occasion. "I want to show I can do more than catch. I want to show I can *catch.* To me, the snatch isn't hot-dogging; it's style. People say I'm a hot dog. What *is* a hot dog?" 4

Good question. *"A* hot dog is someone whose actions put down someone on another team," says Doug DeCinces, the former major-league third baseman now playing for Tokyo's Yakult Swallows. 5

"Hot-dogging is unnecessarily calling attention to yourself," adds Roy Smalley, the well traveled former American League infielder. 6

But there's another point of view: that hot-dogging is flair and zest, the very ingredients that make baseball so entertaining on the air or in person. Hot dogs contribute to baseball science, strategy and style. Some hot dogs show off; others motivate themselves; still others intimidate the opposition; most are entertaining. 7

Henderson may qualify on every count. "I never try to put anyone down," he says. "I take my time getting into the box because I'm thinking of the pitches I'm going to get." But he knows only too well the effect his apparent stalling has. Even as imperturbable a pitching pro as the now-retired Tom Seaver got so flustered that he had to turn his back on the mound until Henderson had set himself to hit. 8

"Rickey has always played with flair," says Milwaukee manager Tom Trebelhorn, who handled Henderson in the minors. "When he played for me, he drove the other side crazy. Now he drives *me* crazy." 9

National League managers echo those sentiments about the San Francisco Giants' Jeffrey "Hac-Man" Leonard, who showcased his trademark "flap down" home-run trot (one arm pinned to his side) four times during the 1987 League Championship Series. 10

"[One flap down] is entertaining, a guy having fun," the unflappable Leonard has told reporters. "Anything that provides energy gets me up. Like Muhammad Ali, we'll bring out the best in our opponents, and that'll make us better." 11

Oh, there are many kinds of baseball hot dogs—kosher and otherwise. Cleveland's Mel Hall used to round the bases with a batting glove in each back pocket arranged to flap "bye-bye." He has since contained his act. But there's no containing Dennis "Oil Can" Boyd, the Boston Red Sox pitcher who celebrates good fortune by variously high-fiving and low-fiving teammates, waving to the crowd, doing clenched-fist "out" calls and Michael Jackson struts, and snapping his fingers as he walks off the mound. 12

Oil Can (the nickname is Mississippi slang for beer can) grew up playing with older men who had starred in the Negro leagues. "I had a lead-off hitter who drag-bunted with the bat behind his back," says Boyd. "My fielders would turn [the double play] by throwing the ball between their legs. A first baseman named Bud Moore said to throw to him in the dirt so he could pick it and look good. When I punched [struck] a guy out, I'd say, 'Get outta here—next guy up.' To hot-dog was the way to play." 13

TV may be the biggest boon to hot-dogging since the invention of mustard. Midway through the 1982 World Series, St. Louis pitcher Joaquin Andujar was struck on the leg by a line drive and carried off in apparent agony. NBC sportscaster Bob Costas raced down to the 14

dugout expecting to report on a broken leg. The Cardinals made faces and winked at him. "Television time," they were saying. Sure enough, Andujar returned to pitch and win the final game.

"These days there are fewer characters but more character-acting," 15
says Costas. "You can almost choreograph your own moment, and the camera will do the rest."

Hot *dog* 16

Questions About the Reading

1. What *is* a hot dog? Fashion your own definition, based on the essay and your personal opinions.
2. What is the difference between catching and *catching* (paragraph 4)? Why does Henderson want to show that he can *catch?*
3. What do you think the writer's opinion of hot-dogging is? Does he offer any conclusions about it?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What two similes does the writer use in his description of Henderson?
2. Identify the subjective elements in this essay.
3. What primary mode does the writer use to develop his definition?
4. What is the tone of the essay? What type of audience do you think the essay is aimed at?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay in which you define some other behavior in which people use different styles or about which they have various opinions, like flirting, arguing, dancing, or even walking. Try to talk to people about the behavior and use dialogue in your definition, as Kaplan does.
2. Write an essay defining the term *essay.* (Put this book aside and don't refer to it for help in composing your definition.)

Defining Success

Michael Korda

Michael Korda has written several books with the intention of ***helping*** *people get the most out of their work and their lives. The titles of his books tell you exactly what he has in mind for you*—Power! *and* Success! *But before he can tell you (as the subtitle of his first book puts it) "how to get it, how to use it," he wants to be sure you understand what* it *is. In the first chapter of* Success! *he presents this controversial definition.*

***Words** to Know*

conglomerate a business corporation made up of many different companies
degenerate decrease in quality or size
grandiose large, great
relative determined in relation to something else
superseded taken over, replaced
unethical lacking in honesty or principles

Uthers may ask how you define success. This is more difficult. Success is relative; not everybody wants to put together a four-billion-dollar conglomerate, or become President of the United States, or win the Nobel Peace Prize. It is usually a mistake to begin with such grandiose ambitions, which tend to degenerate into lazy daydreams. The best way to succeed is to begin with a reasonably realistic goal and attain it, rather than aiming at something so far beyond your reach that you are bound to fail, it's also important to make a habit of succeeding, and the easiest way to start is to succeed at something, however small, every day, gradually increasing the level of your ambitions and achievements like a runner in training, who begins with short distances and works up to Olympic levels.

Try to think of success as a journey, an adventure, not a specific des- 2
tination. Your goals may change during the course of that journey, and your original ambitions may be superseded by different, larger ones. Success will certainly bring you the material things you want, and a good, healthy appetite for the comforts and luxuries of life is an excellent road to success, but basically you'll know you have reached your goal when you have gone that one step further, in wealth, fame or achievement, than you ever dreamed was possible.

How you become a success is, of course, your business. Morality has 3
very little to do with success. I do not personally think it is necessary

to be dishonest, brutal or unethical in order to succeed, but a great many dishonest, brutal or unethical people in fact do succeed. You'd better be prepared for the fact that success is seldom won without some tough infighting along the way. A lot depends on your profession, of course. There is a great deal of difference between setting out to become a success in a Mafia family and trying to become vice president of a bank, but the differences simply consist of contrasting social customs and of what is the appropriate way to get ahead in a given profession or business. Whether you're hoping to take over a numbers game or an executive desk, you have to make the right moves for your circumstances. In the former example, you might have to kill someone; in the latter, you might only have to find ways of making your rivals look foolish or inefficient. In either case, you have to accept the rules of the game and play to win, or find some other game. This is a book about success, after all, not morality. The field you go into is your choice, but whatever it is, you're better off at the top of it than at the bottom.

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer say is the best way to succeed?
2. What does the writer mean when he says to "think of success as a journey, an adventure, not a specific destination"? Does this sentence in any way contradict what he says is the best way to succeed?
3. What does Korda mean by his statement "Morality has very little to do with success"?
4. What does Korda suggest you do if you have to violate your moral standards to achieve success in your field?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Does the writer actually define success? If so, identify the sentenced) in which he does so.
2. What is the **main idea** (thesis) of the essay?
3. What are the **tone** and **point of view** of the essay? Why should we consider the writer an authority on success?
4. Do you believe that how a person becomes a success is that person's business only? Why or why not?

Writing Assignments

1. Korda focuses on success in terms of people's professions, but people can be professional successes and personal failures. Write an essay in which you define success in terms of a person's life.
2. Write an essay in which you define one of the following terms: *competition, cooperation,* or *ambition.* Give several examples. Develop a paragraph for each example.
3. Write an essay defining *morality.* Use whatever **modes of development** seem appropriate.

It's Failure, Not Success

Ellen Goodman

Not everyone agrees with Michael Korda's "get-what-you-can" mentality (see 248-250). Ellen Goodman found herself getting more and more disturbed as she read Korda's words to live by. She was certain there must be more to the truly successful Ijf So she wrote her own definition of success *and applied another term,* failure, *to the self serving life Korda described. Do you agree with Korda or with Goodman?*

Words to ***Know***

ambivalence simultaneously having different feelings or attitudes

bigot an intolerant or prejudiced person

edits cuts out, does away with

excised removed

Fanny Farmer author of a **well-known cookbook**

finesses glosses over

intent determined

judgmental having an opinion about something, criticizing it

Machiavellian having political principles that are based on craftiness and doing anything necessary to get ahead

machete-ing using a machete or heavy knife

napalm a firm jelly used in flame throwers and incendiary bombs

placebo a substance given as medication that does not contain actual medication

J. knew a man who went into therapy about three years ago because, as he put it, he couldn't live with himself any longer. I didn't blame him. The guy was a bigot, a tyrant and a creep.

In any case, I ran into him again after he'd finished therapy. He was still a bigot, a tyrant and a creep, *but...* he had learned to live with himself.

Now, I suppose this was an accomplishment of sorts. I mean, nobody else could live with him. But it seems to me that there are an awful lot of people running around and writing around these days encouraging us to feel good about what we should feel terrible about, and to accept in ourselves what we should change.

*fT*he only thing they seem to disapprove of is disapproval. The only *judgment* they make is against being judgmental, and they assure us that we have nothing to feel guilty about except guilt itself. It seems *to* me that they are all intent on proving that I'm OK and You're OK, when in fact, I may be perfectly dreadful and you may be unforgivably *dreary,* and it may be—gasp!—*wrong.*

What brings on my sudden attack of judgmentitis is success, or rather, *Success!*—the latest in a series of exclamation-point books all concerned with How to Make It. 5

In this one, Michael Korda is writing a recipe book for success. Like the other authors, he leapfrogs right over the "Shoulds" and into the "Hows." He eliminates value judgments and edits out moral questions as if he were Fanny Farmer and the subject was the making of a blueberry pie. 6

It's not that I have any reason to doubt Mr. Korda's advice on the way to achieve success. It may very well be that successful men wear handkerchiefs stuffed neatly in their breast pockets, and that successful single women should carry suitcases to the office on Fridays whether or not they are going away for the weekend. 7

He may be realistic when he says that "successful people generally have very low expectations of others." And he may be only slightly cynical when he writes: "One of the best ways to ensure success is to develop expensive tastes or marry someone who has them." 8

And he may be helpful with his handy hints on how to sit next to someone you are about to overpower. 9

But he simply finesses the issues of right and wrong—silly words, embarrassing words that have been excised like warts from the shiny surface of the new how-to books. To Korda, guilt is not a prod, but an enemy that he slays on page four. Right off the bat, he tells the would-be successful reader that: 10

- It's OK to be greedy.
- It's OK to look out for Number One.
- It's OK to be Machiavellian (if you can get away with it).
- It's OK to recognize that honesty is not always the best policy (provided you don't go around saying so).
- And it's always OK to be rich.

Well, in fact, it's not OK. It's not OK to be greedy, Machiavellian, dishonest. It's not always OK to be rich. There is a qualitative difference between succeeding by making napalm or by making penicillin. 11

There is a difference between climbing the ladder of success, and machete-ing a path to the top.

Only someone with the moral perspective of a mushroom could assure us that this was all OK. It seems to me that most Americans harbor ambivalence toward success, not for neurotic reasons, but out of a realistic perception of what it demands. 12

Success is expensive in terms of time and energy and altered behavior—the sort of behavior he describes in the grossest of terms: "If you can undermine your boss and replace him, fine, do so, but never express anything but respect and loyalty for him while you're doing it." 13

This author—whose *Power!* topped the best-seller list last year—is intent on helping rid us of that ambivalence which is a signal from our conscience. He is like the other "Win!" "Me First!" writers, who try to make us comfortable when we should be uncomfortable. 14

They are all Doctor Feelgoods, offering us placebo prescriptions instead of strong medicine. They give us a way to live with ourselves, perhaps, but not a way to live with each other. They teach us a whole lot more about "Failure!" than about success. 15

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean when she says, "he leapfrogs over the 'Shoulds' and into the 'Hows'?"
2. What is the "qualitative difference between succeeding by making napalm or by making penicillin?"
3. What is the "moral perspective of a mushroom"? Does Korda have such a perspective, in your opinion?
4. What does success demand that makes Americans ambivalent about it? What is it about Korda's brand of success that should make us uncomfortable?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the writer defining in this essay?
2. Does the essay contain a thesis statement? State the thesis in a sentence of your own. What is the function of the first four paragraphs of the essay?
3. Does the writer indicate that she is being subjective? If so, how?
4. Find a simile in paragraph 10. What is its effect?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay defining *failure.*
2. Write an essay defining *generosity* or *kindness.*
3. Write an essay in which you define something by saying what it is not. Possible topics might include fishing ("Fishing is not a pastime for the impatient . . ."); voting ("Voting is not a chore, nor is it a spur of the moment act. . ."), writing ("Writing is not as hard as it seems, and it should not be threatening..."); winning or losing; or being rich or poor.

What Is Intelligence, Anyway?

Isaac Asimov

Many of us think that intelligence is something one is simply born with, or that it has to do iviih doing well in school or scoring highly on IQ tests. But did you ever stop to think about what IQ tests really *measure? In the essay that follows, Isaac Asimov asks us to rethink our definition of intelligence.*

Words to Know

aptitude **ability**

arbiter someone who has the power to judge
complacent **self-satisfied**
intricate elaborate
KP kitchen patrol
oracles people able to foresee the future or make prophecies
raucously loudly

What is intelligence, anyway? When I was in the army I received a kind of aptitude test that all soldiers took and, against a normal of 100, scored 160. No one at the base had ever seen a figure like that, and for two hours they made a big fuss over me. (It didn't mean anything. The next day I was still a buck private with KP as my highest duty.)

All my life I've been registering scores like that, so that I have the complacent feeling that I'm highly intelligent, and I expect other people to think so, too. Actually, though, don't such scores simply mean that I am very good at answering the type of academic questions that are considered worthy of answers by the people who make up the intelligence tests—people with intellectual bents similar to mine? 2

For instance, I had an auto-repair man once, who, on these intelligence tests, could not possibly have scored more than 80, by my estimate. I always took it for granted that I was far more intelligent than he was. Yet, when anything went wrong with my car I hastened to him with it, watched him anxiously as he explored its vitals, and listened to his pronouncements as though they were divine oracles—and he always fixed my car. 3

Well, then, suppose my auto-repair man devised questions for an intelligence test. Or suppose a carpenter did, or a farmer, or, indeed, almost anyone but an academician. By every one of those tests, I'd 4

prove myself a moron. And I'd *be* a moron, too. In a world where I could not use my academic training and my verbal talents but had to do something intricate or hard, working with my hands, I would do poorly. My intelligence, then, is not absolute but is a function of the society I live in and.of the fact that a small subsection of that society has managed to foist itself on the rest as an arbiter of such matters.

Consider my auto-repair man, again. He had a habit of telling me jokes whenever he saw me. One time he raised his head from under the automobile hood to say: Doc,, a deaf-and-dumb guy went into a hardware store to ask for some nans. He put two fingers together on the counter and made hammering mouorfewith the other hand. The clerk brought him a haminer.' He shook nis head and pointed to the two fingers he was hammering. The clerk brought him nails. He picked out the sizes he wanted, and left. Well, Doc, the next guy who came in was a blind man. He wanted scissors. How do you suppose he asked for them?" -, 5

Indulgently, I lifted my right hand and made scissoring motions with my first two fingers. Whereupon my auto-repair man laughed raucously and said, "Why, you dumb jerK; ne used his *voice* and asked for them." Then he said, smugly, "I've been trying that on all my customers today." "Did you catch many?" I asked. "Quite a few," he said, "but I knew for sure I'd catch *you."* "Why is that?" I asked. "Because you're so goddamned educated, Doc, I *knew* you couldn't be very smart." 6

And 1 have an uneasy feeling he had something there. 7

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer mean when he says, "My intelligence, then, is not an absolute but is a function of the society I live in?"
2. What distinction does the writer make between being educated and being smart?
3. Do you think the repairman is smarter than the writer? Why or why not?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What **mode of development** does the writer use in paragraphs 5 and 6? What is the purpose of these paragraphs?
2. Does the writer actually define *intelligence?* If so, state his definition in your own words. If not, explain why not.
3. In paragraph 6, the writer says he made the scissoring motion "indulgently." What does this tell you about his attitude toward the joke? Why is his attitude ironic?
4. Does the essay contain a thesis statement? If so, where is it located? If not, state it in your own words.
5. Is the repairman a symbol? If so, what does he represent?

Writing Assignments

1. Imagine a society in which intelligence is measured by how well people can work with their hands and fix machinery. Write a definition of intelligence for that society.
2. Write an essay defining the term *joke.* Use examples to illustrate your definition.
3. Pick one of the following concepts and define it in an essay: *beauty, truth, wisdom,* or *quality.*

Migraines

***Joan** Dtdion*

For people who have never experienced one, it is difficult to understand what a migraine headache is. In the following essay, taken from The White Album, *Joan Didion defines migraines, explains their causes and cures, and tells how she has learned to live with them.*

Words to Know

aphasia inability to speak
cerebral of or related to the brain
contraindications indications that something **is** inadvisable
contretemps embarrassing incident
convalescent healing
debility weakness
euphoria a feeling of well-being
histamine a substance used to dilate, or enlarge, the blood vessels
incapacitating disabling
lobotomy surgery to cut nerves in the brain
predisposition a tendency or inclination
vascular of the blood vessels
yoga a Hindu discipline

X hree, four, sometimes five times a month, I spend the day in bed with a migraine headache, insensible to the world around me. Almost every day of every month, between these attacks, I feel the sudden irrational irritation and the flush of blood into the cerebral arteries which tell me that migraine is on its way, and I take certain drugs to avert its arrival. If I did not take the drugs, I would be able to function perhaps one day in four. The physiological error called migraine is, in brief, central to the given of my life. When I was 15, 16, even 25, I used to think that I could rid myself of this error by simply denying it, character over chemistry. "Do you have headaches *sometimes? frequently? never?"* the application forms would demand. "Check one." Wary of the trap, wanting whatever it was that the successful circumnavigation of that particular form could bring (a job, a scholarship, the respect of mankind and the grace of God), I would check one. *"Sometimes,"* I would lie. That in fact I spent one or two days a week almost unconscious with pain seemed a shameful secret, evidence, not

merely of some chemical inferiority but of all my bad attitudes, unpleasant tempers, wrongthink.

For I had no brain Junior, no eyestrain, no high blood pressure, 2
nothing wrong with me at all: I simply had migraine headaches, and migraine headaches were, as everyone who did not have them knew, imaginary. I fought migraine then, ignored the warnings it sent, went *id* school and later to work in spite of it, sat through lectures in Middle English and presentations to advertisers with involuntary tears running down the right side of my face, threw up in washrooms, stumbled home by instinct, emptied ice trays onto my bed and tried to freeze the pain in my right temple, wished only for a neurosurgeon. who would do a lobotomy on house call, and cursed my imagination.

It was a long time before I began thinking mechanistically enough 3
to accept migraine for what it was: something with which I would be living, the way some people live with diabetes. Migraine is something more than the fancy of a neurotic imagination. It is an essentially her reditary complex of symptoms, the most frequently noted but by no means the most unpleasant of which is a vascular headache of blinding severity, suffered by a surprising number of women, a fair number of men (Thomas Jefferson had migraine, and so did Ulysses S. Grant, the day he accepted Lee's surrender), and by some unfortunate children as young as two years old. (I had my first when I was eight. It came on during a fire drill at the Columbia School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. I was taken first home and then to the infirmary, at Peterson Field, where my father was stationed. The Air Corps doctor prescribed an enema.) Almost anything can trigger a specific attack of migraine: stress, allergy, fatigue, an abrupt change in barometric pressure, a contretemps over a parking ticket. A flashing light. A fire drill. One inherits, of course, only the predisposition. In other words I spent yesterday in bed with a headache not merely because of my bad attitudes, unpleasant tempers and wrongthink, but because both my grandmothers had migraine, my father has migraine and my mother has migraine.

No one knows precisely what it is that is inherited. The chemistry 4
of migraine, however, seems to have some connection with the nerve hormone named serotonin, which is naturally present in the brain. The amount of serotonin in the blood falls sharply at the onset of migraine, and one migraine drug, methysergide, or Sansert, seems to have some effect on serotonin. Methysergide is a derivative of lysergic acid (in fact Sandoz Pharmaceuticals first synthesized LSD-25 while looking for a migraine cure), and its use is hemmed about with so many contraindications and side effects that most doctors prescribe it only in the most incapacitating cases. Methysergide, when it is prescribed, is

taken daily, as a preventive; another preventive which works for some people is old-fashioned ergotamine tartrate, which helps to constrict the swelling blood vessels during the "aura," the period which in most cases precedes the actual headache.

Once an attack is under way, however, no drug touches it. Migraine 5
gives some people mild hallucinations, temporarily blinds others, shows up not only as a headache but as a gastrointestinal disturbance, a painful sensitivity to all sensory stimuli, an abrupt overpowering fatigue, a strokelike aphasia, and a crippling inability to make even the most routine connections. When I am in a migraine aura (for some people the aura lasts fifteen minutes, for others several hours), I will drive through red lights, lose the house keys,, spill whatever I am holding, lose the ability to focus my eyes or frame coherent sentences, and generally give the appearance of being on drugs, or drunk. The actual headache, when it comes, brings with it chills, sweating, nausea, a debility that seems to stretch the very limits of endurance. That no one dies of migraine seems, to someone deep into an attack, an ambiguous blessing.

My husband also has migraine, which is unfortunate for him but 6
fortunate for me: perhaps nothing so tends to prolong an attack as the accusing eye of someone who has never had a headache. "Why not take a couple of aspirin," the unafflicted will say from the doorway, or "I'd have a headache, too, spending a beautiful day like this inside with all the shades drawn." All of us who have migraine suffer not only from the attacks themselves but from this common conviction that we are adversely refusing to cure ourselves by taking a couple of aspirin, that we are making ourselves sick, that we "bring it on ourselves." And in the most immediate sense, the sense of why we have a headache this Tuesday and not last Thursday, of course we often do. There certainly is what doctors call a "migraine personality," and that personality tends to be ambitious, inward, intolerant of error, rather rigidly organized, perfectionist. "You don't look like a migraine personality," a doctor once said to me. "Your hair's messy. But I suppose you're a compulsive housekeeper." Actually my house is kept even more negligently than my hair, but the doctor was right nonetheless: perfectionism can also take the form of spending most of a week writing and rewriting and not writing a single paragraph.

But not all perfectionists have migraine, and not all migrainous peo- 7
pie have migraine personalities. We do not escape heredity. I have tried in most of the available ways to escape my own migrainous heredity (at one point I learned to give myself two daily injections of histamine with a hypodermic needle, even though the needle so fright-

ened me that I had to close my eyes when I did it), but I still have migraine. And I have learned now to live with it, learned when to expect it, how to outwit it, even how to regard it, when it does come, as more friend than lodger. We have reached a certain understanding, my migraine and I. It never comes when I am in real trouble. Tell me that my house is burned down, my husband has left me, that there is gunfighting in the streets and panic in the banks, and I will not respond by getting a headache. It comes instead when I am fighting not an open but a guerrilla war with my own life, during weeks of small household confusions, lost laundry, unhappy help, canceled appointments, on days when the telephone rings too much and I get no work done and the wind is coming up. On days like that my friend comes uninvited.

And once it comes, now that I am wise in its ways, 1 no longer fight 8
it. I lie down and let it happen. At first every small apprehension is magnified, every anxiety a pounding terror. Then the pain comes, and I concentrate only on that. Right there is the usefulness of migraine, there in that imposed yoga, the concentration on the pain. For when the pain recedes, ten or twelve hours later, everything goes with it, all the hidden resentments, all the vain anxieties. The migraine has acted as a circuit breaker, and the fuses have emerged intact. There is a pleasant convalescent euphoria. 1 open the windows and feel the air, eat gratefully, sleep well. I notice the particular nature of a flower in a glass on the stair landing. I count my blessings.

Questions About the Reading

1. When the writer was younger, why did she lie about the frequency of her headaches?
2. Explain the meaning of the last sentence in paragraph 3.
3. Why is the writer grateful that her husband also suffers from migraines?
4. How has the writer learned to cope with her migraines?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the predominant **mode of development** used to define migraines?
2. Does the writer actually tell what a migraine headache is? If so, locate the sentences in which the definition appears.
3. Identify the **simile** used in paragraph 8, and explain what it means.
4. The writer switches from the first person 7 in paragraph 4. What **person** does she switch to? Why does she do this?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay defining an everyday ailment from which you sometimes suffer, such as the common cold or the flu.
2. Write an essay defining the term *coping,* using an extended example from your own life, like a medical condition, a physical handicap, the death of a loved one, or a significant failure you have experienced. (If you cannot think of an example from your own life, perhaps you could draw your example from a friend's life.)
3. In an essay, describe *perfectionism.* Include at least three examples of the forms it can take.

What Is a Drug?

Andrew Weil and Winifred Rosen

The topic of drugs raises strong emotions in most people. But what do we mean by a drug? *Is chocolate a* drug? *How about salt? In the following essay from* Chocolate to Morphine: Understanding Mind-Active Drugs, *Andrew Weil and Winifred Rosen question our beliefs about drugs.*

Words to Know

adhere stick to
arbitrary determined by whim and **not by reason**
nonchalant seemingly indifferent
perverts corrupts
procreation production of offspring
sacrament a formal religious rite or practice
taboos forbidden things
yogis those who practice yoga, a Hindu discipline

1VJ. ost people would agree thayieroin is a drug..It is a white powder 1
that produces striking changes in the body and mind in tiny dosesj
But is sugar a drug? Sugar is also a white powder that strongly affects the body, and some experts say it affects mental function and mood as well. Like heroin, it can be addicting. How about chocolate? Most people think of it as a,.food or flavor, but it contains a chemical related to caffeine, is a stimulant, and can also be addicting. Is salt a drug? Many people think they cannot live without it, and it has dramatic effects on the body.

A common definition of the word *drug* is any substance that in srrull 2
amounts^produces significant changes in the body, mind, or bothj This definition does not clearly distinguish drugs from some foods. The difference between a drug and a poison is also unclear. All drugs become poisons in high enough doses, and many poisons are useful drugs in low enough doses. Is alcohol a food, a drug, or a poison? The body can burn it as a fuel, just like sugar or starch, but it causes intoxication and can kill in overdose. Many people who drink alcohol crusade against drug abuse, never acknowledging that they themselves are involved with a powerful drug. In the same way, many cigarette addicts have no idea that tobacco is a very strong drug, and few people who drink coffee realize the true nature of that beverage.

The decision to call some substances drugs and others not is often 3
arbitrary. In the case of medical drugs—substances such as penicillin, used only to treat physical illness—the distinction may be easier to make. But talking about psychoactive drugs—substances that affect mood, perception, and thought—is tricky.

In the first place, foods, drugs, and poisons are not clear-cut catego- 4
ries. Second, people have strong emotional reactions to them. Food is good. Poison is bad. Drugs may be good or bad, and whether they are seen as good or bad depends on who is looking at them. Many people agree that^drugs are good when doctors give them to patients in order to make them better^jSome religious groups^ such as Christian Scientists^do not share that view,.however^They believe that God intends us to deal with illness without drugs.

When people take psychoactive drugs on their own, in order to 5
change their mood or feel pleasure, the question of good or bad gets even thornier. The whole subject of pleasure triggers intense controversy. Should pleasure come as a reward for work or suffering? Should people feel guilty if they experience pleasure without suffering for it in some way? Should work itself be unpleasant? These questions are very important to us, but they do not have easy answers. Different people and different cultures answer them in different ways.

Drug use is universal. Every human culture in every age of history 6
has used one or more psychoactive drugs. (The one exception is the Eskimos, who were unable to grow drug plants and had to wait for white men to bring them alcohol.) In fact, drug-taking is so common that it seems to be a basic human activity. Societies must come to terms with people's fascination with drugs Usually the use of certain drugs is approved and integrated into the life of a tribe, community, or nation, sometimes in formal rituals and **ceremonies** The approval of some drugs for some purposes usually goes hand in hand with the disapproval of other drugs for other purposes. For example, some early Muslim sects encouraged the use of coffee in religious rites, but had strict prohibitions against alcohol. On the other hand, when coffee came to Europe in the seventeenth century, the Roman Catholic Church opposed it as an evil drug but continued to regard wine as a traditional sacrament.

Everybody is willing to call certain drugs bad, but there is little 7
agreement from one culture to the next as to which these are. In our own society^ll nonmedical drugs other than alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine are viewed with suspicion by the majority^here are subgroups within our society, however, that hold very different opinions. Many

North American Indians who use peyote and tobacco in religious rituals consider alcohol a curse. The most fervent members of the counterculture that arose in the 1960s regard marijuana and psychedelics as beneficial while rejecting not only alcohol, tobacco, and coffee but most other legal and illegal drugs as well. Classic heroin addicts, or junkies, may reject psychedelics and marijuana as dangerous but think " of narcotics as desirable and necessary. Some yogis in India use marijuana ritually, but teach that opiates and alcohol are harmful. Muslims may tolerate the use of opium, marijuana, and qat (a strongly stimulating leaf), but are very strict in their exclusion of alcohol.

Furthermore, attitudes about which drugs are good or bad tend to 8
change over time within a given culture. When tobacco first came to Europe from the New World it provoked such strong opposition that authorities in some countries tried to stamp it out by imposing the death penalty for users. But within a century its use was accepted and even encouraged in the belief that it made people work more efficiently. In this century Americans' attitudes toward alcohol have shifted from nonchalant tolerance to antagonism strong enough to result in national prohibition, and back to near-universal acceptance. The current bitter debate over marijuana is mostly a conflict between an older generation that views the drug as evil and a younger generation that finds it preferable to alcohol.

Students of behavior tell us that dividing the world into good and 9
evil is a fundamental human need. The existence of evil provokes fear and demands explanation. Why is there sickness? Why is there death? Why do crops fail? Why is there war? And, most important, how should we act to contain evil and avoid disaster? One attempt at a solution is to attribute evil to external things, and then prohibit, avoid, or try to destroy them. This is how taboos arise.

People tend to create taboos about the activities and substances that 10
are most important to them. Food, sex, and pleasure are very important, and many taboos surround them—although, again, there is little agreement from culture to culture as to what is good and what is bad. Muslims and Jews eat beef but not pork; some groups in India eat pork but not beef. Homosexuality is taboo in most modern Western cultures, but has been fully accepted in the past and is still accepted today in certain parts of the world.

People who adhere to taboos justify them with logical reasons. Jews 11
like to think they do not eat pork because pigs are unclean and may have carried disease in former times. Christians argue that homosexuality is a sin because it perverts God's intended use of sex for procreation. Actually, reasons for taboos are secondary; the basic process is

the dividing of important things into good and evil—a form of magical thinking that tries to gain control over sources of fear. The reasons and justifications come later.

*-Because psychoactive drugs can give pleasure and can change the 12
ways people think, perceive the world, behave, and relate to each other, they invite magical thinking and taboos^ When you hear arguments on the merits or dangers of drugs, even by scientific experts, remember that these may be secondary justifications of pre-existing views that are deep-seated and rooted in emotion. (It is always easy for both sides to produce statistics and "scientific evidence" to support opposing views.)

Because drugs are so connected with people's fears and desires, it 13
is very hard to find neutral information on them. In this book we try to give unbiased facts about all psychoactive drugs people are likely to encounter today. We cannot say that we have no biases about drugs, but we think we know what they are. Our strongest conviction is that drugs themselves are neither good nor bad; rather, £hey are powerful substances that can be put to j^ood or bad uses^Ve are concerned with the relationships people form with drugs, whether legal or illegal, approved or unapproved. We believe that by presenting neutral information about these substances, we can help people, especially young people, come to terms with drugs. Our purpose is not to encourage or discourage the use of any drug, but rather to help people learn to live in a world where drugs exist and not get hurt by them.

Questions About the Reading

1. What are *psychoactive drugs?*
2. In your own words, define *taboos.*
3. Why do the writers think drugs are neither good not bad?
4. Why is it difficult to find neutral or unbiased information on drugs?

Questions About the Writers' Strategies

1. Do the writers actually define *drug?* If so, in which sentence(s) is the definition stated?
2. What other terms do the writers define in the essay?
3. Identify at least three modes of **development** the writers use in different paragraphs of the essay.
4. The writers want the **tone** of the essay to be **objective,** as indicated in paragraph 13. Do you think the writers are successful in sounding objective? Why or why not?
5. What **person,** or **point of view,** do the writers use throughout most of the essay? Does the point of view change anywhere in the essay? If so, where, and what do you think the purpose of the change is?

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay defining marijuana, using extended definition, and state why it should or should not be legalized.
2. Write an essay defining the term *law.* Think, for instance, about whether laws are always right, about how laws change, and about who makes the laws.

Argumentation and Persuasion

ALL EFFECTIVE WRITING involves, to some'extent, argumentation or persuasion. As you have learned from the preceding chapters, writers use various kinds of information to develop a topic or thesis. Such information can be said to "argue" or "persuade" in the sense that it convinces the reader that the writer's idea is true or believable. However, as modes of development, argumentation and persuasion have some particular characteristics that you should know about and be able to use in your own writing.

Let's look first at persuasion in its most obvious form—the advertisement. You should not use sentence fragments in your writing assignments, as the following advertisement does; and of course you should continue to structure your writing according to a main (general) idea and to support it according to the various modes of development. But you will want to appeal to the emotions, qualities, or values that a reader is likely to share or find desirable, as advertisers do. One way to appeal to a reader is to use words for their **connotations**—that is, as explained in the preceding chapter, for the feelings or qualities a reader may associate with the words—rather than for their **denotation,** or dictionary definition.

In the example below, the advertiser uses the words *clean, smooth, fresh,* and *pure innocence.* We associate such words with highly desirable qualities, and the advertiser intends to persuade us that a particular soap will give our skin these qualities. The word *new* implies that the product has been improved and, therefore, is better or more

desirable than its predecessor or a competing product. Notice, too, that the ad appeals to our senses in the description of the soap's lather as *silky* and *soft.*

Connotation
Connotation
Connotation
Connotation
Connotation
Connotation
Connotation

Now. Clean skin with the touch of innocence. The joy of it. Of having skin so clean, so smooth, so fresh, it has the touch of pure innocence. Today, you can capture that feeling, simply by cleansing with the extraordinary new Olay Beauty Bar. Its special Olay lather, silky and soft, creams up to clean when you work it in. The tinier bubbles work in natural harmony with your skin. They lift out impurities, then rinse cleanly away, leaving better skin even before you raise your eyes to the mirror—fresher skin each time, smoother skin at every touch. Again and again, new Olay Beauty Bar cleanses innocence into your skin.

The purpose of persuasion is of course to make the reader accept the writer's idea. That idea may be an opinion or judgment that the reader might not ordinarily share or have knowledge of. The idea may be controversial—as we shall see later the idea of an argument must be—but it does not have to be. The idea may even be humorous. Whatever the idea, the writer will use words and information to appeal to the reader's emotions. Such information may be biased in favor of the writer's idea, but it should be honest and accurate. Notice the emotional strength of the writer's examples in the letter that follows.

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.
4th and Main Street
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102

Dear Sirs:

When my wife died of lung cancer in 1976, I wanted to write you about her love affair with Camel cigarettes. I concluded, however, that it would be an exercise in futility.

I take up the challenge now, because you have publicly announced an advertising campaign to cast doubt on medical reports that cigarettes are a public-health hazard. You call for an open debate. Okay, let's debate.

Example 1: wife

My wife died a painful death. She was just 56 and had smoked at least a pack of Camels a day for 40 years. Coincidentally, just 30 days before her demise her 47-year-old

Example 2: brother-in-law

brother died of the same illness. Both experienced unbearable pain. He, too, was a heavy smoker.

But there is more to this horror story. In 1958, my father died suddenly of a cardiovascular ailment. He'd been a two-pack-a-day man for years, and would "walk a mile for a Camel" when younger. Later in life, he could hardly walk at all. But he still puffed away, day and night, before breakfast and with his meals. He endured continual nasal and respiratory problems, and never enjoyed a day free of a hacking cough.

Example 3: father

A popular pharmacist, he had many doctor friends who urged him to stop smoking. But he was firmly hooked and had been since 1909. Ill with lung disease (emphysema and chronic bronchitis), he had long suffered intensely painful attacks of near-suffocation. In 1955 he was forced to retire and spend his "golden years" either lying on our sofa or propped up in a lounge chair.

In late summer of 1957, I took him to a specialist at the University of Maryland Hospital in Baltimore. There he was told there was no cure for his condition. But he could help himself. "How." he asked. "Stop smoking," was the reply.

That is a tall order for anyone who has smoked for almost 50 years. But my father did not want to live the life of an invalid, so he determined to try. That he succeeded—cold turkey—is nothing short of a miracle. But he really had no other choice, except to suffer.

Within weeks he was breathing easier, and it was not long before he was walking about and driving his car. He got to enjoy life a bit. I'm convinced that giving up smoking added that near-year to his life.

Example 4: daughter

Today, I have a daughter—a working mother of two—who has been addicted to cigarettes since peer pressure in high school encouraged her to smoke. She wants desperately to quit. In fact, she has done so several times, only to be lured back by the smoking of others in her workplace.

Having presented four powerful extended examples, this writer goes on to a thorough persuasive conclusion. You will see below that he uses rhetorical questions to introduce and structure his conclusion. A rhetorical question is a question to which no real answer is expected because only one obvious reply can be made—and that reply will either support or restate the writer's point. Rhetorical questions are fairly common in persuasive writing and in argumentation because they offer a way for writers to emphasize the correctness of their viewpoints.

Okay, R. J. Reynolds, that's my story, What's yours? Are you prepared to tell us that the National Institutes of Health, the Surgeon General and the various voluntary health agencies are all wrong? Are the many scientific studies indicting smoking just so much hogwash?

For the sake of debate, let's assume smoking's critics are wrong. Can you deny that cigarette smoking is addictive? Isn't that fact precisely the reason why you sell so many cigarettes? Is it moral to manufacture and sell *any* product that causes addiction—even if it might otherwise be harm-less? As bad as alcohol abuse is, alcohol is addictive to only a relatively small number of consumers. You" can't say that about cigarettes. Smoking hooks nearly every consumer. And once hooked it is difficult to stop; for some, it seems impossible.

In a free society, people can't be forbidden to smoke. But government does have the obligation to warn the public of the dangers involved. It has the responsibility to hold R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. and others accountable for luring impressionable people to smoke, while suggesting that medical findings establishing a relationship between smoking and cancer, cardiovascular diseases and respiratory ailments are inconclusive.

It's hard to fight the rich tobacco industry, but just maybe, through education, we non-smokers will eventually win. As a witness to so much tragedy caused by smoking, I feel compelled to hope so.

Sincerely,
Gil Crandall

In summary, then, a persuasive paragraph or essay, like the other modes of development, is based on a main (general) idea that is developed by one or more of the modes of development. However, persuasion is also characterized by the use of words or information that appeals to the reader's emotions. The information or evidence used in persuasion may be one-side'd, but it should be honest and accurate. Tlfe topic, or thesis, of persuasion may be controversial, but it does not have to be.

Argumentation, on the other hand, must be based on a controversial idea—an idea that people have different views or opinions about. Although argumentation may include some persuasion, its appeal to the reader should be rational and logical, as opposed to emotional, and

objective, rather than one-sided. A classic or formal argument includes five elements:

- **Statement of the problem**
- **Solution,** the writer's thesis or answer to the problem
- Evidence, the information the writer presents to support or prove the thesis
- **Refutation,** the writer's acknowledgment of and response to the opposing views related to the problem
- **Conclusion,** the writer's summation of the evidence and, generally, a restatement of the thesis

Although you may seldom need to write a paragraph-length argument, it is helpful to examine an example for the elements of argumentation. Notice in the example below that the writer has explained the problem, stated a solution or answer to the problem—which is the topic of the paragraph—provided evidence in support of the solution, refuted the opposing view, and summarized the position taken on the topic.

Statement of the problem

Solution

During the late sixties, and early seventies, political and social activism was rampant on college campuses. Student protests—which were sometimes peaceful and other times violent—addressed issues related totivil rights, the environment, war, nuclear arms, and consumer protection and rights. In recent years, student protests have been much less frequent and, generally, peaceful, causing some writers and politicians to label present-day students as apathetic. Nonsense! Today's students are not apathetic. They simply have different concerns than they did in the sixties and seventies. They are more concerned about, for instance, employment and the quality of their own lives. They are assessing, confronting even, themselves—their hopes, plans, desires, ambitions, and values. They are fighting quietly for their causes—personal or otherwise—by pursuing training and retraining opportunities and by exercising their voting privileges. To say they are apathetic is to ignore the steadfastness with which they are pursuing their goals. To say they are apathetic is to imply that a person is not concerned about an issue unless that person takes to the streets or possibly engages in violent acts on behalf of that issue. The fact is, the current coliege population is older—the average age of community-college students nationwide is about twenty-eight—

S

Evidence

Refutation

Conclusion

more experienced, and in some ways wiser. As a consequence, they have perhaps learned that confrontation may win a battle but lose the war, that in the long run, they must live and work with those persons who hold opposing views. Thus, while they are indeed quieter than their predecessors, they continue to be concerned about such important issues as employment (their own and others), nuclear arms, environment, civil rights, and war. We make a mistake if we write off today's college students as apathetic simply because we do not see physical evidence of their concern.

In the solution section of this sample, did you notice that the writer used the same sentence structure several times ("They are . . ."), and then actually repeated the long opening phrase of one sentence in the next one ("To say that they are apathetic is to . . .")? This technique is called **parallelism.** You may already have learned in composition class that grammatical parallelism is important within a sentence. In rhetorical parallelism, such as that above, the writer uses similar structures in separate sentences to express related ideas. The parallel sentences may occur one after the other, as above, or they may be separated by other sentences or by whole paragraphs. Like rhetorical questions, parallelism is common in argumentation and persuasion because it can help the writer emphasize important points and how they work together to support the main idea.

In a full-length essay, you can of course develop your argument more fully and convincingly than you can in a paragraph. The order in which you present the elements of an argument may differ from the classic argument represented by the paragraph above. For instance, you may want to state the refutation before presenting the evidence for your argument. And sometimes one of the elements of your argument may be implied rather than stated, just as the topic sentence of a paragraph or the main idea of an essay may be implied.

No matter what method is used to develop an argument, however, always remember that the evidence presented to support the solution and the conclusion must be valid—true, supported by facts, accurately expressed, and based on sound reasoning. This is something to watch for not only in your own writing but also when you are reading arguments composed by others. When you read or write an argument, analyze not only the main conclusion but also all the ideas that support it. A conclusion may seem quite sensible based on the evidence the writer supplies, but if the evidence itself is not true and presented logically, the conclusion must be viewed as faulty.

In the essay below, the writer presents her argument according to the classic model. She supports her opinion objectively with facts that give the reader sound reasons to accept her conclusion. Notice that in doing so, she uses several **modes of development,** such as **contrast** and **examples.**

Statement of the problem

Solution

Each year, from late spring to early fall, thousands of high school students and their parents spend a great deal of time and money driving around the country to visit expensive and prestigious colleges that the students think they might like to attend. Each year, thousands of students go through the ritual of applying to and being rejected by these colleges. Instead, they should go to a community college and, after earning their associate degree, transfer to a four-year university to complete their education.

Evidence

Most community colleges offer a wide choice of career or technical programs as well as a curriculum paralleling that offered by a university. If the student has already made a career choice, an associate degree prepares the student to enter the workforce or to continue his or her career study in a four-year university. If the student has not decided on a career, a community college is an excellent place to learn more about many different career possibilities and to complete the general education courses required by either a career or university-parallel program.

Evidence

Most community colleges also have a more diverse population than that of the student's high school. In a community college the student has the opportunity to meet persons of all ages, abilities, and ethnic and racial backgrounds and to improve his or her knowledge and understanding of others.

Evidence

A community college is also much less expensive than most colleges. In addition to the lower cost of tuition and fees, the student can usually live at home and commute to classes, which also saves the high cost of dorm or apartment fees.

It is true, of course, that a community college does not offer the prestige of the more famous universities. But if

Refutation

prestige is significant, the student could complete a baccalaureate and graduate work at a better-known school. And whether the education the student receives at a community college is equal to that provided by a more prestigious university can be determined only on a case-by-case basis, since much of the success of any education depends on the individual student.

The fact is, for most students a community college is a sound educational and economic choice. Instead of engaging in the expensive and time-consuming spring-to-fall ritual of college shopping, most students would be as well or better served by taking advantage of the educational opportunity offered by their local community college.

Conclusion

6

When you read an argument, remember too, that a writer may present facts selectively. That is, the writer may not give you all the facts relating to an issue or problem. For this reason, it is advisable to read and consider arguments on both sides of the controversy and to carefully select the facts when you are trying to form an opinion about an important issue. It will then be up to you when writing an argumentation paper to interpret the facts and conclusions presented to decide which ones are most valid and which ones you will use to support your own writing.

In summary, although argumentation and persuasion have a common purpose—to convince the reader to accept the writer's opinion—they differ principally in the way the writer appeals to the reader. In argumentation, the writer supports the topic or thesis by presenting objective, logical evidence that appeals to the reader's reason. In persuasion, the writer does not necessarily abandon objectivity or logic, but uses words or other information that appeals to the reader's emotions. Also, although the thesis of persuasion *may* be controversial, the thesis of an argument *must* be. In both argumentation and persuasion, the writer makes use of whatever modes of development are effective and appropriate.

In school and beyond, you will almost certainly encounter occasions when you will want to use argumentation or persuasion to make a point to your audience. Whether you are doing so orally or in writing, being familiar with techniques used in argumentation and

^uaus

persuasion will help you- The reading selections that follow provide examples of many such techniques employed by experienced writers. The questions at the ends of the readings will help you understand these techniques, and the writing assignments will give you a chance to apply them yourself.

The Inflammable River

VineDeloria,Jr.

Vine Deloria, Jr., is a Native American activist who writes compelling!}/ about the situation of American Indians today. In the paragraph that follows, taken from the introduction to his book We Talk, You Listen, *he argues that white people have destroyed the natural environment.*

Word to Know

combustible capable of being set on fire

very now and then I am impressed with the thinking of the non-Indian. I was in Cleveland last year and got to talking with a non-Indian about American history. He said that he was really sorry about what happened to Indians, but that there was good reason for it. The continent had to be developed and he felt that Indians had stood in the way and thus had had to be removed. "After all," he remarked, "what did you do with the land when you had it?" I didn't understand him until later when I discovered that the Cuyahoga River running - through Cleveland is inflammable. So many combustible pollutants are dumped into the river that the inhabitants have to take special precautions during the summer to avoid accidentally setting it on fire. After reviewing the argument of my non-Indian friend I decided that he was probably correct. Whites had made better use of the land. How many Indians could have thought of creating an inflammable river?

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the non-Indian mean when he says, "What did you do with the land when you had it?"
2. In what sense did the writer not understand the non-Indian's question?
3. Does the writer really think that the non-Indians have made better use of the land? Explain.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. What is the **tone** of this paragraph? How does the tone contribute to the persuasiveness of the paragraph?
2. Why does Deloria refer to his non-Indian acquaintance as a friend? Do you think he is serious?
3. What **mode** of **development** is used to develop the paragraph?
4. Does the paragraph have a **topic sentence?** What is the purpose of the first sentence of the paragraph?
5. Is the Cuyahoga a symbol? If so, what does it stand for?

Writing Assignments

1. Rewrite the paragraph, but instead of using irony, use a serious-minded tone.
2. Imagine that a developer has proposed building a shopping mall that will destroy a large area of marshland in your town. Write a paragraph arguing for or against the mall. You may want to go to the library and read a little about wetlands before you write.
3. Do you think that the development of industry in the United States represents progress? Write a paragraph or essay in which you define progress and then argue for or against industrial development.

Beer Can

John Updike

Like Vine Deloria, fohn Updike doesn't think progress is always wonderful But his perspective in this paragraph is quite different from Deloria's. Sometimes, he complains, progress can thoughtlessly alter the little things in life, taking away their rewarding, comfortable familiarity. (Note: This paragraph was written in 1964, before can makers had created drink cans with the molded bottoms they have today.)

Words to Know

gratuitous done for its own sake, useless

1 his seems to be an era of gratuitous inventions and negative improvements. Consider the beer can. It was beautiful—as beautiful as the clothespin, as inevitable as the wine bottle, as dignified and reassuring as the fire hydrant. A tranquil cylinder of delightfully resonant metal, it could be opened in an instant, requiring only the application of a handy gadget freely dispensed by every grocer. Who can forget the small, symmetrical thrill of those two triangular punctures, the dainty *pfffff,* the little crest of suds that foamed eagerly in the exultation of release? Now we are given, instead, a top beetling with an ugly, shmoo-shaped "tab," which, after fiercely resisting the tugging, bleeding fingers of the thirsty man, threatens his lips with a dangerous and hideous hole. However, we have discovered a way to thwart Progress, usually so unthwartable. *Turn the beer can upside down and open the bottom.* The bottom is still the way the top used to be. True, this operation gives the beer an unsettling jolt, (\nd the sight of a consistently inverted beer can might make people edgy, not to say queasy. But the latter difficulty could be eliminated if manufacturers would design cans that looked the same whichever end was up, like playing cards. What we need is Progress with **an** escape hatch.

Questions About the Reading

1. What is the "handy gadget so freely dispensed by grocers"?
2. Why might an upside-down beer can make people edgy or queasy? How does this suggestion relate to the main point of the paragraph?
3. Describe in your own words what it is that the writer liked about pre-pop-top beer cans.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. One problem leads to another in this paragraph. Where does the writer state the problems? Where does he state the solutions?
2. Describe the **connotations** of the word *beetling.* If you like, just brainstorm for a short list of other words *beetling* makes you think of.
3. What does the writer mean in the final sentence? What is the irony in this **statement?**
4. Although the writer cites only irrefutable facts in the paragraph, he clearly is not entirely serious or objective in his **tone.** What methods does he use to overstate the importance of his topic? How does his choice of words contribute to his method?
5. Compare Updike's portrayal of progress in this paragraph with that expressed by Deloria in "The Inflammable River." What similarities or differences do you see in the writers' methods? Is Updike also making as serious **a** point as that made by Deloria?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a paragraph in which you argue for or against allowing students to use calculators in elementary and junior high school classes. Include a statement of the problem, evidence, and a statement of the solution.
2. Write a paragraph in which you try to persuade readers of the *benefits* of contemporary aluminum cans. Think of all the benefits you can, even far-fetched ones, but be sure your evidence consists of verifiable facts. (If aluminum cans don't appeal **to** you, think of another everyday object that has undergone changes in recent years—the telephone, the video recorder, the stereo system, contact lenses.)

The Vandal and the Sportsman

Joseph Wood Krutch

Joseph Wood Krutch was a noted scholar, in fields ranging from literature (which he taught) to sociology. Forced by his health to leave New York City for Tucson, Arizona, he became a passionate advocate of nature and especially of the desert wilderness. In this paragraph, taken from an essay in The Best Nature Writing of Joseph Wood Krutch, *he explains why he feels that hunting animals "for sport" is a pure evil, the kind which has no excuse, no possible good to be gained at all.*

Words to Know

gratuitously without justification; unnecessarily
impediment obstacle
unscrupulous without regard for what is right
Vandal a member of a Germanic tribe that attacked ancient Rome; *vandalism* means the willful or malicious destruction of property, especially something beautiful

Most wicked deeds are done because the doer proposes some good to himself. The liar lies to gain some end; the swindler and thief want things which, if honestly got, might be good in themselves. Even the murderer may be removing an impediment to normal desires or gaining possession of something which his victim keeps from him. None of these usually does evil for evil's sake. They are selfish or unscrupulous, but their deeds are not gratuitously evil. The killer for sport has no such comprehensible motive. He prefers death to life, darkness to light. He gets nothing except the satisfaction of saying, "Something which wanted to live is dead. There is that much less vitality, consciousness, and, perhaps, joy in the universe. I am the Spirit that Denies." When a man wantonly destroys one of the works of man we call him Vandal. When he wantonly destroys one of the works of God we call him Sportsman.

Questions About the Reading

1. According to the author, is the person who hunts animals for pure sport worse than a liar or murderer?
2. According to the author, why is it worse to destroy a helpless animal "legally" than to rob a bank or to vandalize a park?
3. In your own words, state the motive of the killer for sport.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Many words used in persuasive writing are **connotative** and can trigger a reader's emotion. Which words does the writer use to accomplish this?
2. How does the writer show the reader that he believes that our society condones those who kill animals for sport?
3. What mode of development does the writer use to develop his paragraph?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a persuasive paragraph in which you try to convince your reader that one of the following is "evil": gun control laws or the absence of such laws, our present nuclear arms policy, football in our society, killing or trapping wild animals for their fur, or driving while intoxicated.
2. Proponents of hunting argue that in many cases it is an essential form of population control for wild species, and they cite many other positive qualities of the sport. Write a persuasive paragraph refuting Krutch's statements about the attitude of hunters and the nature of hunting. (If you agree with Krutch, you may want to choose another assignment.)
3. Many hunters eat the animals they kill, yet hunting is viewed in a very different light from raising beef cattle or hogs. Write a persuasive paragraph expressing approval or disapproval of raising animals for food.

Eliminate Cars from the National Parks

Edward Abbey

This selection is from Desert Solitaire, *by Edward Abbey. In the paragraphs leading uv to this one, Abbey calls for banning* ***all*** *cars from our national parks. In this paragraph, he gives reasons for his position.*

Words to Know

circumnavigate **go all the** way **around**

Onee people are liberated from the confines of automobiles there will be a greatly increased interest in hiking, exploring, and back-country packtrips. Fortunately the parks, by the mere elimination of motor traffic, will come to seem far bigger than they are now—there will be more room for more persons, an astonishing expansion of space. This follows from the interesting fact that a motorized vehicle, when not at rest, requires a volume of space far out of proportion to its size. To illustrate: imagine a lake approximately ten miles long and on the average one mile wide. A single motorboat could easily circumnavigate the lake in an hour; ten motorboats would begin to crowd it; twenty or thirty, all in operation, would dominate the lake to the exclusion of any other form of activity; and fifty would create the hazards, confusion, and turmoil that make pleasure impossible. Suppose we banned motorboats and allowed only canoes and rowboats; we would see at once that the lake seemed ten or perhaps a hundred times bigger. The same thing holds true, to an even greater degree, for the automobile. Distance and space are functions of speed and time. Without expending a single dollar from the United States Treasury we could, if we wanted to, multiply the area of our national parks tenfold or a hundredfold—simply by banning the private automobile. The next generation, all 250 million of them, would be grateful to us.

Questions About the Reading

1. In what ways are "distance and space functions of speed and time"?
2. Have you ever been on a lake crowded with motorboats? Describe what you think the writer means by "dominate the lake to the exclusion of any other form of activity."
3. How would banning cars make the parks bigger? Explain the writer's proposition in your own words.
4. Do you agree with the writer's reasoning? Why or why not?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Analyze the first sentence in the paragraph. How does the writer's language support his position?
2. In this paragraph, the writer does nothing in particular to establish his authority on his subject. How does he try to lend authority to his evidence? That is, what techniques does he use to make his evidence seem reasonable and convincing?
3. Identify the subjective and objective elements in the paragraph.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a persuasive paragraph for or against allowing woodcutters to harvest trees in the national parks.
2. Write a persuasive paragraph for or against the idea of banning cars in the downtown sections of large cities.
3. In an argumentative paragraph or essay, support or reject the proposal that roads be built into wilderness sections of the national parks so that people with physical handicaps can enjoy them.

Why National Literacy Is Important

E. D. Hirsch

The term literacy *refers to the ability to read and write. However, as E. D. Hirsch points out* ***in*** *this paragraph, the importance of literacy extends far beyond signing your name or enjoying a book. In fact, Hirsch says, literacy provides the foundation for modern societies.*

Words to ***Know***

undertaking a task or assignment

Why is literacy so important in the modern world? Some of the reasons, like the need to fill out forms or get a good job, are so obvious that they needn't be discussed. But the chief reason is broader. The complex ^undertakings of modern life depend on the cooperation of many people with different specialties in different places. Where communications fail, so do the undertakings. (That is the moral of the story of the Tower of Babel.) The function of national literacy is to foster effective nationwide communications. Our chief instrument of communication over time and space is the standard national language, which is sustained by national literacy. Mature literacy alone enables the tower to be built, the business to be well managed, and the airplane to fly without crashing. All nationwide communications, whether by telephone, radio, TV, or writing are fundamentally dependent upon literacy, for the essence of literacy is not simply reading and writing but also effective use of the standard literate language. In Spain and most of Latin America the literate language is standard written Spanish. In Japan it is standard written Japanese. In our country it is standard written English.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why is literacy necessary to the "complex undertakings of modern life"?
2. The telephone, radio, and TV don't involve reading. Why are they dependent on literacy?
3. If literacy is "so important in the modern *world,"* what is the **implication** of different countries—like Japan, Spain, and the United States—having different languages?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is this a paragraph of argumentation, persuasion, or both?
2. Is there a **topic sentence** in the paragraph? If so, where is it? If not, state the **main idea** in your own words.
3. This paragraph might also have appeared as an example of another **mode of development.** What is the other mode the paragraph serves?

Writing Assignments

1. The title of the book from which this paragraph is taken is *Cultural Literacy.* Write a paragraph in which you argue for or against the idea that we should learn about our culture by studying subjects like history, civics, sociology, and American literature.
2. Write a paragraph in which you argue for or against the need to read and write as well as you are learning to do in this course. Feel free to use your own experiences to illustrate your paragraph.

Excuses, Excuses

Helen C. Vo-Dinh

In its report A Nation at Risk, *the National Commission on Excellence in Education warns that "for the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of its parents." Not surprisingly, this prediction has caused considerable discussion of educational reform, much of it focused on the quality of the teaching in our schools. Here, Helen C. Vo-Dinh, a teacher in a school near Washington, D.C., argues that the* quantity *of teaching in American schools may be at least equally to blame for the decline in student achievement.*

Words to Know

charade imitation of a real activity
competency ability to do **a** job
consensus general opinion
culmination climax, most extreme **point**
depleted made smaller, reduced
en masse in a group or body
guise false appearance
merit pay wages based on the quality of the work performed
plethora an excessive amount, superabundance
rationale line of reasoning
sanctioned approved, accepted
Second Coming return of Christ *at* the end of the world
state-mandated required or decreed by the state

y and large, the report of the National Commission on Educational Excellence has been received favorably by those of us in the teaching profession, even though the blame for a shoddy educational system falls so often on our shoulders. For example, recently we have been hearing a lot about teacher competency and the need for merit pay as if this would solve our problems. 1

Somewhere in the commission's report and lost to sight in the hue and cry is a recommendation that received little publicity. This is the suggestion that schools make more effective use of the existing school day. 2

As a teacher I understand this to mean that I had better make sure my students spend every minute they have with me studying and learning the subject I teach. Now, we teachers have some control over time on task. We have no one to blame but ourselves if we fill up half a period Monday entertaining our classes with stories about what we did over the weekend. However, even those of us with the best intentions find our classes interrupted, depleted or canceled by forces beyond our control day after day after day. For under the guise of "education," a plethora of social activities has sprouted in our schools which draw students from our rooms. This situation is particularly destructive at the high-school level where I am now teaching. 3

Sometime in the summer, our school district, like others across the country, will publish a school calendar for the coming year. In my state, students must attend school 180 days. This means that each of the students assigned to me will have 180 periods of classroom instruction in the subject I teach. However, I know that this will never happen. If I consider only the classes I lose to "necessities" such as fire drills, bomb scares, three days of state-mandated testing, three days of registration and one entire day for school photos, my students have already missed 10 periods out of the 180. Now, depending upon how many pep rallies are needed, how many assemblies we can afford and the degree to which my students participate in a host of activities offered during schooltime, I will lose all of them again, and most of them again and again. 4

It might be helpful to compare the situation in our high schools with that in our colleges, where an intellectual atmosphere still prevails. Think back a moment. Do you remember your college classes being canceled for pep rallies, assemblies or class meetings? Not once, but often during a semester? When you wanted to attend some social function or help prepare for a dance were you excused with the blessings of the administration, or did you cut? Do you remember lectures interrupted routinely by a hidden sound system? Did office aides make it a practice to appear with urgent memos which your professors had to read and respond to while you waited impatiently? Was it a common occurrence for football players to rise en masse in the middle of a discussion to go to practice or a game? 5

And yet this is precisely the kind of situation we high-school teachers put up with day after day. Is it any wonder that many students don't value much of what goes on in the classroom? 6

At the latest count my syllabus is at the mercy of 45 different activities sanctioned by our school system. I lost students this past year for the following reasons: club trips to Atlantic City, student-council elections, bloodmobile, appointments with guidance counselors and Army representatives, an art show, community show, tennis, track, 7

baseball, swimming, football, cheerleading, club meetings, class meetings, drama and band workshops, yearbook, PSAT, chorus and orchestra rehearsals, science day, cattle judging, attendance at the movie "Gandhi" and graduation rehearsal.

This list is by no means complete. 8

The rationale which allows this charade to continue is that if students miss classes they can make up the work and no harm is done. Of course, this idea carried to its logical conclusion means that we need less school for students, not more as the president's commission recommended. It is true that many students can read assignments outside of class, copy notes and keep up with their work. Others may opt for lower grades. But much of what takes place during class cannot be made up. How do you make up a class discussion where you have a chance to test and clarify your ideas on a subject? A group discussion where you must come to a consensus? An oral reading? 9

When I cannot organize a group discussion in advance because I am never sure who will show up, when "Romeo" is off to a band rehearsal and "Juliet" has a swim meet on the day the class reads "Romeo and Juliet" aloud, how can I generate seriousness of purpose and respect for intellectual effort? 10

Obviously many of these activities are worthwhile. But there is no pressing reason why any of them have to take place during class hours. Days could be added to the school calendar for state-mandated testing and registration. And why not let communities sponsor dances, sports, college and Army representatives and clubs after school hours? At the very least we would then discover which students wanted to participate in activities and which simply wished to escape from class. 11

The culmination of this disrespect for intellectual effort occurs in my school when the seniors are allowed to end classes and prepare for graduation three weeks before the rest of the student body. The message which comes across is that the senior curriculum is so negligible it can be cut short, and that when you get older, you have it easier than anybody else, not harder. 12

I am not a kill-joy. I know that kids need fun just as much as adults do and that clubs are educational in their own way. But as a member of a profession which is accorded only the most grudging respect and which is continually suspected of not doing its job, I say start by giving us a chance. Guarantee me those 180 periods I'm supposed to have. I'll know the public and the people who run the schools are serious about improving them the year my classes have not been shortened, 13

delayed, canceled, interrupted or depleted for any reason short of illness, an emergency or the Second Coming.

Questions About the Reading

1. According to Vo-Dinh, who is usually considered to blame for the declining quality of American education? Which remedies for this decline receive most attention?
2. How does Vo-Dinh define "effective use of the existing school day"?
3. In what way is the situation the writer describes a charade?
4. Why does Vo-Dinh feel that unified class time and consistent attendance are important?
5. What is the writer's attitude toward the public and educational administrators? What statements in the essay indicate how she feels?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Identify the five elements of argumentation in Vo-Dinh's essay. (See page 339.)
2. What different modes of development does the writer use to support her argument?
3. Where does Vo-Dinh use rhetorical questions in this essay? How do they influence your acceptance of her argument?
4. Is this essay completely objective? Cite examples from the essay to support your answer.
5. What does the writer do to try to establish herself as a fair observer?

Writing Assignments

1. Some critics of the American educational system feel that its quality can be improved by rating teachers individually according to various criteria and paying them only as much as that evaluation suggests they deserve (merit pay). Consider the pros and cons of this proposal, and write an essay supporting or rejecting it.
2. Many colleges require a certain minimum of class attendance for course credit. Criticize or defend this practice.
3- Colleges frequently have distribution requirements that control the kinds of courses students take and the amount of time they spend in particular areas of study. Evaluate the distribution policies of your school or major department, and write an essay supporting them or recommending specific changes.

So That Nobody Has to Go to School if They Don't Want To

Roger Sipher

Roger Sipher, a professor of history at the State University of New York, has a different solution to the problem of the declining quality of American schools. Instead of increasing the quantity of teaching, as Helen Vo-Dinh recommends (see pages 354-357), he suggests that mandatory attendance laws be abolished. The effect, he argues, will be to improve dramatically the quality of education for those children who choose to go to school.

Words to Know

antagonistic opposing
archaic old-fashioned
assertion statement
conventional customary
enacted made law
homage honor
homily sermon
mandatory required by rule or law
oust force out
recalcitrant hard to control
repeal abolish
tangentially superficially relevant
undermines weakens

ZJL. decline in standardized test scores is but the most recent indicator 1
that American education is in trouble.

One reason for the crisis is that, present mandatory-attendance laws 2
force many to attend school who have no wish to be thereySuch children have little desire to learn and are so antagonistic to school that neither they nor more highly motivated students receive the quality education that is the birthright of every American.

The solution*j* to this problem is simple: f Abolish compulsory- 3
attendance laws and allow only those who are committed to getting an education to attend./

This will not end public education. Contrary to conventional belief, 4
legislators enacted compulsory-attendance laws to legalize what already existed. William Landes and Lewis Solomon, economists, found little evidence that mandatory-attendance laws increased the number of children in school. They found, too, that school systems have never

effectively enforced such laws, usually because of the expense involved.

There is no contradiction between the assertion that compulsory at- 5
tendance has had little effect on the number of children attending school and the argument that repeal would be a positive step toward improving education. Most parents want a high school education for their children. Unfortunately; compulsory attendance hampers the ability of public school officials to enforce legitimate educational and disciplinary policies and thereby make the education a good one.

f_Private schools have no such problem. They can fail or dismiss stu- 6
dents, knowing such students can attend public schoolj Without compulsory attendance, public schools^would be freer to oust students whose academic or personal behavior undermines the educational mission of the institution^

Has not the noble experiment of a formal education for everyone 7
\. failed? While we pay homage to the homily, "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink," we have pretended it is not true in education.

\ , Ask high school teachers if recalcitrant students learn anything of 8
value. Ask teachers if these students do any homework. Ask if the threat of low grades motivates them. Quite the contrary, these students know they will be passed from grade to grade until they are old enough to quit or until, as is more likely, they receive a high school diploma.;'At the point when students could legally quit, most choose to remain since they know they are likely to be allowed to graduate whether they do acceptable work or not/

Abolition of archaic attendance laws would produce enormous 9
dividends^

First,(it would alert everyone that school is a serious place where 10
one goes to learn. Schools are neither day-care centers nor indoor street corners./Young people who resist learning should stay away; indeed, an end to compulsory schooling would require them to stay away.

Second) students opposed to'learning would not be able to pollute 11
the educational atmosphere for those who want to learn. Teachers could stop policing recalcitrant students and start educating, *j*

Thirdj grades would show what they are supposed to: how well a 12
student is learningf Parents could again read report cards and know if their children were making progress.

Fourth,[1] public esteem for schools would increase. People would 13
stop regarding them as way stations for adolescents and start thinking of them as institutions for educating America's youth, i

Fifth/ elementary schools would change because students would 14
find out early that they had better learn something or risk flunking out later/ Elementary teachers would no longer have to pass their failures on to junior high and high school.

.Sixth, the cost of enforcing compulsory education would be elimi- 15
nated. Despite enforcement efforts, nearly 15 percent of the school-age children in our largest cities are almost permanently absent from school./

Communities could use these savings to support institutions to deal 16
with young people not in school. If, in the long run, these institutions prove more costly, at least we would not confuse their mission with that of schools.

1 Schools should be for education. At present, they are only tangen- 17
tially so. They have attempted to serve an all-encompassing social function, trying to be all things to all people. In the process they have failed miserably at what they were originally formed to accomplish^

Questions About the Reading

1. What evidence does the writer give that the American educational system is in trouble?
2. What does the writer mean by the statement, "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink"? How have we pretended that this isn't true for education?
3. Why are high school students who do not do acceptable work allowed to graduate?
4. What effects do students who do not want to learn have on schools, according to the writer?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Locate the **statement of the problem** and the **solution.**
2. What is the function of paragraphs 4 and 5?
3. Analyze the evidence the writer offers to support his argument. Is the evidence mainly objective or **subjective?**
4. In paragraph 11, how does the writer use **connotation** to help make his point?

Writing Assignments

1. Do you agree that schools have "failed miserably" in their mission to educate? Write an essay in which you argue formally for or against the writer's position. Support your argument with evidence

of your own as well as evidence from the essay. (If you choose to reject Sipher's claim, remember that you can use **refutation** of his statements as evidence for your position.)

2. Many colleges require that students score at a certain level on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) before admission to the college. Standardized tests have recently come under attack for not measuring aptitude or ability but for measuring information that students have learned in school. Some people think that such tests are biased in favor of white, middle-class students. Do you think colleges should require the SAT as a prerequisite for admission? Write an essay that explains and provides evidence for your position.
3. Did you go to school each day because of the law or because your parents insisted that you go? Write an essay arguing for or against the position that parents, not the law, should decide when and where their children go to school.

Climbing at Its Best

Galen Rowell

To Galen Rowell, mountain climbing is not an activity but an experience. In this passage from his book In the Throne Room of the Mountain Gods, *he tries to persuade his readers that reaching the pinnacle of the climbing experience requires certain specific conditions and a special mental attitude.*

Words to Know

conducive supportive
meld blend
plethora an excessive **amount**

/ \ t the highest levels of difficulty or endurance, climbing demands 1
total concentration of one's senses. All thoughts converge on the task at hand. No room exists for such normal mental activities as time measurement or self-contemplation. Consciousness becomes a smooth, purposeful stream of energy fitted to the task. Feet, eyes, and mind work in total harmony as each receives instantaneous feedback from the actions of the others. No random thoughts block the flow between body and mind. Only by attaining this smooth and tranquil state can climbers do their best. Conversely, climbers intent on doing their best, whether they admit it or not, are seeking this satisfying state of mind, often more directly than the summit itself.

Not surprisingly, the "style" that climbers consider the best is nor- 2
mally that which makes this purity of consciousness possible. A climber is most likely to reach this state when climbing alone or with a few quiet companions, and least likely when being guided, acting as a guide, or consciously trying to follow someone else's description of a climb. Equipment is also a factor. Climbing with a few classic tools that become extensions of the body is quite conducive to the sought-after-feeling; using a plethora of gadgets is not. Climbing near one's limit brings on the feeling; staying well within one's margin does not. Viewed in this context, reaching the summit of a mountain is not all it is cracked up to be; it simply marks the end of a highly pleasurable state of mind.

The ecstasy that a climber seeks is not to be found solely in the 3
mountains. The identical feeling is the goal in all sorts of activities that require intense concentration and that do not involve direct

rewards such as money or prestige. Chess brings on the self-communication of intense concentration, but lacks the meld of physical and mental action. Most team sports involve too many distractions and only a short-term commitment. Many top climbers feel that climbing is basically useless, but return to the mountains again and again because they cannot experience the same ecstasy in performing the actions our society deems useful. For them, the summit is merely the curtain falling on a grand play. The curtain, like the achievement of the summit, tells nothing about what happened beforehand.

Novice climbers can only experience hints of this emotional reward 4
because their actions are not yet ingrained in the motor nerves, and the feeling cannot be realized when one is outwardly contemplating one's own actions. Similarly, if a climb is either too hard or too easy, then horror or boredom respectively will interfere with the tranquility of this state of mind. When and how a person experiences the shift of consciousness depends on his own personal level of ability. An intermediate climber might reach it on a moderate climb, but an expert would have to do a harder climb or change the style of the moderate climb by using less equipment or climbing solo. The significant point is that the climber must be working at his own top capacity for difficulty, endurance, or both.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why is it necessary for a climber to be working at top capacity to experience the feeling the writer describes?
2. What does the writer mean by "style" in paragraph 2?
3. What does reaching the summit have to do with mountain climbing, according to the writer?
4. Despite what he says in the first sentence of paragraph 3, the writer seems to feel that the experience he is describing is for the most part unique to mountain climbing. Do you agree? Have you experienced the feeling described?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1- What is the **main idea** in the essay? Is it directly stated in a **thesis statement,** or is it **implied?**

2 What is the writer's **tone?** Does he do anything to establish his au-
4.1
tnonty on his topic? Cite statements in the essay to support your answer.

3 Identify the metaphor in paragraph 3, and explain what it means.

4. Compare the first sentence of the essay, the last sentence in paragraph 1, and the last sentence of the essay. What relationship do you see among them?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a persuasive essay in which you try to convince your reader that you know the single best way to complete some task or play some game, such as playing Monopoly or poker, memorizing a poem or song, studying for an exam, building a house of cards, or washing windows or a car.
2. Write an advertisement for your favorite book or magazine, trying to convince people to read it. Use correct grammar, and do not quote any existing ad copy.

The Spreading Use of Steroids

fane E. Brody

At the 1988 summer Olympics, several prominent athletes, including "the world's fastest human"—the winner of the men's WO-meter dash—were disqualified from the games for using anabolic steroids. In this article, written several months before the Olympics, Jane E. Brody presents the case against steroids and the alarming indications of their widespread use.

Words to Know

accruing adding up
endocrine gland any of several glands that secrete hormones into the bloodstream
exacerbate make worse

s the serious and possibly life-threatening effects of body-building steroids become better known, specialists are increasingly alarmed aboutthe growing use of these drugs by college and high school athletes and by teen-age boys who want an athlete's body without the work.. 1

For years the hormonelike drugs have been used by adult athletes who were willing to risk possible long-term damage for what they believed was a short-term competitive edge.^The well-known dangers include the possibility of sexual and reproductive disorders^ Recent research also indicates that use of the .drugs, can dangerously change cholesterol levels. 2

But not only are more people now taking these drugs, experts say that they are also taking them at younger ages, in higher doses and for longer periods, all of which can greatly exacerbate the risks. In some cases, parents of high school athletes have asked doctors to prescribe the drugs to help their youngsters excel in competitions or win college scholarships. 3

^These anabolic steroid drugs are not licensed for athletic use.jBut they are easily obtained under the counter and from mail-order companies that buy them in Mexico and abroad, as well as from some veterinarians and physicians willing to prescribe them for nonmedical purposes. 4

Anabolic steroids are especially popular among men and boys^who are weight lifters, body builders, football players, shot-putters, discus 5

throwers and swimmers.. They are also used by some women body Guilders seeking more muscle than their natural hormones will allow.

According to Dr. John A. Lombardo, medical director of sports medicine at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, "runners, swimmers, wrestlers and cyclists who want to train harder also ask for steroids because they seem to speed recovery from intense workouts." e

For some activities, especially powerlifting, athletes believe they have no choice but to take the drugs if they wish to hold their own in competitions with others who take them. 7

Since the late 1950's, when anabolic steroids were introduced, thousands of athletes have injected or swallowed them in hopes of improving performance. *Sports Illustrated* has reported that as many as 80 percent of the linemen and half of the linebackers in the National Football League are thought to have used steroids. 8

Although the drugs were banned in 1976 by amateur athletic organizations and have since resulted in several competitors being disqualified or losing medals, professional athletic groups have not taken similar action. 9

Even in amateur sports, the drugs remain popular among some athletes, who seek to foil the urine tests used to detect them. The Mayo Clinic estimates that a million people in this country are now taking steroids for nonmedical purposes, with annual sales (mostly black market) exceeding $100 million. 10

Anabolic Steroids

Anabolic steroids are sometimes used medically in patients with certain blood disorders, severe burns, muscle-wasting diseases and some endocrine gland abnormalities^ 11

The drugs are synthetic derivatiyespf the natural male hormone testosterone, which^ncreases"protein synthesis and promotes the growth of lean muscle tissue rather than fat when excess calories are consumed^- 12

Dr. David Lamb, director of exercise physiology at Ohio State University in Columbus, said most athletes who use anabolic steroids take three to four times the natural daily "dose" of testosterone and many take 20 or 40 times the amount their bodies would produce of this hormone. 13

Do They Work?

There is little question that the steroids can help men, women, and teenagers lay down more muscle tissue. However, to maintain this 14

muscle mass, the drugs must be used indefinitely. Furthermore^the drug stimulated muscle tissue appears to be highly susceptible to injuries, which take much longer to heal than damage to ordinarily developed muscle./

Then there is the matter of documenting anjncrease in strength, In 1981 Dr. Allen Ryan, a former team physician at the University of Wisconsin who is now retired, reviewed more than two dozen studies of the effects of steroids on physical strength and endurance. In 13 of the better studies, there were no significant improvements in the athletes. 15

In another review several years later, 14 studies of weight lifters indicated a significant increase in strength when steroids were used, but 10 studies reported no such increase. The primary benefits were described as accruing from previous training in weight lifting and continuous training in the period of drug use, an effect that would result from training even without the drugs. 16

But even if the drugs do work for some athletes, Dr. Lamb seriously questions the wisdom of their use, given the fact that they "almost invariably cause adverse side effects, certainly minor ones and possibly life-threatening as well." 17

Questions About the Reading

1. Why do teen-age boys who are not athletes take steroids?
2. Is there a rule against using steroids in the NFL, according to the article?
3. After reading paragraphs 14-16, do you think that, overall, steroids work to improve athletic performance? Explain your answer.
4. In which paragraphs does the writer actually address the issue of whether steroids are good or bad for people? What are most of the other paragraphs about?
5. The writer tells us that using steroids is dangerous. Does she also express any opinion about whether steroid use is "morally" wrong? Does she **imply** any such opinion?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

L Can you identify the five elements of a classical argument in this essay?

2. Is the writer being objective or **subjective** in the essay? Support your answer by citing examples.

3- What does the writer do to establish her authority on her topic? How do you know that she has done a lot of research?

4. Is thprp any place in the essay where the writer clearly paid attention the connotations of her words? Explain why you think she made the general word choice that she did.

Writing Assignments

1. Are athletes who use steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs cheating? Write an essay arguing for one side or the other of this question.
2 Although selling steroids to someone who does not have a doctor's prescription is illegal in many places, the use of steroids itself is not. (That is, the seller can be prosecuted, but the person taking the drugs cannot be.) Bearing in mind that our society permits the legal use of drugs like alcohol and tobacco, write an essay arguing for or against laws prohibiting steroid use.

Death to the Killers

Mike Royko

Like Coretta Scott King, Mike Royko has strong feelings about the death penalty. But Royko, a syndicated newspaper columnist, takes a view opposite to tiiat of King. In the essay that follows, he tells the stories of the families of murder victims. "Opponents of the death penalty," he asserts, "should try explaining to these people just how cruel it is to kill someone."

Words to Know

decomposed rotting
delegate to give duties to another
deter to keep from acting
dispatching getting rid of (in this context, putting to death)
retribution punishment

LJ ome recent columns on the death penalty have brought some interesting responses from readers all over the country. 1

There were, of course, expressions of horror and disgust that I would favor the quick dispatching of convicted murderers. 2

I really don't like to make fun ofpeople who oppose the death penalty because they are so sincere! Butf wish they would come_up with some new arsumenisJxLxeDlace the worn-out ones. 3

For example, many said something"like this: "Wouldn't it be better to keep the killers alive so psychiatrists can study them in order to find out what makes them the way they are?" 4

It takes the average psychiatrist about five years to figure why a guy wants to stop for two drinks after work and won't quit smoking. So how long do you think it will take him to determine why somebody with an *IQ* of 92 decided to rape and murder the little old lady who lives next door? 5

Besides, we have an abundance of killers in our prisons—more than enough to keep all the nation's shrinks busy for the next 20 years. But shrinks aren't stupid. Why would they want to spend all that time listening to Willie the Wolfman describe his ax murders when they can get $75 an hour for listening to an executive's fantasies about the secretarial pool? 6

Another standard is: "The purpose of the law should be to protec society not to inflict cruel retribution, such as the death,penalty"

In that case, we should tear down all the prisons and let all the criminals go because most people would consider a lone imposonment to y be cruel retribution—especially those who are lockecHrp. Even 30 days in the Cook County Jail is no picnic.

And: "What gives society the right to take a life if an individual can't?" The individuals who make up society give it that right. Societies perform many functions that individuals can't. We can't carry guns and shoot people, but we delegate that jighttonplice.

Finally: "The death penalty doesnlt deter 'crime." I heard from a 10
number of people who have a less detached[1] view of the death penalty than many of the sensitive souls who oppose it.

For instance, Doris Porch wrote me about a man ®*n* Death Row in Tennessee. He hired men to murder his wife. One threw in a rape, free of charge.

Porch wrote: "My family had the misfortune of knowing this man 12
(the husband) intimately. The victim was my niece. After her decomposed body was found in the trunk of her car, I made the trip to homicide with my sister."

Sharon Rosenfeldt of Canada wrote: "We know exactly what you 13
are talking about because our son was brutally murdered and sexually abused by mass murderer Clifford Olson in Vancouver.

"Words can't explain the suffering the families of murder victims 14
are left to live with. After two years, we're still trying to piece our lives back together mentally and spiritually."

Eleanor Lulenski of Cleveland said: "I'm the mother of one of the 15
innocent victims. My son was a registered nurse on duty in an emergency room. A man walked in demanding a shot of penicillin. When he was told he would have to be evaluated by a physician, he stomped out, went to his car, came back with a shotgun and killed my son.

"He was sentenced to life, but after several years the sentence was 16
reversed on a technicality—it being that at the time of his trial it was mentioned that this was his second murder."

And Susie James of Greenville, Miss.: "My tax dollars are putting 17
bread into the mouth of at least one murderer from Mississippi who showed no mercy to his innocent victim.

"He caught a ride with her one cold February night. She was returning to her home from her job in a nursing home. She was a widow. The murderer, whom she had befriended, struck her on the head with a can of oil. Ignoring her pleas, he forced her through a barbed-wire fence into the woods at knifepoint. He stabbed her repeatedly, raped her and left her for dead.

"When the victim's son walked down the, stairs to leave the court- 19
house after the guilty sentence had been uttereaTne happened to look at the killer's mother.

"She said: 'You buzzard, watching me.'"

"The murder victim was my mother."

There are many others. The mother of the boy who angered some 22
drunken street thugs. They shot him and then ran him over repeatedly with a car. The mother whose son and daughter were beaten to death. The brother who remembers how his little sister would laugh as they played—until she was butchered.

They have many things in common. They suffered a terrible loss, 23
and they live with terrible memories.

One other thing they share: The knowledge that the killers are alive 24
and will probably remain alive and cared for by society.

Opponents of the death penalty should try explaining to these peo- 25
ple just how cruel it is to kill someone.

Questions About the Reading

1. Why does the writer think that psychiatrists are not interested in finding out why people kill?
2. The writer says that he does not like "to make fun of people who oppose the death penalty because they're so sincere." Does he make fun of them? Cite examples from the essay to support your answer.
3. What do the families and friends of homicide victims have in common?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. In paragraphs 4-10, what method does the writer use to create evidence supporting his position?
2. Is the essay an example of argumentation, persuasion, or a mixture of the two? Explain.
3. What is the dominant **mode of development** in paragraphs 11-22?
4. Can you locate a **statement of the problem** in the essay? Can you locate a **solution?** Is a solution **implied?**
5. How does the writer refute the argument that the death penalty won't deter criminals?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a persuasive essay in which you use examples to appeal to your reader's emotions. Possible topics might include spaying or neutering of cats and dogs, the need for smoke detectors in all buildings, the need to make day care widely available at a reasonable cost, the need for closer government oversight of safety in the workplace, or the need for stiff penalties for people who pollute the environment (for instance, by dumping hazardous waste or ignoring pollution control procedures).

2. Some people support mandatory sentencing for criminals, or ensuring that people who commit certain crimes are automatically given prison sentences of a certain length. What purpose do you think mandatory sentencing would serve? Write an essay in which you support or reject the concept of mandatory sentencing.

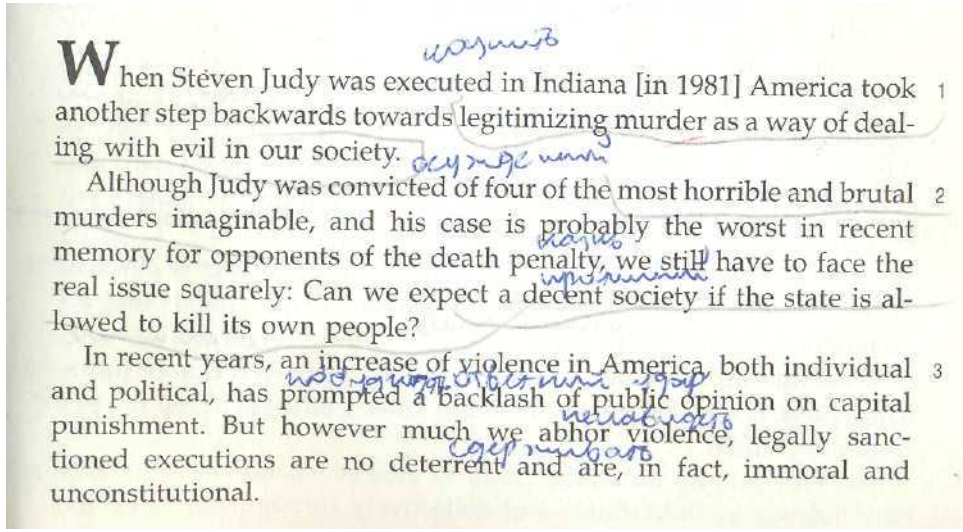
The Death Penalty Is a Step Back

Coretta Scott King

Coretta Scott King has strong opinions about the death penalty. Despite the loss of two family members, including her husband, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., by assassination, she remains firmly convinced that the death penalty is morally wrong and unjustifiable. A long-time civil rights activist, she believes that the practice of nonviolence is the way to make our society a more just and humane place to live. In the essay that follows, she argues passionately for her convictions.

Words to Know

abhor detest, hate strongly
deterrent something that prevents
inequitable unfair
irrevocable not reversible
legitimizing making lawful
miscarriage a failure
proponents advocates, supporters
retaliation to get revenge
sanctioned approved
specter ghost
unequivocally clearly, without question
unwarranted not supported by facts



When Steven Judy was executed in Indiana [in 1981] America took 1
another step backwards towards legitimizing murder as a way of dealing with evil in our society.

Although Judy was convicted of four of the most horrible and brutal 2
murders imaginable, and his case is probably the worst in recent memory for opponents of the death penalty, we still have to face the real issue squarely: Can we expect a decent society if the state is allowed to kill its own people?

In recent years, an increase of violence in America, both individual 3
and political, has prompted a backlash of public opinion on capital punishment. But however much we abhor violence, legally sanctioned executions are no deterrent and are, in fact, immoral and unconstitutional.

Although I have suffered the loss of two family members by assassination, I remain firmly and unequivocally opposed to the death penalty for those convicted of capital offenses. 4

An evil deed is not redeemed by an evil deed of retaliation. Justice is never advanced in the taking of a human life. 5

Morality is never upheld by legalized murder. Morality apart, there are a number of practical reasons which form a powerful argument against capital punishment. 6

First, capital punishment makes irrevocable any possible miscarriage of justice. Time and again we have witnessed the specter of mistakenly convicted people being put to death in the name of American criminal justice. To those who say that, after all, this doesn't occur too often, I can only reply that if it happens just once, that is too often. And it has occurred many times. 7

Second, the death penalty reflects an unwarranted assumption that the wrongdoer is beyond rehabilitation. Perhaps some individuals cannot be rehabilitated; but who shall make that determination? Is any amount of academic training sufficient to entitle one person to judge another incapable of rehabilitation? 8

Third, the death penalty is inequitable. Approximately half of the 711 persons now on death row are black. From 1930 through 1968, 53.5% of those executed were black Americans, all too many of whom were represented by court-appointed attorneys and convicted after hasty trials. 9

The argument that this may be an accurate reflection of guilt, and homicide trends, instead of a racist application of laws lacks credibility in light of a recent Florida survey which showed that persons convicted of killing whites were four times more likely to receive a death sentence than those convicted of killing blacks. 10

Proponents of capital punishment often cite a "deterrent effect" as the main benefit of the death penalty. Not only is there no hard evidence that murdering murderers will deter other potential killers, but even the "logic" of this argument defies comprehension. 11

Numerous studies show that the majority of homicides committed in this country are the acts of the victim's relatives, friends and acquaintances in the "heat of passion." 12

What this strongly suggests is that rational consideration of future consequences are seldom a part of the killer's attitude at the time he commits a crime. 13

The only way to break the chain of violent reaction is to practice non-violence as individuals and collectively through our laws and institutions. 14

Questions About the Reading

1. What does the writer think **we should** do instead of using the death penalty?
2. What is illogical about suggesting a "deterrent effect"?
3. How do you feel about "mistakenly convicted people being put to death in the name of American criminal justice"?

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Is this essay an example of argument, persuasion, or both? Support your answer with examples.
2. Why does the writer state that she has lost two family members by assassination? How does this contribute to the effectiveness of her argument?
3. What **modes of development** does the writer use to develop her argument?
4. Where is the **thesis** most clearly stated?
5. The paragraphs in this essay are quite short. Why do you think the writer paragraphed this way? What effect does this technique have on your interpretation of her argument?

Writing Assignments

1. Write a persuasive essay for or against the death penalty. Try to appeal to your reader's emotions, but remember that you must still be clear and logical in your reasoning for your persuasion to be effective.
2. Some states have enacted laws that mandate jail sentences for people who are convicted of drunk driving. Do you agree with such laws? Write an essay that provides evidence for your position.
3. Write an argumentative or persuasive essay for or against the death penalty. To support your opinion, use information from the Royko or King essays in this chapter or from the Johnson essay in Chapter 3.

I Have a Dream

Martin Luther King, Jr.

The 1963 march on Washington, involving a quarter of a million people, was the largest demonstration for civil rights in ***the*** *history of the United States. This event, which coincided with the hundredth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, climaxed with the delivery of a speech by Martin Luther King, jr., from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, King's words, printed below, are a classic of modern persuasive writing. His powerful demand for courage and persistence in the continuing struggle for justice moved many in his audience to tears.*

Words to Know

defaulted **failed** to pay
degenerate become worse
Emancipation Proclamation document issued by President Lincoln ending slavery in the United States
interposition coming between; standing in the way
manacles chains put around the wrists; handcuffs
nullification taking the force out of a law
promissory note written promise to pay an amount of money

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. 1

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. 2

In a sense we have come to our nation's Capitol to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was the promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check; a check which has come back marked "'insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check—a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of *now*. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the **tranquilizing** drug of gradualism. *Now* is the time to make real the promises of Democracy. *Nozv* is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. *Nozv* is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. *Nozv* is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have **a** rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges. 5

But there is something I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the 6

Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always 7
march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: "for whites only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great 8
trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Caro- 9
lina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettoes of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficul- 10
ties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out 11
the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons 12
of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state 13
sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a 14
nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today. 15

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious ra- 16
cists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day, right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today. 17

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every 18
hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. 19
With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

And this will be the day. This will be the day when all of God's chil- 20
dren will be able to sing with new meaning.

My country, tis of thee
Sweet land- of liberty,
  Of thee I sing:
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountainside
  Let freedom ring.

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So 21
let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado! 22

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California! 23

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! 24

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! 25

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From 26
every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, and we allow freedom to ring, when we 27
let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God almighty, we are free at last!"

Questions About the Reading

1. In paragraph 2 and throughout the speech, how does King support his statement that "the Negro still is not free"?
2. How does King show, throughout his speech, that his demands for justice are upheld by the established laws and traditions of the United States?
3. What warning does King give in paragraph 6? How is this warning balanced in the paragraph that follows?
4. What does King mean by "creative suffering" in paragraph 8?
5. In the speech, King's attitude toward whites tells us a great deal about his character and his vision. Describe his attitude, citing examples from the speech.

Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Find as many examples as you can of **parallelism** in King's speech. What effect does it have on you as a reader? What effect do you suppose it had on the original audience?
2. King uses metaphors throughout his address. Identify three such metaphors in paragraphs 4-6, and analyze their effect on you. What feelings do they evoke?
3. State King's **thesis** in your own words. What tone dominates as King develops his thesis? Is the tone simple or complex? What different emotions are present?
4. King's "dream" can be viewed as a **symbol.** In your own words, interpret what it symbolizes.
5. Is this an example of argumentation or persuasion? How can you tell? Does King emphasize the connotative or the denotative value of words? Find examples to support your answer.

Writing Assignments

1. Write an essay suitable for delivery to your class, urging people to vote.
2. Is the United States today a more just society than the one King describes? Write a persuasive essay in which you try to convince your reader that the United States does or does not set an example of justice for all the world to follow.
3. Write an essay urging people to participate in a volunteer **activity that** you are especially interested in.

11 Extra Readings

IN THIS SECTION, you will find some additional reading selections. Although some of the readings have one dominant **mode of development,** most of them illustrate combinations of the different modes.

As you read, keep in mind what we have stressed in the earlier sections. Determine the

- topic of each paragraph
- thesis of each essay
- structure of the reading (introduction, development, conclusion)
- supporting details
- modes of development
- point of view (person, time, tone)
- method of organization (time, space, order of importance)
- transitional words
- effective words and sentences

Then, make use of these same strategies to write paragraphs and essays that are as clear and effective as those you have read.

Blue and Brew

Philip Kopper

Good recipes are perfect examples of process analysis. They demand precision, clarity, and step-by-step thoroughness. But in this recipe for cooking and eating Atlantic blue crabs, Philip Kopper offers still more. Using several modes, he **narrates** *his own introduction to the art of eating crabs. He* **compares** *several ways of cooking crabs—his own is best, of course. And he even manages to* **classify** *the different kinds of crab restaurants. This recipe (and a lot of other good seafood recipes like it) appears in Kopper's book,* The Wild Edge.

Words to Know

appendage something attached
diabolically devilishly
dowel a wooden rod
ectoderm outer layer of skin
fawned over acted slavishly over
gauche clumsy
incisor front tooth
lieutenant j.g. lieutenant junior grade
obtuse blunt, dull, not discerning
palate sense of taste
sated filled up, completely satisfied
sullen resentful
supercilious arrogant, haughty
wangle manipulate

Blue crabs make something more than a meal. Properly done, they become a delicious, difficult and messy ritual. I learned about it all in Baltimore from a native who was doing time in the Navy while I apprenticed at the local paper. When my college pal would come home on leave, I'd wangle an evening away from the police beat and we'd go to one of the local crab houses. These were the only restaurants where two young men (on a cub reporter's pay and a lieutenant j.g.'s respectively) could hire a table for several hours of food and talk without being either fawned over by supercilious French waiters or hurried by sullen American ones. Sit down in one of these establishments and they didn't want you to leave until closing time—so long as there was another crab and another beer on the paper-covered table.

The best way to enjoy crabs at home is ala Frederick Road with beer 2
in the can, a length of 2-inch dowel, a dull paring knife and a fresh roll of paper towels. Here's how:

First haul or lay in some crabs. Catch them if possible; buy them 3
if necessary. Next get some beer, a tin of prepared seafood seasoning—Old Bay is the only kind I know—and a large covered pot. A proper steamer is nice, a sort of huge double-boiler affair, but any big kettle with a lid does fine. Just put something solid in the bottom like a few old saucers or clean rocks to keep the crabs out of the liquid. These critters should be cooked by the rising steam, not boiled.

Open a beer, pour it in the pot to the depth of about an inch, and 4
drink the rest. Set the stove on high. When the beer comes to an active boil, joss in a third of the crabs alive and kicking. Do this carefully; given the chance, they are as willing to bite you as you are them (chuck out any dead ones). Sprinkle seafood seasoning on them as they pile up in tJhe.pot according to taste and/or directions on the label. By the time you've finished another beer the crabs will be bright red. But cook them for at least a total of 20 minutes. Spread Sunday's paper—all of it—on a table and tong the crabs onto it in a pile. Then sit everybody down and get to work because work is what it takes.

Callinectes sapidus is a miracle of packaging. If you've never eaten 5
one before, don't be discouraged. You'll learn how with time and practice. Pry off the apron—the pointed plate covering the rear of the bottom.shell. With this gone, the top shell will flip off to reveal the gills. These feathery gray things should be scraped away with the dull paring knife. Eat everything else that tastes good—namely all the meat you can find, the yellow tomalley (spelled "Tom Alley" in one restaurant) and the whitish fat in the body cavity. Then go for the meat. This is easier said than done because each morsel is diabolically encased in ectoderm and partitions. A crab surrenders its meat one nibble at a time.

Using both hands, break the remaining crab in half along the seam 6
that runs front to back. Crush each half slightly. Break off one leg at a time, doing your damnedest to keep a segment of muscle attached. This is a little tricky; practice is the only teacher. With thumb and forefinger, grasp both the inner joint of the leg and the body segment to which it's attached, squeeze, and twist the leg off gently. Start with the hind legs; it's easiest with them and, when done properly, results in a legitimately bite-sized piece of "back fin" meat jutting from the end of the leg. After dispatching that morsel, nibble at each pliable leg Joint; sort of squeegee them between upper and lower incisors to get the meat out.

To get inside the claws, tear off the entire appendage from the body and lay it on the table. Hold the blade of the dull paring knife across the claw and smack it gently with the dowel, broomstick or whatever's handy. (You could always tell if a crab house had pretensions; it provided little mallets for this job.) Repeat with each segment. The notion is to cut about halfway through the claw, then snap it apart with your hands and nibble at the exposed meat. As you proceed, pick out elusive bits of meat with the knifepoint. Go back over your first crab, making sure you haven't missed anything. Morsels hide in all sorts of nooks, crannies, and cubbyholes. You'll soon know the animal's anatomy better than it did.

Needless to say, the entire procedure creates a good deal of scultch and beer cans. That's why you spread the table with so much newspaper. When things get out of hand, roll it all up in a few layers of classified ads, chuck the bundle and start fresh on the sports section. This cannot be a tidy meal, nor a delicate one, nor a fast one. A hungry man can eat a dozen jumbos—if he has the patience and a couple of hours. (One never gets sated on crabs; one gets tired first.) When the party is on the way to finishing the first batch of crabs, put another on to steam and fetch another six-pack from the fridge. The ratio of crabs to cans is sometimes on the order of 1 to 1; peppery seasoning warms a thirst. Outlanders sometimes accompany crabs with french fries and/or coleslaw. Some people even drink good wine with this meal, though fingering a wineglass with crabby hands seems gauche, at least, and all that pepper dulls the palate. Beer goes best.

Discussing the corruption of the mother tongue, H. L. Mencken rather proudly observed that "in Maryland *crabfeast* has never yielded to *crabfest."* (He probably knew more about Maryland food ways and the American idiom than anyone of this century, and wrote about both at greater length.) A crabfeast traditionally includes she-crab soup, crab imperial, crab cakes, and sauteed soft crabs. Some Baltimore restaurants—the places that had moved from dowels to mallets and from newspapers to brown wrapping paper to gingham tablecloths—featured fried hardshells too: hard crabs covered with butter and cooked in deep fat. This practice is slightly more obtuse than gilding lilies.

Ode to My Father

Tess Gallagher

Tess Gallagher is a poet. She seems to have been aware of this calling from early in her youth. When she tells of her experiences with her father, she comes back several times to her central idea, almost a refrain: this was necessary to become a poet. The modes are **narration** *and* **cause and effect.** *At the end, Gallagher is a grown woman with a life of her own and a new view of the father/whose actions shaped her.*

Words to Know /

defiance unwillingness to submit
primal primary, of first importance
psychic mental, psychological
stamina endurance, strength
vulnerability openness or susceptibility to being hurt

Un Saturdays my father would drive my mother and my three 1
brothers and me into town to shop and then to wait for him while he drank in what he called "the beer joints." We would sit for hours in the car watching the townspeople pass, commenting on their dress and faces, trying to figure out what they did with the rest of their lives. Although it was just a game we played to pass the time, I think it taught me to see deeply at a very young age. Every hour or so my mother would send me on a round of the taverns to try for a sighting of my father. I would peck on the windows and the barmaid would shake her head "no" or motion down the dim aisle of faces to where my father would be sitting on his stool, forgetting, forgetting us all for a while. Back at the car, my brothers were quarreling, then crying. My mother had gone stiff. These times were the farthest I would ever get from home.

My father's drinking and the quarrels he had with my mother be- 2
cause of it terrorized my childhood. There is no other way to put it. And if terror and fear are necessary to the psychic stamina of a poet, I had them in steady doses—just as inevitably as I had the rain. I learned that the world was not just, that any balance was temporary, that the unreasonableness could descend at any minute, thrashing aside everything and everyone in its path. Love, through all this, was constant, though it had a hoary head. Its blow, brutal as any evil, was perhaps more so for how it raked the quick of my being. The body

remembers too, though not with malice, but as one might gaze uncomprehendingly at photographs of family friends, now deceased—but somehow important.

I remember the day I became aware that other families lived differently. I was showering in the junior high school's gym with my best friend, Molly, when she noticed the welts on my back. I could not see them and so could not share her awe and worry for me. What had happened to me? What had I done? Who had done this? 3

I was sixteen when I had my last lesson from the belt and my father's arm. I had learned that no words, no pleading would save me. I stood still in the yard, in full view of the neighbors, and took "what was coming to me." I looked steadily ahead, without tears or cries, as a tree must look while the saw bites in, then deepens to the core. I felt my spirit reach its full defiance. I stood somehow in the power of my womanhood that day and knew I had passed beyond humiliation. If a poet must know that physical pain and unreasonable treatment can be turned aside by an ultimate act of the will, I learned this then. I did not feel sorry for myself. I did not stop the loving. It was our hurt not to have another way to settle these things. For we had no language between us in those numb years of my changing, of my large hope toward the world. All through my attempts in the poems, this need has been building, the need to forge a language that would give these dead and living lives a way to speak. There was often the feeling that the language might come too late, might even do damage, might not be equal to the love. All these fears. Finally no choice. 4

The images of these two primal figures, mother and father, condense now into a view of my father's work-thickened hands and my mother's back, turned in hopeless anger at the stove where she fixed eggs for my father in silence. My father gets up from the table, shows me the open palms of his hands: "Threasie," he says, "get an education. Don't get hands like these." 5

Years later, after returning from a trip to Ireland, it was the work of these hands that I wanted to celebrate and to acknowledge for my father. He had recently retired from the docks and liked to play cards with the men down at Chinook Tavern. I would drive down and pick him up when the game ended at 2:00 A.M. Sometimes I would go early enough to have a beer with his friends in the back room and to listen to them kid him. "Hey Okie, how'd an ole geezer like you get a good lookin' daughter like that?" My father would laugh and wink, giving his head a quick little dip and rise. He didn't need to say anything. They called him Okie because he'd come from Oklahoma and he liked to be called that. 6

When he got home, we put the coffee pot on and sat at the kitchen table and talked. I don't remember when we began this sort of talking but I think now it happened because my father had caught sight of his death. He had suffered a heart attack while I had been in Ireland and this had given him more to say. When I'd been a child fishing with him in the salmon derbies he had talked more than he usually did—talked "to make the fish bite"—for just when you got to the most interesting place in the story, the fish were sure to bite. And they did. But this night there was another kind of talking. My father knew I was going the next day to a job in another part of the country. He might not see me again. He began to tell me his life. And though he told it all plainly and without pity for himself—only some verbal turning of the palms upward—the rhythms of his speech, his vulnerability before me had a power and beauty I did not want to see lost to the world.

The next day I got on a bus and waved good-bye to him and my mother. The bus was crammed with people headed for Seattle. They were talking and adjusting their packages. The woman sitting next to me had some knitting to work on. I took out my notebook with its pale green-white pages, frog-belly green they were. I was thinking this is no place to write this; this is too important a poem to be writing here. I put the book on my knees and tried to hear my father's voice, to get it to speak through me. This was the only place, the only time.

3 A.M. Kitchen: My Father Talking

For years it was land working me, oil fields,
cotton fields, then I got some land. I
worked it. Them days you could just about
make a living. I was logging.

Then I sent to Missouri. Momma
come out. We got married.
We got some kids. Five kids.
That kept us going.

We bought some land near the water.
It was cheap then. The water
was right there. You just looked out
the window. It never left the window.

I bought a boat. Fourteen footer.
There was fish out there then.
You remember, we used to catch
six, eight fish, clean them right
out in the yard. I could of fished to China.

I quit the woods. One day just
walked out, took off my corks, said that's
it. I went to the docks.
I was working winch. You had to watch
to see nothing fell out of the sling. If
you killed somebody you'd
never forget it. **All**
those years I was just working
I was on edge, every day. Just working.

You kids. I could tell you
a lot. But I won't.

It's winter. I play a lot of cards
down at the tavern. Your mother.
I have to think of excuses
to get out of the house. You're
wasting your time, she says. You're wasting
your money.

You don't have no idea, Threasie.
I run out of things
to work for. Hell, why shouldn't I
play cards? Threasie,
some days now I just don't know.

How It Feels to Be Colored Me

Zora Neale Hurston

Zora Neale Hurston is one of the most important black woman writers in the United States. Although her works of fiction, folklore, and essays were popular during the Harlem renaissance in the 1930s, her writing was out of print and she was penniless at the time of her death. Her work has recently been reissued, and an anthology of her writing, I Love Myself When I Am Laughing, *edited by writer and activist Alice Walker, was published in 1979. The following essay, taken from this anthology, describes how Hurston became aware of the color of her skin and how it has shaped her attitude toward life.*

Words to Know

assegai a light spear used by Southern African tribesmen
circumlocutions roundabout ways of speaking
ebb the retreat of the tide
extenuating making less serious
Hegira a flight from danger
oleander a poisonous shrub with sweet-smelling flowers
pigmentation coloring
proscenium the area of the theater located between the curtain and the first seats in the audience
raiment clothing
rambunctious unruly
Reconstruction the period after the U.S. Civil War (1865-1877)
rending tearing apart
specter ghost
thorax the chest
veneer a thin layer, the surface appearance

I am colored but I offer nothing in the way of extenuating circumstances except the fact that I am the only Negro in the United States whose grandfather on the mother's side was *not* an Indian chief.

I remember the very day that I became colored. Up to my thirteenth year I lived in the little Negro town of Eatonville, Florida. It is exclusively a colored town. The only white people I knew passed through the town going to or coming from Orlando. The native whites rode

dusty horses, the Northern tourists chugged down the sandy village road in automobiles. The town knew the Southerners and never stopped cane chewing when they passed. But the Northerners were something else again. They were peered at cautiously from behind curtains by the timid. The more venturesome would come out on the porch to watch them go past and got just as much pleasure out of the tourists as the tourists got out of the village.

The front porch might seem a daring place for the rest of the town, 3
but it was a gallery seat for me. My favorite place was atop the gate-post. Proscenium box for a born first-nighter. Not only did I enjoy the show, but I didn't mind the actors knowing that I liked it. I usually spoke to them in passing. I'd wave at them and when they returned my salute, I would say something like this: "Howdy-do-well-I-thank-you-where-you-goin'?" Usually automobile or the horse paused at this, and after a queer exchange of compliments, I would probably "go a piece of the way" with them, as we say in farthest Florida. If one of my family happened to come to the front in time to see me, of course negotiations would be rudely broken off. But even so, it is clear that I was the first "welcome-to-our-state" Floridian, and I hope the Miami Chamber of Commerce will please take notice.

During this period, white people differed from colored to me only 4
in that they rode through town and never lived there. They liked to hear me "speak pieces" and sing and wanted to see me dance the parse-me-la, and gave me generously of their small silver for doing these things, which seemed strange to me for I wanted to do them so much that I needed bribing to stop. Only they didn't know it. The colored people gave no dimes. They deplored any joyful tendencies in me, but I was their Zora nevertheless. I belonged to them, to the nearby hotels, to the county—everybody's Zora.

But changes came in the family when I was thirteen, and I was sent 5
to school in Jacksonville. I left Eatonville, the town of the oleanders, as Zora. When I disembarked from the river-boat at Jacksonville, she was no more. It seemed that I had suffered a sea change. I was not Zora of Orange County any more, I was now a little colored girl. I found it out in certain ways. In my heart as well as in the mirror, I became a fast brown—warranted not to rub nor run.

But I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed 6
up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes. I do not mind at all. I do not belong to the sobbing school of Negrohood who hold that nature somehow has given them a lowdown dirty deal and whose feelings are all hurt about it. Even in the helter-skelter skirmish that is my life, I have seen that the world is to the strong regardless of a little pigmentation more or less. No, I do not weep at the world—I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife.

Someone is always at my elbow reminding me that I am the grand- 7
daughter of slaves. It fails to,register depression with me. Slavery is sixty years in the past. The operation was successful and the patient is doing well, thank you. The terrible struggle that made me an American out of a potential slave said "On the line!" The Reconstruction said "Get set!"; and the generation before said "Go!" I am off to a flying start and I must not halt in the stretch to look behind and weep. Slavery is the price I paid for civilization, and the choice was not with me. It is a bully adventure and worth all that I have paid through my ancestors for it. No one on earth ever had a greater chance for glory. The world to be won and nothing to be lost. It is thrilling to think—to know that for any act of mine, I shall get twice as much praise or twice as much blame. It is quite exciting to hold the center of the national stage, with the spectators not knowing whether to laugh or to weep.

The position of my white neighbor is much more difficult. No 8
brown specter pulls up a chair beside me when I sit down to eat. No dark ghost thrusts its leg against mine in bed. The game of keeping what one has is never so exciting as the game of getting.

I do not always feel colored. Even now I often achieve the uncon- 9
scious Zora of Eatonville before the Hegira. I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background.

For instance at Barnard. "Beside the waters of the Hudson" I feel 10
my race. Among the thousand white persons, I am a dark rock surged upon, and overswept, but through it all, I remain myself. When covered by the waters, I am; and the ebb but reveals me again.

Sometimes it is the other way around. A white person is set down in 11
our midst, but the contrast is just as sharp for me. For instance, when I sit in the drafty basement that is The New World Cabaret with a white person, my color comes. We enter chatting about any little nothing that we have in common and are seated by the jazz waiters. In the abrupt way that jazz orchestras have, this one plunges into a number. It loses no time in circumlocutions, but gets right down to business. It constricts the thorax and splits the heart with its tempo and narcotic harmonies. This orchestra grows rambunctious, rears on its hind legs and attacks the tonal veil with primitive fury, rending it, clawing it until it breaks through to the jungle beyond. I follow those heathen—follow them exultingly. I dance wildly inside myself; I yell within, I whoop; I shake my assegai above my head, I hurl it true to the mark *yeeeeooww!* I am in the jungle and living in the jungle way. My face is

painted red and yellow and my body is painted blue. My pulse is throbbing like a war drum. I want to slaughter something—give pain, give death to what, I do not know. But the piece ends. The men of the orchestra wipe their lips and rest their fingers. I creep back slowly to the veneer we call civilization with the last tone and find the white friend sitting motionless in his seat, smoking calmly.

"Good music they have here," he remarks, drumming the table with 12
his fingertips.

Music. The great blobs of purple and red emotion have not touched 13
him. He has only heard what I felt. He is far away and I see him but dimly across the ocean and the continent that have fallen between us. He is so pale with his whiteness then and I am *so* colored.

At certain times I have no race, I am *me*. When I set my hat at a 14
certain angle and saunter down Seventh Avenue, Harlem City, feeling as snooty as the lions in front of the Forty-Second Street Library, for instance. So far as my feelings are concerned, Peggy Hopkins Joyce on the Boule Mich with her gorgeous raiment, stately carriage, knees knocking together in a most aristocratic manner, has nothing on me. The cosmic Zora emerges. I belong to no race nor time. I am the eternal feminine with its string of beads.

I have no separate feeling about being an American citizen and col- 15
ored. I am merely a fragment of the Great Soul that surges within the boundaries. My country, right or wrong.

Sometimes, I feel discriminated against, but it does not make me 16
angry. It merely astonishes me. How *can* any deny themselves the pleasure of my company? It's beyond me.

But in the main, I feel like a brown bag of miscellany propped 17
against a wall. Against a wall in company with other bags, white, red and yellow. Pour out the contents, and there is discovered a jumble of small things priceless and worthless. A first-water diamond, an empty spool, bits of broken glass, lengths of string, a key to a door long since crumbled away, a rusty knife-blade, old shoes saved for a road that never was and never will be, a nail bent under the weight of things too heavy for any nail, a dried flower or two still a little fragrant. In your hand is the brown bag. On the ground before you is the jumble it held—so much like the jumble in the bags, could they be emptied, that all might be dumped in a single heap and the bags refilled without altering the content of any greatly. A bit of colored glass more or less would not matter. Perhaps that is how the Great Stuffer of Bags filled them in the first place—who knows?

Lenses

Annie Dillard

Dillard recounts a time from hir childhood when she explored the microscopic world of rotifers and amoebae. She saw the thousands of tiny animals and plants that live in just one drop of water and did not cringe or feel remorse when they had to die so that she could learn. Dillard's narration is typical of the wonder and excitement children experience when they encounter a completely new and strange territory. Dillard's writing style allows us to feel as if we are there beside her, peering through the microscope and observing the inhabitants of a curious and fantastic world.

Words to Know

biomass the total amount of living material within a given area
centrifuge equipment consisting of a compartment spun about a central axis to separate materials of different thickness or to simulate gravity with centrifugal force
enthralled fascinated
invulnerable resistant to attack
leached to be dissolved and washed out by a filtering liquid
opacity the quality of not being able to reflect light
purblind nearly or partly blind
rotifer any of various tiny multicellular aquatic organisms
sadism a delight in cruelty
silhouette an outline of something that appears dark against a light background
translucent see-through
vaunted bragged about

You get used to looking through lenses; it is an acquired skill. When 1
you first look through binoculars, for instance, you can't see a thing. You look at the inside of the barrel; you blink and watch your eyelashes; you play with the focus knob till one eye is purblind.

The microscope is even worse. You are supposed to keep both eyes 2
open as you look through its single eyepiece. I spent my childhood

in Pittsburgh trying to master this trick: seeing through one eye, with both eyes open. The microscope also teaches you to move your hands wrong, to shove the glass slide to the right if you are following a creature who is swimming off to the left—as if you were operating a tiller, or backing a trailer, or performing any other of those paradoxical maneuvers which require either sure instincts or a grasp of elementary physics, neither of which I possess.

A child's microscope set comes with a little five-watt lamp. You 3
place this dim light in front of the microscope's mirror; the mirror bounces the light up through the slide, through the magnifying lenses, and into your eye. The only reason you do not see everything in silhouette is that microscopic things are so small they are translucent. The animals and plants in a drop of pond water pass light like pale stained glass; they seem so soaked in water and light that their opacity has leached away.

The translucent strands of algae you see under a microscope—Spi- 4
rogyra, Oscillatoria, Cladophora—move of their own accord, no one knows how or why. You watch these swaying yellow, green, and brown strands of algae half mesmerized; you sink into the microscope's field forgetful, oblivious, as if it were all a dream of your deepest brain. Occasionally a zippy rotifer comes barreling through, black and white, and in a tremendous hurry.

My rotifers and daphniae and amoebae were in an especially tre- 5
mendous hurry because they were drying up. I burnt out or broke my little five-watt bulb right away. To replace it, I rigged an old table lamp laid on its side; the table lamp carried a seventy-five watt bulb. I was about twelve, immortal and invulnerable, and did not know what I was doing; neither did anyone else. My parents let me set up my laboratory in the basement, where they wouldn't have to smell the urine I collected in test tubes and kept in the vain hope it would grow something horrible. So in full, solitary ignorance I spent evenings in the basement staring into a seventy-five-watt bulb magnified three hundred times and focused into my eye. It is a wonder I can see at all. My eyeball itself would start drying up; I blinked and blinked.

But the pond water creatures fared worse. I dropped them on a 6
slide, floated a cover slip over them, and laid the slide on the microscope's stage, which the seventy-five-watt bulb had heated like a grill. At once the drop of pond water started to evaporate. Its edges shrank. The creatures swam among algae in a diminishing pool. I liked this part. The heat worked for me as a centrifuge, to concentrate the biomass. I had about five minutes to watch the members of a very dense

population, excited by the heat, go about their business until—as I fancied sadly—they all caught on to their situation and started making out wills.

I was, then, not only watching the much-vaunted wonders in a drop of pond water; I was also, with mingled sadism and sympathy, setting up a limitless series of apocalypses. I set up and staged hundreds of ends-of-the-world and watched, enthralled, as they played themselves out. Over and over again, the last trump sounded, the final scroll unrolled, and the known world drained, dried, and vanished. When all the creatures lay motionless, boiled and fried in the positions they had when the last of their water dried completely, I washed the slide in the sink and started over with a fresh drop. How I loved that deep, wet world where the colored algae waved in the water and the rotifers swam!

The Momist Manifesto

Alice Kahn

After interviewing several sets of parents for a local support organization, Kahn recounts some of the challenges every parent faces. We learn that many of the things individuals take for granted are soon challenged when they have children. Life suddenly becomes a constant undertaking to be a "good parent," yet Kahn finds hope in knowing that parents as a group are in the struggle together.

Words to Know

compounded combined
elusive difficult to define or describe
frivolous inappropriately silly
manifesto a public declaration of principles
milieu surroundings
poignant appealing to the emotions; touching
rebuffed refused biuntly
scurry to go with light, running steps
sprightly full of light

Recently I was a minor participant in a unique event. Bananas, a 1
pioneering parent support organization, and the local First Presbyterian Church held "Parenting Twenty-five Hours a Day: A Special Event for Families." It was my job to walk around during the lunch hour interviewing members of *the* oppressed group of the '80s—parents.

The entire conference right down to professional child care was 2
free. It included workshops on child *and* parent development, being a single parent, a new parent, a stepparent; one entitled "Dual (Not Duel) Careers," and, my favorite, one on "Setting Limits (Formerly Known as Discipline)." You can't even mention the d-word anymore.

At lunchtime, I walked around with Judy Calder, a registered nurse 3
who works full-time with the Bananas organization. Calder operated the video equipment while I did the interviews. I think Bananas hoped I would provide some sprightly entertainment for their video files, a little gal-in-the-street zaniness with those lovable, laughable parents. Instead, as Calder observed, "the interviews were really poignant."

Why is parenting in the '80s such serious business? Why do we find 4
a role that dates back to Adam and Eve so stressful? There are lots of answers, lots of places to put the blame, but I think the major reason

is because parents are trying so hard to do the job well. Everyone I know, including myself, is obsessed with trying to be something called "a good parent." This is a particularly elusive concept since the desired outcome is so unclear. What is the goal? A moral child? A successful child? A happy child[9] A child who loves you? An independent child? All of the above?

My impression of the parents I interviewed was that most of them 5
were already in the top ten percentile of parenting. Almost by definition, anyone who would spend their entire Saturday focusing on how to be a better parent is already half there. Other parents were probably spending their time doing chores, fighting with their kids, escaping from their kids, or, rarely, having fun with their kids.

Many of the people at the conference were child-care workers in 6
addition to being parents. They discussed the problem of being listened to by their client kids while being rebuffed by their own kids. Parents of teens talked about the pain of being rejected (except, of course, when needed as a funding agent) by their youngsters, who are choosing the support of their peer group. Some parents talked about the problems of balancing career and family.

One woman discussed her decision to leave her job as an executive 7
at AT&T to stay home. "I decided I was paying someone to do my job while I was at my other job," she said. I thought of how hard, as a black woman, the road to her executive position must have been, and what a difficult choice that must have been. Her comment will surely strike at the guilt feelings of other mothers who are afraid to leave their jobs because of uncertainty over whether they could come back, because they can't afford it, or because they simply can't stand to be home with the children full-time. Some fathers may feel this conflict, too, but they have not experienced the rapidly changing expectations that women have. While 46 percent of American women were housewives in 1960, today that number has been cut to 20 percent. All indications are that this percentage will continue to decline. But it doesn't change the fact that these mothers still grew up in a world where women were expected to stay home and raise the children.

A stepfather talked to me about the importance of being patient in 8
winning the love of his three-year-old stepchild. He observed that he had no more right to expect the child's love than any stranger on the street. But he said after a year of patient attention, the child (whose natural father was named Carl) came up to him one day and said, "You're my Carl."

Two couples with babies less than a year old talked about how the 9
youngsters had changed their relationships. In both cases, the women

stayed at home. One man talked about his difficulty with coming home tired from work and finding the wife at the door passing him the baby and saying the equivalent of " You take the little bugger, I'm getting out."

All these problems seemed familiar, some I've experienced, some I've only heard about. What struck me was that regardless of class, style, or any other variable, I can always empathize with that struggle to raise a child well. 10

It is a struggle compounded by the fact that in the modern family, the child has replaced the father as house tyrant. We all scurry around trying to meet that child's needs, trying not to cross him. How many times have you seen a mother (and that mother might have been me) standing in the supermarket presenting a reasonable list of alternatives to an unreasonable screaming little person who stood there shouting, "No, no, no, no"? 11

Discipline is a real thorn in the side of those who spent their formative years rejecting all forms of discipline and control. We fear damaging or repressing our children as we complained our parents did to us. In the context of a "question authority" community, it becomes particularly difficult to set limits for our children. That's why we feel such gratitude for anyone who seems to be on our side, anyone who understands that discipline is not the equivalent of child abuse. 12

Recently a woman asked me, in a somewhat confrontational manner, "What are your politics?" The whole presentation of this question had a '60s milieu about it, and I immediately fell into a '60s response, saying somewhat sheepishly and guiltily, "I used to have politics, but I haven't had time since my kids were born." The assumption here is that politics is something you do for The World rather than for you and yours. Increasingly, however, I realize that parenting *is* my politics. I find my allies are those people who make my life as a parent easier, whether it's an arms control advocate or a good teacher or someone like Bill Cosby, who can produce that rarest of all experiences, real family entertainment. 13

I respect people in public life who take care of their families as well as do their job. In this regard, I thought the much maligned Jackie Kennedy Onassis managed to maintain a strong family life against all odds. By contrast, I've been appalled at how few have observed the hypocrisy of Ronald Reagan advocating "family values" while seeming to be quite distant and unavailable to his own children. If someone spends his life making speeches and going to meetings while his own family is in shambles, I find it hard to take him seriously, like the preacher who can't practice what he preaches. It's clear to me that regardless of whatever happens in my life, I won't enjoy it unless my children are doing well. 14

At the end of the Bananas conference, many spoke of how comforting it was to spend time with other struggling parents, to understand how common the problems are. One father went up to one of the conference organizers and said, "I want you to know how much we appreciate what you're doing for people like us." Although working parents don't have much time for organizing and meeting, I think we are going to increasingly see the end of the parent as wimp. But first we're going to have to learn to stand up to our kids and set those limits. If they want to question authority, they can wait until they're capable of cleaning their rooms or proving themselves otherwise responsible. Once we earn a little self-respect at home, maybe then we can find a way to make our schools, our communities, and our governments help our lives as parents instead of make them more difficult.

Having a child helps you get your priorities straight. You know that you'll never waste a prayer on anything frivolous again. No more, please-God-let-me-get-the-promotion. Never another please-let-him-call-me. Anybody who's ever sat in a hospital emergency room waiting for the results of tests on their child knows exactly what I'm talking about. Although it's easy to forget, there is nothing more important we have to do than raise these children. 16

When I first walked around with my baby strapped on my chest in her little frontpack, I noticed a lot of people giving me a big smile. I'm not talking about the baby-worshippers who kitchy-cooed my little doll. I mean the other parents who gave me that knowing welcome-to-the-club look. We *are* in this together. We're making the same statement against the dark, violent world that seems to have forgotten the value of life. 17

The Dare

Roger Hoffmann

Roger Hoffmann recounts an episode from his adolescence when approval by his peers was more important than personal safety. No matter our age or particular adolescent experience, we are able to relate to the pressure Hoffmann felt as a child. The desire for acceptance by friends and colleagues is something we never outgrow.

Words to Know

ambiguous having multiple meanings
escalated increased
guerrilla warfare warfare carried out by an irregular, independent force
implicit understood although not directly stated
provoke to cause anger or resentment
silhouette an outline of something that appears dark against a light background

The secret to diving under a moving freight train and rolling out the other side with all your parts attached lies in picking the right spot between the tracks to hit with your back. Ideally, you want soft dirt or pea gravel, clear of glass shards and railroad spikes that could cause you instinctively, and fatally, to sit up. Today, at thirty-eight, I couldn't be threatened or baited enough to attempt that dive. But as a seventh grader struggling to make the cut in a tough Atlanta grammar school, all it took was a dare. 1

I coasted through my first years of school as a fussed-over smart kid, the teacher's pet who finished his work first and then strutted around the room tutoring other students. By the seventh grade, I had more A's than friends. Even my old cronies, Dwayne and O.T., made it clear I'd never be one of the guys in junior high if I didn't dirty up my act. They challenged me to break the rules, and I did. The I-dare-you's escalated: shoplifting, sugaring teachers' gas tanks, dropping lighted matches into public mailboxes. Each guerrilla act won me the approval I never got for just being smart. 2

Walking home by the railroad tracks after school, we started playing chicken with oncoming trains. O.T., who was failing that year, always won. One afternoon he charged a boxcar from the side, stopping just short of throwing himself between the wheels. I was stunned. 3

After the train disappeared, we debated whether someone could dive under a moving car, stay put for a 10-count, then scramble out the other side. I thought it could be done and said so. O.T. immediately stepped in front of me and smiled. Not by me, I added quickly, I certainly didn't mean that I could do it. "A smart guy like you," he said, his smile evaporating, "you could figure it out easy." And then, squeezing each word for effect, "I … DARE . . . you." I'd just turned twelve. The monkey clawing my back was Teacher's Pet. And I'd been dared.

As an adult, I've been on both ends of life's implicit business and social I-dare-you's, although adults don't use those words. We provoke with body language, tone of voice, ambiguous phrases. I dare you to: argue with the boss, tell Fred what you think of him, send the wine back. Only rarely are the risks physical. How we respond to dares when we are young may have something to do with which of the truly hazardous male inner dares—attacking mountains, tempting bulls at Pamplona—we embrace or ignore as men. 4

For two weeks, I scouted trains and tracks. I studied moving boxcars close up, memorizing how they squatted on their axles, never getting used to the squeal or the way the air felt hot from the sides. I created an imaginary, friendly train and ran next to it. I mastered a shallow, head-first dive with a simple half-twist. I'd land on my back, count to ten, imagine wheels and, locking both hands on the rail to my left, heave myself over and out. Even under pure sky, though, I had to fight to keep my eyes open and my shoulders between the rails. 5

The next Saturday, O.T., Dwayne and three eighth graders met me below the hill that backed up to the lumberyard. The track followed a slow bend there and opened to a straight, slightly uphill climb for a solid third of a mile. My run started two hundred yards after the bend. The train would have its tongue hanging out. 6

The other boys huddled off to one side, a circle on another planet, and watched quietly as I double-knotted my shoelaces. My hands trembled. O.T. broke the circle and came over to me. He kept his hands hidden in the pockets of his jacket. We looked at each other. BB's of sweat appeared beneath his nose. I stuffed my wallet in one of his pockets, rubbing it against his knuckles on the way in, and slid my house key, wired to a red-and-white fishing bobber, into the other. We backed away from each other, and he turned and ran to join the four already climbing up the hill. 7

I watched them all the way to the top. They clustered together as if I were taking their picture. Their silhouette resembled a round- 8

shouldered tombstone. They waved down to me, and I dropped them from my mind and sat down on the rail. Immediately, I jumped back. The steel was vibrating.

The train sounded like a cow going short of breath. I pulled my 9
shirttail out and looked down at my spot, then up the incline of track ahead of me. Suddenly the air went hot, and the engine was by me. I hadn't pictured it moving that fast. A man's bare head leaned out and stared at me. I waved to him with my left hand and turned into the train, burying my face into the incredible noise. When I looked up, the head was gone.

I started running alongside the boxcars. Quickly, I found their pace, 10
held it, and then eased off, concentrating on each thick wheel that cut past me. I slowed another notch. Over my shoulder, I picked my car as it came off the bend, locking in the image of the white mountain goat painted on its side. I waited, leaning forward like the anchor in a 440-relay, wishing the baton up the track behind me. Then the big goat fired by me, and I was flying and then tucking my shoulder as I dipped under the train.

A heavy blanket of red dust settled over me. I felt bolted to the earth. 11
Sheet-metal bellies thundered and shook above my face. Count to ten, a voice said, watch the axles and look to your left for daylight. But I couldn't count, and I couldn't find left if my life depended on it, which it did. The colors overhead went from brown to red to black to red again. Finally, I ripped my hands free, forced them to the rail, and, in one convulsive jerk, threw myself into the blue light.

I lay there face down until there was no more noise, and I could 12
feel the sun against the back of my neck. I sat up. The last ribbon of train was slipping away in the distance. Across the tracks, O.T. was leading a cavalry charge down the hill, five very small, galloping boys, their fists whirling above them. I pulled my knees to my chest. My corduroy pants puckered wet across my thighs. I didn't care.

Where's Your Space Shell?

Julius Fast

How much space do you need? When you share a table with another person, what do you think of as your "territory"? In this passage from his book Body Language, *Julius Fast defines a feeling that he says is born into all animals, including humans: the* territorial imperative, *the need to claim and hold a certain amount of space around us as our own. He shows us how this feeling affects our actions—even when we are least aware of it.*

Words to Know

abolition the act of abolishing, discontinuing
breach breakthrough
encroach go beyond normal limits
genetic passed on from parent to child
ineradicable not removable
inherited born with, transmitted from parent **to** child
innate born with
integral necessary part
interpolate transfer .
inviolate undamaged
postulate presume as fact
primates the group of animals **including humans,** monkeys, and apes
retaliating getting revenge
territorial concerned with possessing **a specific** area

One of the things that is inherited genetically is the sense of territory. Robert Ardrey has written a fascinating book, *The Territorial Imperative,* in which he traces this territorial sense through the animal kingdom and into the human. In this book he discusses the staking out and guarding of territories by animals, birds, deer, fish, and primates. For some species the territories are temporary, shifting with each season. For other animal species they are permanent. Ardrey makes an interesting case for the fact that, in his belief, "the territorial nature of man is genetic and ineradicable."

From his extensive animal studies he describes an innate code of behavior in the animal world that ties sexual reproduction to territorial defense. The key to the code, he believes, is territory, and the territorial imperative is the drive in animals and in men to take, hold and defend a given area.

There may be a drive in all men to have and defend a territory, and it may well be that a good part of that drive is inborn. However, we cannot always interpolate from humans to animals and from animals to humans.

The territorial imperative may exist in all animals and in some men. It may be strengthened by culture in some of these men and weakened in still others.

But there is little doubt that there is some territorial need in humans. How imperative it is remains to be seen. One of the most frightening plays of modern times is *Home,* by Megan Terry. It postulates a world of the future where the population explosion has caused all notion of territory to be discarded. All men live in cells in a gigantic metal hive enclosing the entire planet. They live out their lives, whole families confined to one room, without^ver seeing sky or earth or another cell.

In this prophetic horror story, territory has been completely abolished. Perhaps this gives the play its great impact. In our modern cities we seem to be moving toward the abolition of territory. We find families crammed and boxed into rooms that are stacked one on another to dizzying heights. We ride elevators pressed together, and subway trains, packed in too tightly to move our arms or legs. We have yet to fully understand what happens to man when he is deprived of all territorial rights.

We know man has a sense of territory, a need for a shell of territory around him. This varies from the tight close shell of the city dweller through the larger bubble of yard and home in the suburbanite to the wide open spaces the country man enjoys.

We don't know how much space is necessary to any individual man, but what is important in our study of body language is what happens to any individual man when this shell of space or territory is threatened or breached. How does he respond and how does he defend it, or how does he yield?

I had lunch not too long ago with a psychiatrist friend. We sat in a pleasant restaurant at a stylishly small table. At one point he took out a pack of cigarettes, lit one and put the pack down three-quarters of the way across the table in front of my plate.

He kept talking and I kept listening, but I was troubled in some way that I couldn't quite define, and more troubled as he moved his tableware about, lining it up with his cigarettes, closer and closer to my side of the table. Then leaning across the table himself he attempted to make a point. It was a point I could hardly appreciate because of my growing uneasiness.

Finally he took pity on me and said, "I just favored you with a demonstration of a very basic step in body language, in nonverbal communication." 11

Puzzled, I asked, "What was that?" 12

"1 aggressively threatened and challenged you. I put you in a position of having to assert yourself, and that bothered you." 13

Still uncomprehending, I asked, "But how? What did you do?" 14

"I moved my cigarettes to start with," he explained. "By unspoken rule we have divided the table in half, half for you and half for me." 15

"I wasn't conscious of any such division." 16

"Of course not. The rule remains though. We both staked out a territory in our minds. Ordinarily we would have shared the table by some unspoken and civilized command. However, I deliberately moved my cigarettes into your area in a breach of taste. Unaware of what I had done, you still felt yourself threatened, felt uneasy, and when I aggressively followed up my first breach of your territory with another, moving my plate and silverware and then intruding myself, you became more and more uneasy and still were not aware of why." 17

It was my first demonstration of the fact that we each possess zones of territory. We carry these zones with us and we react in different ways to the breaking of these zones. Since then I have tried out the same technique of cutting into someone else's zone when he was unaware of what I was doing. 18

At supper the other evening, my wife and I shared a table in an Italian restaurant with another couple. Experimentally I moved the wine bottle into my friend's "zone." Then slowly, still talking, followed up my intrusion by rearranging wine glass and napkin in his zone. Uneasily he shifted in his chair, moved aside, rearranged his plate, his napkin and finally in a sudden, almost compulsive lunge, moved the wine bottle back. 19

He had reacted by defending his zone and retaliating. 20

From this parlor game a number of basic facts emerge. No matter how crowded the area in which we humans live, each of us maintains a zone or territory around us—an inviolate area we try to keep for our own. How we defend this area and how we react to invasion of it, as well as how we encroach into other territories, can all be observed and charted and in many cases used constructively. These are all elements of nonverbal communication. This guarding of zones is one of the first basic principles. 21

How we guard our zones and how we aggress to other zones is an integral part of how we relate to other people. 22

The First Appendectomy

William A. Nolen, M.D.

In this inside look at the practice of medicine, William Nolen, surgeon and author, recalls the first operation he ever performed. In his minute-by-minute account, the action at times seems almost comical, but Nolen is not laughing. He reminds us at the end what a large and terrifying responsibility it is for a doctor—even with the best of training—to hold a person's life in his hands.

Words to Know

anesthetist doctor who gives anesthesia
anticlimactk a letting down after climax
Benchley, Robert American humorist
convalescence recovery
distended stretched out
equanimity calmness
hemostats clamps to stop bleeding
infinitesimal **tiny, minute**
intravenous through the veins
lesion injury
ligature joining
paean song of praise
sutures stitches

A he patient, or better, victim, of my first major surgical venture was 1
a man I'll call Mr. Polansky. He was fat, he weighed one hundred and ninety pounds and was five feet eight inches tall. He spoke only broken English. He had had a sore abdomen with all the classical signs and symptoms of appendicitis for twenty-four hours before he came to Bellevue.

After two months of my internship, though I had yet to do anything 2
that could be decently called an "operation," 1 had had what I thought was a fair amount of operating time. I'd watched the assistant residents work, I'd tied knots, cut sutures and even, in order to remove a skin'.lesion, made an occasional incision. Frankly, I didn't think that surgery was going to be too damn difficult. I figured I was ready, and , so when Mr. Polansky arrived I greeted him like a long-lost friend. He was (overwhelmed., at the interest I showed in his case. He probably couldn't understand why any doctor should be so fascinated by a case of appendicitis: wasn't it a common

disease? It was just as well that he didn't realize my rhterest in him was so personal. He might have been frightened, and with good reason.

At any rate, I set some sort of record in preparing Mr. Polansky for 3
surgery. He had arrived on the ward at four o'clock. By six I had examined him, checked his blood and urine, taken his chest X-ray and had him ready for the operating room.

George Walters, the senior resident on call that night, was to "assist" 4
me during the operation. George was older than the rest of us. I was twenty-five at this time and he was thirty-two. He had taken his surgical training in Europe and was spending one year as a senior resident in an American hospital to establish eligibility(loj!the American College of Surgeons. He had had more experience than the other residents and it took a lot to disturb his equanimity in the operating room. As it i turned out, this made him the ideal assistant for me.

It was ten o'clock when we wheeled Mr. Polansky to the operating 5
room. At Bellevue, at night, only two operating rooms were kept open—there were six or more going all day—so we had to wait our turn. In the time I had to myself before the operation 1 had reread the section on appendectomy in the *Atlas of Operative Technique* in our surgical library, and had spent half an hour tying knots on the bedpost in my room. I was, I felt "ready."

I delivered Mr. Polansky to the operating room and started an intra- 6
venous going in his arm. Then I left him to the care of the anesthetist. I had ordered a sedative prior to surgery, so Mr. Polansky was[1] drowsy,[1] The anesthetist, after checking his chart, soon had him sleeping.

Once he was asleep I scrubbed the enormous expanse of 7
Mr. Polansky's abdomen for ten minutes. Then, while George placed the sterile drapes, I scrubbed my own hands for another five, mentally reviewing each step of the operation as I did so. Donning gown and gloves I took my place on the right side of the operating-room table. The nurse handed me the scalpel. I was ready to begin.

Suddenly my entire attitude changed. A split second earlier I had 8
been supremely confident; now, with the knife finally in my hand, I stared down at Mr. Polansky's abdomen and for the life of me could not decide where to make the incision. The "landmarks" had disappeared. There was too much belly.

George waited a few seconds, then looked up at me and said, "Go 9
ahead." '

"What?" I asked. 10

"Make the incision," said George. 11

"Where?" I asked. 12

"Where?"

13 "Yes," I answered, "where?"

14 "Why, here, of course," said George and drew an imaginary line on the abdomen with his fingers.

I took the scalpel and followed where he had directed. I barely 16 scratched Mr. Polansky.

"Press a little harder," George directed. I did. The blade went 17 through the skin to a depth of perhaps one sixteenth of an inch.

"Deeper," said George.

There are five layers of tissue in the abdominal wall: skin, fat, fascia 19 (a tough membranous tissue), muscle and peritoneum (the smooth, glistening, transparent inner lining of the abdomen). I cut down into the fat. Another sixteenth of an inch.

"Bill," said George, looking up at me, "this patient is big. There's 20 at least three inches of fat to get through before we even reach the fascia. At the rate you're going we won't be into the abdomen for another four hours. For God's sake, will you cut?"

I made up my mind not to be hesitant. I pressed down hard on the 21 knife, and suddenly we were not only through the fat but through the fascia as well.

"Not that hard," George shouted, grabbing my right wrist with his 22 left hand while with his other hand he plunged a gauze pack into the wound to stop the bleeding. "Start clamping," he told me.

The nurse handed us hemostats and we applied them to the numer- 23 ous vessels I had so hastily opened. "All right," George said, "start tying."

I took the ligature material from the nurse and began to tie off the 24 vessels. Or rather, I tried to tie off the vessels, because suddenly my knot-tying proficiency had melted away. The casual dexterity I had displayed *on* the bedpost a short hour ago was nowhere in evidence. My fingers, greasy with fat, simply would not perform. My ties slipped off the vessels, the sutures snapped in my fingers, at one point I even managed to tie the end of my rubber glove into the wound. It was, to put it bluntly, a performance in fumbling that would have made Robert Benchley blush.

Here I must give my first paean of praise to George. His patience 25 during the entire performance was nothing short of miraculous. The temptation to pick up the catgut and do the tying himself must have been strong. He could have tied off all the vessels in two minutes. It took me twenty.

Finally we were ready to proceed. "Now," George directed, "split 26 the muscle. But gently, please."

I reverted to my earlier tack. Fiber by fiber I spread the muscle 27 vvhich was the last layer but one that kept us from the inside of the abdomen. Each time I separated the fibers and withdrew my clamp, the fibers rolled together again. After five minutes I was no nearer the appendix than I had^been at the start.

George could stand it no longer. But he was apparently afraid to 28 <;ueeest I take a more aggressive approach, fearing I would stick the clamp into, or possibly through, the entire abdomen. Instead he suggested that he help me by spreading the muscle in one direction while I spread it in the other. I made my usual infinitesimal attack on the muscle. In one fell swoop George spread the rest.

"Very well done," he complimented me. "Now let's get in." 29

We each took a clamp and picked up the tissue-paper-thin perito- 30 neum. After two or three hesitant attacks with the scalpel I finally opened it. We were in the abdomen.

"Now," said George, "put your fingers in, feel the cecum (the por- 31 tion of the bowel to which the appendix is attached) and bring it into the wound."

I stuck my right hand into the abdomen. I felt around—but what 32 was I feeling? I had no idea.

It had always looked so simple when the senior resident did it. Open 33 the abdomen, reach inside, pull up the appendix. Nothing to it. But apparently there was.

Everything felt the same to me. The small intestine, the large intes- 34 tine, the cecum—how did one tell them apart without seeing them? I grabbed something and pulled it into the wound. Small intestine. No good. Put it back. I grabbed again. This time it was the sigmoid colon. Put it back. On my third try I had the small intestine again.

"The appendix must be in an abnormal position/' I said to George. 35 "I can't seem to find it."

"Mind if I try?" he asked. 36

"Not at all," I answered. "I wish you would." - 37

Two of his fingers disappeared into the wound. Five seconds later 38 they emerged, cecum between them, with the appendix flopping from it.

"Stuck down a little," he said kindly. "That's probably why you 39 didn't feel it. It's a hot one," he added. "Let's get at it."

The nurse handed me the hemostats, and one by one I applied them 40 to the mesentery of the appendix—the veil of tissue in which the blood vessels run. With George holding the veil between his fingers I had no trouble; I took the ligatures and tied the vessels without a single error. My confidence was coming back.

"Now," George directed, "put in your purse string." (The cecum is a portion of the bowel which has the shape of half a hemisphere. The appendix projects from its surface like a finger. In an appendectomy the routine procedure is to tie the appendix at its base and cut it off a little beyond the tie. Then the remaining stump is inverted into the cecum and kept there by tying the purse-string stitch. This was the stitch I was now going to sew.)

It went horribly. The wall of the cecum is not very thick—perhaps one eighth of an inch. The suture must be placed deeply enough in the wall so that it won't cut through when tied, but not so deep as to pass all the way through the wall. My sutures were alternately too superficial or too deep, but eventually I got the job done.

"All right," said George, "let's get the appendix out of here. Tie off the base."

I did.

"Now cut off the appendix."

At least in this, the definitive act of the operation, I would be decisive. I took the knife and with one quick slash cut through the appendix—too close to the ligature.

"Oh oh, watch it," said George. "That tie is going to slip."

It did. The appendiceal stump lay there, open. I felt faint.

"Don't panic," said George. "We've still got the purse string. I'll push the stump in—you pull up the stitch and tie. That will take care of it."

I picked up the two ends of the suture and put in the first stitch. George shoved the open stump into the cecum. It disappeared as I snugged my tie. Beautiful.

"Two more knots," said George. "Just to be safe."

I tied the first knot and breathed a sigh of relief. The appendiceal stump remained out of sight. On the third knot—for the sake of security—I pulled a little tighter. The stitch broke; the open stump popped up; the cecum disappeared into the abdomen. I broke out in a cold sweat and my knees started to crumble.

Even George momentarily lost his composure. "For Christ's sake, Bill/' he said, grasping desperately for the bowel, "what did you have to do that for?" The low point of the operation had been reached.

By the time we had retrieved the cecum, Mr. Polansky's peritoneal cavity had been contaminated. My self-confidence was shattered. And still George let me continue. True, he all but held my hand as we retied and resutured, but the instruments were in my hand.

The closure was anticlimactic. Once I had the peritoneum sutured, things went reasonably smoothly. Two hours after we began, the

operation was over. "Nice job," George said, doing **hi/best** to sound sincere.

"Thanks," I answered, lamely.

The scrub nurse laughed.

Mr. Polansky recovered, I am happy to report, though not without a long and complicated convalescence. His bowel refused to function normally for two weeks and he became enormously distended. He was referred to at our nightly conferences as "Dr. Nolen's pregnant man." Each time the reference was made, it elicited a shudder from me.

During his convalescence I spent every spare moment I could at Mr, Polansky's bedside. My feelings of guilt and responsibility were overwhelming. If he had died I think I would have given up surgery for good.

Glossary

Various terms are used throughout this edition of PATTERNS PLUS to explain the basic strategies of writing. These terms are boldfaced in the chapter introductions and end-of-selection questions, and they are boldfaced and defined here in the following pages. Terms in bold type within the definitions are also defined in the glossary.

Alternating Method Also called the Point-by-Point method, the alternating method is used in **comparison** and **contrast** writing. The method compares and contrasts individual points between two subjects. (See also **Block Method.)**

Antonym An antonym is a word that has a meaning *opposite* to the meaning of another word. For example, *pleasure* is an antonym of *pain.* Using an antonym is one method used by writers to define an unfamiliar word.

Argument An argument is a rational, objective appeal to a reader on a controversial topic. The five elements of a formal, or classical, argument are: **Statement of the Problem, Solution, Evidence, Refutation,** and **Conclusion.** See Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion/' for further discussion.

Argumentation Argumentation is a **mode of development** whose purpose is to convince the reader to accept the writer's opinion. In argumentation, the **main idea** is supported by objective facts or logical evidence. Writers may also use any other modes of development explained in this text. For further discussion, see Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion."

Audience A reader or readers of a piece of writing. More specifically, an audience is that reader or group of readers toward which a particular piece of writing is aimed. (See also **Purpose** and **Occasion.)**

Block Method In comparison and contrast writing, the block method is used to entirely present the first item being compared, then the second, and so on. (See also **Alternating Method.)**

Body The body is the development of the thesis over a group of related paragraphs in an essay. (See also **Introduction** and **Conclusion.)**

Brainstorm A pre-writing technique that many writers use to generate ideas for writing. In brainstorming, a writer jots down as many details and ideas on a subject that come to mind.

Cause A cause is a reason for something that happens or an explanation as to why some effect occurs. Writers explain why an **effect** (or result) comes about

by explaining its causes. See Chapter 8, "Cause and Effect," for further discussion.

Chronological order See **Order**

Class **In classification** and **division,** a writer can classify or divide items if they are of the same type, that is, if they belong to the same class.

Classification Classification is the process of sorting a group of items into categories on the basis of some characteristic or quality that the items have in common. As a **mode of development,** classification is used by writers to organize and develop information included in a paragraph or essay. Classification is sometimes combined with **division** to develop a topic or thesis. See Chapter 5, "Classification and Division," for further discussion.

Cliche Cliches are words or phrases that have become overused and so have lost their expressive power. Examples of cliches are: "rosy red," "silly goose," " **bull in** a china shop," "works like a horse," etc.

Coherent In order for a **paragraph** to be effective, it must state the **main idea** clearly in a way that allows the reader to follow the thoughts presented without stumbling or needing to backtrack. (See also **Unified** and **Complete.)**

Comparison When making a comparison, the writer discusses the similarities of objects or ideas. Writers sometimes combine comparison with **contrast in** developing their main idea. See Chapter 6, "Comparison and Contrast," for further discussion.

Complete In order for a **paragraph** to be effective, it must be complete, that is, it must develop the **main idea** fully enough so that the reader understands and appreciates the **topic.** (See also **Coherent** and **Unified.)**

Conclusion In writing, the term *conclusion* is used to refer to the sentences or paragraph that completes the composition. Within the conclusion, the writer may restate the main idea of the composition or sum up the important points made in the composition.

In reading, the term *conclusion* refers to the idea the reader can draw from the information in the reading selection. Drawing a conclusion involves making an inference, that is, deriving an idea that is implied by the information stated within a composition.

Connotation Connotation refers to the feelings or qualities a reader associates with a word. In persuasive writing, writers often use the connotations of words to appeal to their readers. (See also **Denotation.)**

Contrast When making a contrast, the writer discusses the differences among objects or ideas. Writers sometimes combine contrast **with comparison** in developing an idea. See Chapter 6, "Comparison and Contrast," for further discussion.

Definition A definition explains the meaning of a word or term. Writers frequently use a variety of methods for defining the words and terms they use. They may use a dictionary definition, a **synonym,** or **an antonym.** They may also use any combination of the **modes of development** explained in this text.

An **extended definition** is one that occurs over the course of several sentences or paragraphs. It is often used to define complex objects or concepts. See also Chapter 9, "Definition," for further discussion.

Denotation Denotation refers to the exact or dictionary definition of a word. (See also **Connotation.)**

Description In a description, the writer discusses the appearance of a person, place, or object. In descriptions, writers use words and details that appeal to the senses in order to create the *impression* they want the reader to have about what is described.

Details Details are specific pieces of information—examples, incidents, dates, and so forth—that explain and support the general ideas in a composition. Writers use details to make their general ideas clearer and more understandable to the reader.

Development Development refers to the detailed explanation of the main—and usually more general—ideas in a composition. The main idea (or topic) of a paragraph is explained through the more specific information in the sentences within the paragraph. The **main idea** or **thesis** of an essay is explained or developed through the paragraphs within the essay.

Dialogue Dialogue is conversation, usually between two or more persons. It is used by writers to give the exact wording used by people introduced in the composition, and thus is always set off by quotation marks. The writer usually uses a new paragraph to indicate a change of speaker. Dialogue is commonly found in narrative writing.

Division In division, the writer breaks down or sorts a single object or idea into its components or parts and then gives detailed information about each of the parts. Division is sometimes used in combination with **classification.** For further discussion, see Chapter 5, "Classification and Division."

Effect An effect is the result of certain events or **causes.** An effect may be the result of one or more causes. Writers often combine cause and effect to explain why something happens. For further discussion, see Chapter 8, "Cause and Effect."

Essay An essay is a written composition based on an idea, which is called its thesis. An essay usually consists of a least three paragraphs. In the paragraphs, writers generally introduce and state the thesis, develop or explain the thesis, and conclude the essay. See Chapter 1, "The Basics of Paragraphs and Essays," for further discussion.

Event An occurrence or happening that a writer will portray, often as part of a **fictional** or **non-fictional narrative.**

Evidence In argumentation, evidence refers to the examples or facts a writer uses to support the **solution,** or **main idea,** of a paragraph or essay. See Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion," for further discussion.

Example An example is a specific illustration of a more general idea or statement. Writers may use one or more examples and may extend a single example over an entire essay in order to illustrate and support their ideas.

Extended Example An extended example is one example that occurs over several sentences or paragraphs. It is used as a way of providing additional support **for** a **topic sentence** or **thesis statement.** See also Chapter 4, "Examples," for further discussion.

Fact(s) Anything or things that are known with certainty. Writers often present facts as a way of stating the **objectivity** of their position on a subject. (See also **Opinion.)**

Fiction (Fictional Narrative) A paragraph or essay that presents a story or event that did not occur, or which differs significantly from a real or true event is called fiction. (By contrast, see **Nonfiction (Non-fictional Narrative).)**

General Idea/General Statement A general idea or statement is broad and sweeping and therefore must usually be explained through more specific information. The **main idea** of a paragraph or essay is a relatively general idea, involving only the main features of the thought. In a paragraph or an essay, the general ideas and statements must be supported by more specific information.

Implied/Imply To imply is to hint at or indicate indirectly. Writers sometimes only imply their ideas rather than stating them directly. An implied idea requires the reader to draw **conclusions** or make **inferences in** order to determine the idea.

Incidents Incidents are the more specific, detailed happenings within a particular event. The narrative about an event will include an account of the specific incidents that occurred as part of the event (see **Narration).**

Inference An inference is a conclusion drawn by the reader based on information known or indicated *indirectly.* Writers sometimes indicate their ideas indirectly by suggesting rather than stating them. Readers must make inferences and use the information that is known or stated to determine the writer's ideas.

Inform Inform means to relate or tell about something. Writers often use **process** as a **mode of development** in which to inform their readers, though any of the modes in this text can be used to inform.

Instruct Instruct means to teach or educate. Writers often use **process** as a **mode of development** in which to instruct their readers.

Irony The use in writing of a relationship that is contradictory or unexpected. Writers often use irony to amuse, sadden, instruct, or anger their readers.

Introduction The introduction of a paragraph or essay is at its beginning. The introduction of an essay is often the place where the writer places the **thesis statement.** (See also **Body** and **Conclusion.)**

Main Idea The main idea of a composition is the general concept or broad opinion on which the composition is based. The main idea of a paragraph is referred to as the **topic.** The main idea of an essay is called the **thesis.**

Metaphor A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares unlike items by attributing the qualities or characteristics of one item to the other. A metaphor compares the items without the use of the words *like* or *as.* (See also **Simile.)**

Mixed Method Writers will often use the **Mixed Method** form in **comparison** and **contrast** writing, when neither the **Alternating Method** nor the **Block Method** alone is sufficient.

Mode of Development The mode of development refers to the kind of information used to support and explain the **main idea** of a paragraph or essay. Writers commonly use, either singly or in combination, the modes included in this text: **narration, description, examples, classification** and **division, comparison** and **contrast, process, cause** and **effect, definition,** and **argumentation** and **persuasion.**

Narration Narration is a **mode of development** used by writers to tell a story or give an account of a historical or factual event. See Chapter 2, "Narration," for further discussion.

Nonficiton (Non-fictional Narrative) A paragraph or essay that presents a story or event that actually happened. (By contrast, see **Fiction [Fictional Narrative]).**

Objective A paragraph or essay that presents the facts without including the writer's own feelings about interpretation of those facts is said to be objective. (By contrast, see **Subjective.)**

Occasion An occasion is the circumstances under which a particular piece of writing occurs. The Writing Assignments in this text are occasions for writing paragraphs and essays.

Opinion An opinion is a writer's belief or conclusion about something that may or may not be based on fact. Writers often use opinion as a way of presenting **a** subjective account of an event or object. (By contrast, see **Fact(s).)**

Order Order refers to the sequence in which the information in a composition is organized or arranged. Information is commonly organized in chronological, importance, or spatial orders. In **chronological order,** the information is sequenced according to time. In **order of importance,** the information may be sequenced from the least to the most important—or from the most to the least important. **In spatial order,** the information is presented from a particular vantage point—the door to a room, front to back, floor to ceiling, and so forth.

Order of Importance (See **Order)**

Paragraph A paragraph is usually a set of two or more sentences that are related to one another in explaining an idea. The major use of a paragraph is to mark a division of the information within a composition. Another use of the paragraph is **to** set off **dialogue** within a composition. In this text, a paragraph is considered as a unit. The first word of a paragraph is usually indented a few spaces from the left margin of the writing or the print.

Parallelism Parallelism refers to the use of the same grammatical structure in successive sentences. Writers use parallel sentence structure to clarify and emphasize the relation of the information within the sentences.

Person Person is indicated by the personal pronouns used in a composition. Writers use the first person *(/, we)* to represent themselves as participants or firsthand observers of their subject. They use the second person *{you)* to address

the reader directly. They use the third person *(he, she, it, one, they)* to provide the reader with a less limited and more objective view of the subject than may be conveyed by using first or second person. (See also **Point of View.)**

Persuade To persuade is to try and convince someone of **a** particular **point of view.** Writers often try to persuade their readers. (See also **Inform** and **Instruct.)**

Persuasion Persuasion is a **mode of development** whose main purpose is to convince the reader to accept the writer's opinion. In persuasive writing, writers use words and examples to appeal to the reader's emotions. Writers may also use any other modes of development explained in this text. For further discussion, see Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion."

Point of View Point of view refers to the way writers present their ideas. Point of view is determined by the **person, time,** and **tone** used in a composition. Person is indicated by the personal pronouns. Time is determined by the words that indicate whether the information included in the composition takes place in the past, in the present, or in the future. Tone refers to the attitude that writers take toward their subjects. Tone may be serious, humorous, formal, informal, cynical, sarcastic, ironic, sympathetic, and so forth.

Process Process is a **mode of development** used by writers to explain the method of doing a task, making or preparing something, or achieving a particular result. See Chapter 7, "Process," for further discussion.

Purpose Purpose refers to a writer's reason for writing. Common purposes for writing include writing to persuade, to inform, and to instruct. (See **Persuade, Inform, Instruct.)**

Refutation **In argumentation,** refutation refers to the writer's acknowledgment of and response to opposing views. For further discussion, see Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion."

Rhetorical Question A rhetorical question is a question to which no real answer is expected because only one obvious reply can be made. Writers often use rhetorical questions to emphasize a point and to suggest that only one viewpoint—the writer's—is possible.

Sentence A sentence is a group of words that expresses a unit of thought. A sentence usually contains a word or words that express who is doing an action or is being acted upon (the *subject* of the sentence) and a word or words that express the action that is taking place (the *verb* of the sentence). The first word of a sentence begins with a capital letter. The end of the sentence is marked by a period (.), a question mark (?), or an exclamation point (.'}.

Simile A simile is a figure of speech in which unlike items are compared. A simile is usually introduced by *like* or *as,* as in "He worked *like a horse* on the project" or "The chicken was as tasteless *as a piece of cardboard."* (See also **Metaphor.)**

Solution **In argumentation,** the solution refers to the writer's answer **to the statement of the problem.** For further discussion, see Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion."

Spatial order (see **Order)**

Statement of the Problem In **argumentation,** the statement of the problem refers to the opinion or belief that the writer opposes. See Chapter 10, "Argumentation and Persuasion," for further discussion.

Subjective Subjective writing is that in which the writer expresses his or her feelings about the topic. (For contrast, see **Objective.)**

Support Support refers to the information—specific details, examples, and so forth—used to develop or explain the general idea in a composition.

Symbol A symbol is a person, place, or object that represents something other than itself, usually something immaterial or abstract.

Synonym A synonym is a word or phrase that has the same meaning as another word or phrase. Writers sometimes use a synonym to clarify an unfamiliar word or phrase used in their compositions.

Thesis The thesis is the main idea of an essay. The thesis may be stated directly (see Thesis **Statement)** or only implied (see **Implied/Imply).**

Thesis Statement The thesis statement is the sentence or sentences in which the **main** idea of an essay is stated. The thesis statement is generally placed at or near the beginning of an essay.

Time Time refers to the period (past, present, future) when the action mentioned in the composition took place. Time is indicated by the action words (verbs) and such words as *tomorrow, yesterday, next week,* and so on. (See also **Point of** View.)

Tone Tone refers to the attitude writers take toward their subjects. The attitude in a particular composition may be formal, informal, serious, humorous, and so forth. (See also **Point of View.)**

Topic The main idea of a paragraph is called its topic. The topic of a paragraph may be stated directly (see **Topic Sentence)** or only implied (see **Implied/ Imply).**

Topic Sentence The topic sentence is the sentence or sentences in which the **main idea** of a paragraph is stated. The topic sentence is commonly placed at or near the beginning of a paragraph, but it may appear at any point in the paragrpah.

Transitions Transitions are words and expressions such as *for example, on the other hand, first, second,* or *to illustrate* that are used to help the reader identify the relation of ideas in a composition.

Unified A paragraph must be unified if it is to be effective, which means it must deal with a single idea, and that each sentence in the paragraph must be related to that idea. (See also **Main Idea, Coherent** and **Complete.)**

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